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The United Kingdom in the European Community:
The diplomacy of the UK government towards the
Single European Act, 1984-5

Dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the policy making of the United Kingdom towards the Single European Act (SEA) from June 1984 to December 1985. The SEA codified the practice of foreign policy coordination and began a process of liberalising the Single Market of the European Community (EC). The literature has identified the SEA as an important milestone in the process of European integration. Controversy surrounds the question as to how Margaret Thatcher could sign the SEA but afterwards say she did not like it. This research makes a contribution with a multi-archival and multilingual analysis of the UK government's decision making and diplomacy in the negotiations that lead to the SEA. This dissertation argues that the UK government's approach to the SEA went through two phases. In the first phase, Thatcher unsuccessfully attempted to lead the EC, in cooperation with Germany and France, into formalising foreign policy coordination. In the second phase, Thatcher withheld her commitment to the ongoing talks until the shape of the SEA had become clear, while the Foreign Secretary and diplomats were negotiating the clauses of the SEA. Using the SEA as a lens makes it possible to comment on the broader theme of Margaret Thatcher's views on European integration and adds a puzzle piece to the history of the relationship between the UK and the EC.

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The popular perception of what it means to “do a Ph.D.” could not be further from the truth. Researching and writing a Ph.D. does not mean sitting in a room and thinking big thoughts. On the contrary, Ph.D. research is a team effort in an endeavour to discover a grain of knowledge and take a minuscule step in advancing the knowledge of a chosen field. My Ph.D. certainly was a team effort. This Ph.D. research could never have happened without the marvellous help of many people who have tirelessly supported me – and who deserve my heartfelt thanks. First of all, I would like to thank my wife for her loving support. I am more grateful to have had her with me on this journey than I can express. I could not have done this without her. She kept me sane. We have fond memories of shared trips to archives and drafting sessions of chapters. My friend and supervisor, Professor Helen Parr, has instilled in me a curiosity about the politics of the UK in the EU. I have learned that knowing the British experience holds many fascinating lessons for my home country, Switzerland. Helen has been unwavering in her support of my research, in encouraging me to hone my analysis, write better and in helping me to bring this Ph.D. dissertation to the finishing line. Her insightful comments and detailed feedback on countless drafts always reflected her great sense of humour and optimism about the world. I shall never forget our many great conversations and her constant encouragement at all stages of my research and teaching journey. I would also like to thank my second supervisor, Dr Elisabeth Carter, for her careful reading of texts, detailed comments and helpful suggestions during the course of my Ph.D. research.

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List of abbreviations

AN	Archives Nationales (French National Archives)
BArch	Bundesarchiv der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BBQ	British Budget Question
BDOHP	British Diplomatic Oral History Programme
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COREPER	Committee of Permanent Representatives
CSCE	Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
DOE	Department for Education
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EAEC	European Atomic Energy Community
EC	European Community/ies
ECJ	European Court of Justice
ECOFIN	Economic and Financial Affairs Council
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
ECU	European Currency Unit
EDC	European Defence Community
EDG	European Democratic Group
EEC	European Economic Community
EESC	European Economic and Social Committee
EI (E)	European Integration (External) department at the FCO
EI (I)	European Integration (Internal) department at the FCO
EMS	European Monetary System
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ERM	Exchange Rate Mechanism
ERT	European Round Table of Industrialists
EP	European Parliament
EPC	European Political Cooperation
EQ (O)	Cabinet Official Committee on European Questions
EQ (S)	European Questions Steering Group
EU	European Union
FAC	Foreign Affairs Council
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Foreign Office)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany)
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HC	House of Commons
HL	House of Lords
HO	Home Office
IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
INF	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force Treaty
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITN	Independent Television News
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
MCA	Monetary Compensation Amounts
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MP	Member of the UK House of Commons
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NI	Northern Ireland

NTB	Non-Tariff Barriers to trade
OD	Overseas, Defence and Northern Ireland Cabinet Committee
OD(E)	Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee Sub-Committee on European Questions
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PAAA	Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts
PoCo	[European] Political Cooperation
PM	Prime Minister of the UK
PMQ	Prime Minister's Questions (UK House of Commons)
QMV	Qualified Majority Voting
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
SDP	Social Democratic Party
SEA	Single European Act
TEU	Treaty of European Union
THCR	Thatcher papers, Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge University
TNA	The National Archives of the United Kingdom
TSD	Treasury Solicitor's Department
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UKRep	UK Representation to the European Community
UN	United Nations
USSR	Union of Socialist Soviet Republics
WEU	Western European Union
WWII	Second World War

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Introduction

*“If Britain were to withdraw, we might imagine that we could regain complete national sovereignty. But it would, in fact, be an illusion. Our lives would be increasingly influenced by the EEC, yet we would have no say in decisions, which would vitally affect us”.*¹

Margaret Thatcher (1975)

*“Yes, we got our fingers burnt [with the Single European Act]. Do not now go back to that same fire with a much bigger treaty with many more powers and get both your arms and perhaps your head burnt as well”.*²

Margaret Thatcher (1993)

Margaret Thatcher’s views on European integration have always been of interest, never more so than now, as Brexit is keeping the issue of Britain and its relationship with the European Union in the news. Thatcher campaigned alongside Edward Heath to keep Britain in the European Economic Community (EEC) during the 1975 referendum but warned John Major that he would get his “head burnt” if he signed the Maastricht Treaty.³ The quotes above illustrate how Thatcher’s views on European integration changed over the course of her political career. The Single European Act (SEA) sits at an important crossroad for Margaret Thatcher and for the UK in the European Community (EC). Before 1985, Thatcher’s views on the issue of “Europe” followed the line that Harold Macmillan and Edward Heath had charted, which emphasised the benefits of EC membership to Britain’s standing in the world and to the economy. After the SEA was ratified, Thatcher began to express doubts, not of membership in the EC, but of the current direction of European integration. The most famous of such expressions was her landmark speech on 20 September 1988 in Bruges, when she said that “we have not successfully rolled back the frontiers of the state in Britain, only to see them

¹ Margaret Thatcher quoted in Saunders, *Yes to Europe! The 1975 Referendum and Seventies Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 247.

² Speech by Margaret Thatcher in House of Lords, European Communities (Amendment) Bill debate, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/108317>.

³ Uwe W. Kitzinger and David H. E. Butler, *The 1975 referendum* (London: Macmillan, 1976); Saunders, *Yes to Europe! The 1975 Referendum and Seventies Britain*; Stephen Wall, *The Official History of Britain and the European Community: From Rejection to Referendum, 1963-1975* (Routledge, 2012); Speech by Margaret Thatcher in House of Lords, European Communities (Amendment) Bill debate, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/108317>.

re-imposed at a European level with a European super-state exercising a new dominance from Brussels".⁴ By studying the SEA, my research adds a vital piece to the puzzle about Britain's policy making towards the EC in the mid-1980s and on Thatcher's own thinking about European integration.

Thatcher wrote in her memoirs that "the Single Market was very much a British initiative".⁵ Thatcher argued that she was prepared to accept majority voting and standardisations as "the price" for achieving a better functioning of the Single Market, but hastened to add she could not have known that such powers would later be used to legislate on social policies after the Single Market had been achieved.⁶ Looking back at the SEA from retirement, Margaret Thatcher argued that the SEA had been a "disappointment".⁷ After retiring, Thatcher believed that majority voting, which the SEA significantly extended, was being used to "push corporatist and collectivist social legislation upon Britain by the back door".⁸ Thatcher's changing views on the SEA pose a very interesting question: if the SEA was such a disadvantageous treaty for the UK, why had she decided to agree to the treaty and how did her government negotiate the provisions in the SEA? It is this discrepancy between the rhetorical element of Thatcher's European policies and her commitment to the practical aspects of European integration in the SEA that puzzled me and motivated me to conduct a detailed archival study of Thatcher's policies towards the SEA. My research was driven by wanting to understand the tension between Thatcher's commitment to European integration and her rejection of many aspects that came with being a member of the EC. How Margaret Thatcher and her government negotiated the SEA, the diplomatic bargaining, the disagreements over conflicting views on European integrations and how the British

⁴ Speech by Margaret Thatcher to the College of Europe in Bruges, 20 September 1988, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107332>.

⁵ Margaret Thatcher, *Statecraft: Strategies for a Changing World* (Harper Collins, 2003), 372.

⁶ Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (London: Harper Collins, 1995), 553, 556-57; Thatcher, *Statecraft*, 374-6.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 376.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 374-5.

government engaged in the negotiations towards the SEA will be the focus of this Ph.D. dissertation.

Using the SEA as a lens this Ph.D. dissertation studies the evolution of European policy making of Margaret Thatcher and her government from June 1984 to December 1985 and examines what this says about her views towards European integration. The focus of this dissertation is to assess the evolution of Britain's policy towards the SEA and to analyse how the British government negotiated in the diplomatic setting of the EC, by examining multiple archival records. The multi-archival methodology that underpins this research will be explained in the section on methods and sources below. The outcome is a fine-grained and narrowly focused account that explains in detail how the UK contributed to and engaged in the negotiations towards the SEA. This research can thus shed new light on the role of the UK in the negotiations that led to the SEA. Moreover, by drawing on British, French and German sources this research analyses how the British government interacted in the high-level diplomatic forums where the SEA was discussed. *This dissertation asks a three-pronged research question: firstly, what was the policy of the UK government towards the SEA? Secondly, how did the diplomacy of the UK leading up to the act evolve? Thirdly, what can the SEA tell us about Margaret Thatcher and the Conservative government's attitudes towards European integration?* These overarching research questions opened up other questions, such as how the UK engaged with the EC diplomatically, and how Britain negotiated with the EC's main powers, France and Germany. These issues will be explored at apt chronological moments during the course of the thesis.

The SEA needs to be situated in the historical context of European integration. In 1951 the Treaty of Paris founded the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and in 1957 the Treaties of Rome founded the European Economic Community (EEC) and Euratom. These treaties founded the European Community and established the Common Market as a tariff-free zone of trade. The "Merger Treaty" of 1965 established a single Council of

Ministers and one European Commission. In 1992 the Treaty of European Union, which became known as the “Maastricht Treaty”, established a treaty structure of three pillars that created the European Union as a new organisation.⁹ The SEA sits between the Merger Treaty and the Maastricht Treaty. The SEA was the first substantial amendment of the Treaty of Rome that founded the EEC in 1957 and which shall henceforth be referred to as the “EEC treaty”. With the negotiation for the SEA, for the first time since the creation of the EEC the political will was summoned by all member states to negotiate detailed changes to the articles of the EEC treaty. In doing so the EC collectively began to formulate answers to the challenges that the EC faced in the 1980s. The 1980s were marked by increased economic competition from the USA and Japan, developments of new technologies (such as microchips and industrial lasers) and, with the end of détente, a renewed heightening of Cold War tensions. The SEA also reflected the reforms that were undertaken during the 1970s, such as first successes in European Political Cooperation (EPC), the commitment to stable exchange rates and the setting up of the European Monetary System (EMS), the successful participation of Roy Jenkins, European Commission president, at international high-level summits and gave a legal basis to the meeting of heads of government in the European Council.¹⁰

The SEA was an ambitious political programme of liberalising the Internal Market and a further step towards turning a commitment made with the EEC treaty to the free movement of goods, services and people, into reality. The SEA committed the EC to establishing the Single Market by 1992, which was implemented by following the

⁹ The three pillars were the European Communities, the Common Foreign and Security Policy and Justice and Home Affairs.

¹⁰ See Daniel Möckli, *European Foreign Policy during the Cold War: Heath, Brandt, Pompidou and the Dream of Political Unity* (London: IB Tauris, 2009); Emmanuel Mourlon-Druol and Federico Romero, eds., *International Summitry and Global Governance: The Rise of the G7 and the European Council, 1974-1991* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014); Emmanuel Mourlon-Druol, *A Europe Made of Money: The Emergence of the European Monetary System* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2012); Peter Ludlow, *The Making of the European Monetary System: A Case Study of the Politics of the European Community*, Butterworths European Studies (London: Butterworth scientific, 1982); N. Piers Ludlow, ‘The Unnoticed Apogee of Atlanticism?: US-Western European Relations during the Early Reagan Era’, in *European Integration and the Atlantic Community in the 1980s*, ed. Kiran Klaus Patel and Kenneth Weisbrode (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 17-38; N. Piers Ludlow, *Roy Jenkins and the European Commission Presidency, 1976-1980: At the Heart of Europe* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

recommendations of a White Paper written by the European Commission.¹¹ The White Paper suggested the successive abolition, or harmonisation, of a list of approximately 300 non-tariff barriers (NTB) to trade. Therefore, the SEA prepared the legal basis for turning the Internal Market, which since the establishment of the Common Market had no internal tariffs, into the Single Market, by lowering technical, financial and fiscal NTBs. To implement the Single Market, the SEA introduced more majority voting provisions, and revived existing unused ones. The SEA also provided a legal basis for involving the European Parliament (EP) more in the process of EC-law making through a consultation process, giving the European Commission more executive power and establishing a court of first instance at the European Court of Justice (ECJ). Moreover, the preamble of the SEA contained a commitment to Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and endorsed measures of social, environmental and technical cooperation. Finally, the signatories of the SEA committed themselves to codifying the coordination of their foreign policies in an EPC framework, which involved regular meetings to align their positions in an attempt to create a “European foreign policy”.¹²

It is also important to put the SEA in perspective by recognising that it was just one of several issues that the second Thatcher government and the EC were dealing with. In domestic politics the SEA was a low-salience issue, exemplified by nearly a third of MPs not showing up to vote on its ratification.¹³ In 1985 the Westland Affair began, which was a dispute over whether a European or American company should take over an ailing military helicopter manufacturing company. The conflict laid bare the divisions in Cabinet and publicly exposed Thatcher’s sometimes abrasive leadership style when Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, resigned in January 1986. Also in 1985, the miners’ strike was

¹¹ Arthur S. Cockfield, ‘Completing the Internal Market, White Paper from the Commission to the European Council (Milan, 28-29 June 1985)’, 14 June 1985, http://europa.eu/documents/comm/white_papers/pdf/com1985_0310_f_en.pdf.

¹² The UK National Archives (henceforth TNA) FO 949/553, “Single European Act and Final Act with declarations by Italy and Federal Republic of Germany made on signature Place of Signing: Luxembourg, The Hague,” 17 and 28 February 1986.

¹³ The SEA passed by 270 to 153 votes. See Hugo Young, *This Blessed Plot: Britain and Europe from Churchill to Blair* (London: MacMillan, 1998), 334; Anthony Forster, *Euroscepticism in Contemporary British Politics, Opposition to Europe in the British Conservative and Labour Parties since 1945* (London: Routledge, 2002), 67, 80.

coming to an end, which for Thatcher meant that she had won against those who she called “the enemy within”. Moreover, the Brighton bomb of 12 October 1984 had accentuated the importance of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference which concluded in November 1985 with an agreement that aimed to put an end to “the troubles” in Northern Ireland. In European integration, the EC was busy with finding a resolution to the dispute on the British Budget Question (BBQ) and engaged in the accession negotiations for Greece, Spain and Portugal.¹⁴ Greece gained full membership in 1981 and Iberian enlargement was to take effect from 1986. The combined effects of stalled new developments, such as the Genscher-Colombo proposals in 1981 (proposing the extension of EC powers into foreign policy, defence, justice and a revival of majority voting), with enlargement (from 9 to 12 member states) were important factors in the debates on how to take the project of European integration into the future.¹⁵ With the end of détente, Cold War tensions were increasing again. Moreover, on 16 December 1984, Thatcher met Mikhail Gorbachev. Konstantin Chernenko passed away on 10 March 1985 and Gorbachev came to power the day afterwards. These domestic and international developments lie outside the scope of my research but were important because they shaped the world around the topic of this dissertation.

It is important to clarify some of the terminologies used in this dissertation. One of the challenges in writing about European integration is that different actors used different terminologies at different times and did so inconsistently, vaguely or even wrongly. A further challenge was that sometimes terms were used to describe aspirations. Helmut Kohl for instance used the term European Union in an aspirational sense, whereas Margaret Thatcher avoided using the term because she believed it had no clear meaning. Equally, Margaret Thatcher referred to the EP by its old name of “assembly” to make a clear distinction between the EP and national parliaments. Therefore, these terms have to be seen in the context of who

¹⁴ Eirini Karamouzi, *Greece, the EEC and the Cold War 1974-1979: The Second Enlargement*: (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Jurgen Elvert and Wolfram Kaiser, eds., *European Union Enlargement: A Comparative History* (London: Routledge, 2006).

¹⁵ Deborah Cuccia, ‘The Genscher-Colombo Plan: A Forgotten Page in the European Integration History’, *Journal of European Integration History* 24, no. 1 (2018): 59–78, <https://doi.org/10.5771/0947-9511-2018-1-59>.

used them, when and for what purpose. In general, this dissertation tries to bridge staying true to sources with writing consistently and clearly. A few specific cases should be highlighted. Firstly, the terms “European Communities” and “European Community” are used interchangeably, as was common at the time, to refer to the European Communities as they stood in 1984-5. The term EEC treaty is used here to refer to the 1957 Treaty of Rome that founded the European Economic Community, which the SEA amended. For reasons of readability, the term United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) is used synonymously with Great Britain or simply Britain.

Secondly, this is a story about Britain and the European Community. I have therefore zoomed in on such detailed policy aspects, and their appropriate terminologies, when the analysis merited it but focused on explaining the overarching narrative of policy formation in the British government in line with my overall research question. In the UK the by 1984-5 outdated term “Common Market” was still used a lot, not least by Thatcher herself, for what correctly should have been called the Internal Market. The term Single Market is used in many of the sources in aspirational terms to refer to the goal of a truly unified or liberalised market. Because this dissertation is in part about the treaty that created the Single Market, it was decided to refer to the Single Market as such from the beginning to avoid confusion, except when quoting directly or in my search for primary sources. The practice of foreign policy cooperation in the EC in the 1980s was referred to in France, Germany and Brussels as European Political Cooperation and abbreviated as “EPC”, whereas in the UK it was called Political Cooperation and abbreviated as “PoCo”. This dissertation stays true to the respective usage in the primary sources but because of a focus on the UK uses the term PoCo more.

Thirdly, terms that describe institutional policies of the EC, such as voting mechanisms, have been used in the sources either to refer to specific rules or in an aspirational sense. For instance, the terms majority voting and qualified majority voting (QMV) have sometimes been used in the sources interchangeably and sometimes specifically.

It is also important to know that the distinction between majority voting and QMV was simpler in 1985 than today, with QMV having a simple weighting by size of the country and not yet by population. I have for reasons of clarity referred to majority voting in a general sense and only indicated the kind of majority voting when this was relevant. The term “co-decision” was also used in aspirational terms in the sources to advocate measures that would give the EP more say vis-à-vis the Council of Ministers. The result of the SEA was a consultation process that gave the EP more say in how European laws were created but kept the last word with the Council of Ministers. I have tried to stay true to the sources in using these terms because they were mostly used in proposing specific policies.

Lastly, the Luxembourg Compromise featured frequently in the negotiations leading up to the SEA and needs to be explained briefly. It was a legacy that originated with the “empty chair crisis” (1965-6), during which French ministers boycotted meetings of the Council of Ministers to protest against the introduction of qualified majority voting and the concept of “own resources”, a proposal under which money paid in by member states was transferred entirely to the EC. The French president General Charles de Gaulle worried that these proposals would weaken member states’ ability to block individual decisions that were not in their interest. The stalemate was resolved with a compromise that informally permitted a member state to delay a vote if a “vital national interest” was at stake.¹⁶ The Luxembourg Compromise was not a “veto” but rather a fragile truce, centred on the resolve to keep discussions going when no agreement could be found, which sometimes was characterised in

¹⁶ N. Piers Ludlow, *The European Community and the Crises of the 1960s: Negotiating the Gaullist Challenge* (London: Routledge, 2006), 65–68, 118–24; Anthony L. Teasdale, ‘The Life and Death of the Luxembourg Compromise’, *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 31, no. 4 (1 December 1993): 567–79, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5965.1993.tb00481.x>; Derek W. Urwin, *The Community of Europe: A History of European Integration since 1945*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1995), 111–15; Mark Gilbert, *Surpassing Realism: The Politics of European Integration Since 1945* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 104–11; Andrew M. Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht* (London: UCL Press, 1999), 227–36; Dorothee Heisenberg, ‘The Institution of “Consensus” in the European Union: Formal versus Informal Decision-Making in the Council’, *European Journal of Political Research* 44, no. 1 (1 January 2005): 65–90, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2005.00219.x>; Jean Marie Palayret, Helen Wallace, and Pascaline Winand, eds., *Visions, Votes, and Vetoes: The Empty Chair Crisis and the Luxembourg Compromise Forty Years On* (Brussels: PIE-Peter Lang, 2006).

the literature as “agreement to disagree”.¹⁷ Not all governments formally recognised the existence of the Luxembourg Compromise. When Germany invoked the Luxembourg Compromise over grain prices in 1985,¹⁸ Maurice Couve de Murville, who was French foreign minister when the Luxembourg Compromise was created, argued that the Luxembourg Compromise was not a veto but instead was a “political” compromise, which rested on the willingness of other countries to honour it.¹⁹ The UK government was well aware of the fact that this was a political compromise that depended on the recognition of other EC member states, which is shown in the full Cabinet minutes explaining in detail which country supported Kiechle when he invoked the Luxembourg Compromise.²⁰

Literature review

This Ph.D. dissertation can be situated at the intersection of three broad strands of literature: firstly, the literature that focuses on Britain and the EC; secondly, the biographical literature on Margaret Thatcher and her time as Prime Minister; thirdly, the literature that explains the process of European integration, how it came about and what it is. This research contributes to the literature with a detailed multi-archival study of the SEA. Firstly, my research contributes to the literature on the UK and European integration. By analysing the SEA, my Ph.D. dissertation studies a detailed aspect of Britain’s policy making towards the EC. Secondly, my research speaks to the biographical literature in adding a puzzle piece to the broader interpretations of Thatcher’s views on European integration. Thirdly, because this dissertation is about the UK and the EC, it has been informed by the literature on the dynamics of European integration.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ On 12 June 1985, Ignaz Kiechle, the German minister for agriculture, invoked the Luxembourg Compromise over an 1.8% decrease in grain prices.

¹⁹ TNA FCO30/6198, “Un blocage du Marché commun?,” *Le Figaro*, 14 June 1985.

²⁰ TNA CAB128/81/20, “Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on Thursday 13 June 1985 at 10.30 am,” 13 June 1985, 3-4.

Since the creation of the EEC, the literature on the history of the UK and European integration has become an important historical field in its own right.²¹ The orthodox argument held that the UK did not form part of the EEC because of an overly cautious stance at the Messina conference in 1955 and a refusal on the part of the British government of the time to interact with the Spaak Committee that led to the creation of the EEC.²² Aspects that held up joining the ECSC and the EEC were rooted in domestic politics, international connections (notably with the Commonwealth) and notions of national standing as a winner of WWII. The analogy that was frequently used, in newspaper cartoons and academic articles, was one of missing busses, trains or ships bound for Europe.²³ One of the early comprehensive monographs advancing this argument was written by Miriam Camps.²⁴ In addition, several journalists have embraced this view, most prominently Nora Beloff and Hugo Young.²⁵ A significant segment of the literature looks at Britain in the process of European integration over a longer time frame.²⁶ A section of this broader literature analyses Britain and the EC in the context of Britain's influence in the wider world.²⁷

The orthodox thesis has been criticised by a revisionist school of thought for advancing a one-dimensional argument. James Ellison suggested that the orthodox view

²¹ For historiographical overviews see Oliver J. Daddow, *Britain and Europe since 1945: Historiographical Perspectives on Integration* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); James Ellison, 'Britain and Europe', in *A Companion to Contemporary Britain, 1939-2000*, ed. Paul Addison and Harriet Jones (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 517–38.

²² Daddow, *Britain and Europe since 1945*, 58 ff.; Ellison, 'Britain and Europe', 518–20.

²³ Daddow, *Britain and Europe since 1945*, 62–66; The British Cartoon Archive at the University of Kent contains a record of such depictions. See <https://archive.cartoons.ac.uk/>.

²⁴ Miriam Camps, *Britain and the European Community, 1955-1963* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964).

²⁵ Nora Beloff, *The General Says No, Britain's Exclusion from Europe* (London: Penguin Books, 1963); Young, *This Blessed Plot*.

²⁶ Stephen George, *An Awkward Partner: Britain in the European Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); Sean Greenwood, *Britain and European Cooperation Since 1945* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); David A. Gowland, Arthur S. Turner, and Alex Wright, *Britain and European Integration since 1945, On the Sidelines* (London: Routledge, 2010); John W. Young, *Britain and European Unity, 1945-1999*, 2nd ed. (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 2000); Young, *This Blessed Plot*.

²⁷ Nicholas J. Crowson, *Britain and Europe: A Political History Since 1918* (Routledge, 2010); David Reynolds, *Britannia Overruled: British Policy and World Power in the Twentieth Century* (Routledge, 2013); Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Continental Drift: Britain and Europe from the End of Empire to the Rise of Euroscepticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

meant “writing history backwards”.²⁸ Oliver Daddow argued that the orthodox school “generate[d] an internal logic of its own” and was “ideologically weighted”.²⁹ Mark Gilbert and N. Piers Ludlow both criticised the orthodox school for advancing teleological explanations, which implied an assumed sense of progress towards a desired outcome.³⁰ Moreover, the revisionists have added colour, context and new dimensions to the picture and have successfully refuted the narrative of Britain simply missing the bus, train or ship.³¹ The UK’s turn towards European integration under the leadership of Harold Macmillan, the decision to apply for EEC membership and the first British application to join the EEC generated a rich and qualitatively high-standing academic debate,³² which according to Ellison “represents the field at its best”.³³ Ellison, Kaiser, Deighton, Ludlow, Milward and Young all pointed out the unique challenges that the post-WWII world, the Cold War, changing domestic politics and the diplomatic accession negotiations created for successive UK governments.³⁴ For instance, Ellison examined the free trade area proposals that the UK

²⁸ Ellison, ‘Britain and Europe’, 520.

²⁹ Daddow, *Britain and Europe since 1945*, 112.

³⁰ N. Piers Ludlow, ‘History Aplenty: But Still Too Isolated’, in *Research Agendas in EU Studies: Stalking the Elephant. Palgrave Studies in European Union Politics*, ed. Michelle Egan, Neil Nugent, and William E. Paterson (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/26370/>; Mark Gilbert, ‘A Polity Constructed: New Explorations in European Integration History’, *Contemporary European History* 19, no. 2 (May 2010): 169–79, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S096077731000007X>.

³¹ Ellison, ‘Britain and Europe’, 520–23, 530–32; Daddow, *Britain and Europe since 1945*, 114 ff.

³² Richard Griffiths, ‘A Slow One Hundred and Eighty Degree Turn: British Policy Towards the Common Market, 1955–60’, in *Britain’s Failure to Enter the European Community, 1961–63, The Enlargement Negotiations and Crises in European, Atlantic and Commonwealth Relations*, ed. George Wilkes (London: Frank Cass, 1997), 35–50; Richard T. Griffiths and Stuart Ward, “‘The End of a Thousand Years of History’: The Origins of Britain’s Decision to Join the European Community, 1955–61”, in *Courting the Common Market: The First Attempt to Enlarge the European Community, 1961–63*, ed. Richard T. Griffiths and Stuart Ward (London: Lothian Foundation Press, 1996), 7–37; Wolfram Kaiser, *Großbritannien und die Europäische Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft, 1955–61: Von Messina nach Canossa* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1996); Wilfried Loth, *Der Weg nach Europa: Geschichte der Europäischen Integration 1939–1957*, 2. Aufl. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991); John W. Young, “‘The Parting of the Ways’?: Britain, the Messina Conference and the Spaak Committee, June–December 1955’, in *British Foreign Policy, 1945–56*, ed. Michael L. Dockrill and John W. Young (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), 197–224; Roger Broad and Virginia Preston, eds., *Moored to the Continent?: Britain and European Integration* (London: Institute of Historical Research, University of London, 2001); Anne Deighton and Alan S. Milward, eds., *Widening, Deepening and Acceleration: The European Economic Community, 1957–63* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1999); Anne Deighton, ‘The United Kingdom Application for EEC Membership 1961–63’, in *Courting the Common Market: The First Attempt to Enlarge the European Community, 1961–63*, ed. Richard Griffiths and Stuart Ward (London: Lothian Foundation Press, 1996), 39–58; Wolfram Kaiser and Gillian Staerck, eds., *British Foreign Policy, 1955–64, Contracting Options* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000); George Wilkes, ed., *Britain’s Failure to Enter the European Community, 1961–63, The Enlargement Negotiations and Crises in European, Atlantic and Commonwealth Relations* (London: Frank Cass, 1997).

³³ Ellison, ‘Britain and Europe’, 530.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

put forward as an alternative to the EEC, which in their failure added to the momentum towards the decision to join the EEC.³⁵

N. Piers Ludlow examined the first British application to join the EEC, from 1961 to 1963, in a ground-breaking multi-archival study of Britain's first diplomatic negotiations to join the EEC.³⁶ Ludlow argued that from the outset of the application, France couched opposition to British membership in pro-European language, which prevented its isolation and delayed the progress of the talks.³⁷ Ludlow further argued that had there been a clear choice on the principle of membership, de Gaulle would have had no alternative but to accept Britain as EEC member.³⁸ The technical, drawn-out process of the talks, and the fact that all six existing members had to agree to one common position in the diplomatic negotiations resulted in delay, which gave de Gaulle the opportunity to impose his veto on the process of British accession to the EEC, once his standing in domestic politics had improved.³⁹ Helen Parr persuasively argued that in the 1960s Britain was not on a self-evident trajectory towards application but that Harold Wilson made a conscious decision to reapply for membership in 1966, determined by considerations of Britain's standing in the world and the wish to lead the EEC, together with France, which kept Britain on the path towards EC membership.⁴⁰

Alan Milward was commissioned by the British government to write the "Official History of Britain and the European Community", from the end of WWII to the first accession negotiations on UK entry into the EEC. The result was a seminal monograph in which Milward explained how Harold Macmillan set the UK on a course in which the British government would no longer try to exert influence from the outside but would apply to join

³⁵ James Ellison, 'Accepting the Inevitable: Britain and European Integration', in *British Foreign Policy, 1955-64, Contracting Options*, ed. Wolfram Kaiser and Gillian Staerck (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 171–89.

³⁶ N. Piers Ludlow, *Dealing with Britain: The Six and the First UK Application to the EEC* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 238–40.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 244–47.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 111 ff., 247–52.

⁴⁰ Helen Parr, *Britain's Policy towards the European Community: Harold Wilson and Britain's World Role, 1964-1967* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), 163 ff.

the EEC and as a leading member of the EC also gain influence in the Commonwealth and vis-à-vis the USA.⁴¹ Stephen Wall, a former diplomat, continued the “Official History of Britain and the European Community” series with a second volume, covering the time when the UK joined the EEC and the first referendum in 1975.⁴² Ludlow observed that unlike Milward, Wall has not put forward a “bold interpretative thesis” in his “official history” volume and interacted less with the existing secondary literature than other academic historians would.⁴³ Moreover, Sir Con O’Neill, the negotiator who secured Britain’s entry into the EEC, published his official account on how the UK joined the EEC.⁴⁴ The divisiveness of the issue of European integration was not confined to the realm of foreign policy but was also felt in domestic politics, as Robert Saunders has shown in his masterful account of the different campaigns during the first EEC membership referendum of 1975.⁴⁵

The scholarship of the UK and the EC in the 1980s is very different in focus and approach from the more settled debate of the question why and how the UK joined the EEC. In terms of their use of sources, much of the literature on the UK and the EC in the 1980s relied on information that was at the time already in the public domain, especially first-hand accounts and memoirs. Butler, Renwick and Wall, three former diplomats who throughout their careers were intimately involved in European diplomacy, published monographs on the subject.⁴⁶ The archival sources for this time have only recently been declassified. Wall, as official Whitehall historian, received early access to archival records. He continued the “Official History of Britain and the European Community” series with a third volume, which

⁴¹ Alan S. Milward, *The Rise and Fall of a National Strategy, 1945-1963* (London: Whitehall History Publication in association with Frank Cass, 2002).

⁴² Wall, *The Official History of Britain and the European Community: From Rejection to Referendum*.

⁴³ N. Piers Ludlow, ‘The Discomforts of Life on the Edge: Britain and Europe, 1963–1975’, *International Affairs* 88, no. 6 (2012): 1331–1340, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2012.01135.x>.

⁴⁴ Sir Con O’Neill, *Britain’s Entry Into the European Community: Report by Sir Con O’Neill on the Negotiations 1970-1972*, ed. David Hannay (London: Frank Cass, 2000).

⁴⁵ Saunders, *Yes to Europe! The 1975 Referendum and Seventies Britain*.

⁴⁶ Michael Butler, *Europe: More Than a Continent* (London: Heinemann, 1986); Robin Renwick, *A Journey with Margaret Thatcher: Foreign Policy Under the Iron Lady* (London: Biteback Publishing, 2013); Stephen Wall, *A Stranger in Europe: Britain and the EU from Thatcher to Blair* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Wall, *The Official History of Britain and the European Community: From Rejection to Referendum*; Stephen Wall, *The Official History of Britain and the European Community, Volume III: The Tiger Unleashed, 1975-1985* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).

brought the narrative up to the mid-1980s.⁴⁷ Wall argued that by championing the Single Market as well as enlargement of the EC after the end of the Cold War, which he sees as the two “principal successes” of European integration, Thatcher was “in the vanguard of the European Communities/Union”.⁴⁸ However, Wall qualified this statement by adding that the safeguards in the SEA on social policy and border controls were “ineffective”.⁴⁹ According to Wall, during the “implementation of the SEA, [the EC] broke through the safeguard that the UK had sought to put in place”, on issues such as monetary integration, social legislation and passport-free travel.⁵⁰ Wall argued further that once the SEA was agreed, the reference to EMU in the SEA gave Jacques Delors “a foothold” to pursue European integration further.⁵¹ In terms of Thatcher’s negotiating approach, Wall remembered how she “hacked her way, armed with a machete, through the European jungle”, whereas Geoffrey Howe was “sugaring wine with honey” to avoid a ruptures in the diplomatic relations.⁵² Wall brings together an impressive amount of detail and some great anecdotes from the primary sources. However, perhaps because of his longer timeframe, his explanation on why and how the UK came to agree to the SEA lacks an overarching argument.

Stephen George argued that many of the unique challenges that Britain faced as the first new member of the EC could be reduced to the epithet of being the “awkward partner” in the EC.⁵³ George believed that the Thatcher government nudged the EC in a direction of policies the UK could live with.⁵⁴ According to George, the more constructive approach of the British government in the Intergovernmental Conference of 1985 produced tangible results that the UK had desired from the outset, for instance limiting majority voting to issues connected with the Single Market.⁵⁵ In addition, VAT as well as border control remained in

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 332.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 331.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 330–32.

⁵¹ Ibid., 330.

⁵² Ibid., 312–13.

⁵³ George, *An Awkward Partner*.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 183–85, 206–7.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

national hands after the SEA was agreed, just as the UK had preferred. George suggested that with these achievements, the UK outmanoeuvred France and Germany by interacting constructively in the negotiations on the SEA. Therefore, neither France nor Germany could lay the responsibility for any lack of progress at the door of the UK.⁵⁶ John Young argued that with the SEA, Thatcher and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) had “reached an uneasy truce” around a policy that was intended to maintain full membership of the EC and still prevent the divisions of a “two-tier’ Europe”.⁵⁷ In essence, George and Young argued that with the SEA, the UK countered the threat of being sidelined in what was at the time debated as a “two-tier Community”, where some countries would integrate faster than others.

A significant strand of the literature saw the SEA in the context of domestic politics. Richard Vinen depicted Thatcher as taking over a pro-European party with no apparent intention of changing this policy, but then slowly changing her attitude to harbour more and more misgivings about Britain’s policies towards the EC.⁵⁸ In this process, Thatcher’s views began to clash with those of Lawson and Howe (Chancellor of the Exchequer and Foreign Secretary), which contributed to her losing the leadership of her party.⁵⁹ Vinen argued that from this perspective, the SEA was not part of Thatcher’s trajectory towards Euroscepticism, because it effectively delegated some powers to the EC to further the Single Market. Vinen suggested this “genuinely perplexed” her advisors.⁶⁰ Robert Blake’s history of the Conservative Party argued that Thatcher signed the SEA because of its trade implications and dismissed the language of European integration as “windy waffle”.⁶¹ Blake presented the issue of the SEA in the larger context of a split in the Cabinet which gradually became apparent, between the more pro-European Geoffrey Howe and Michael Heseltine on one side,

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Young, *Britain and European Unity, 1945-1999*, 140–41.

⁵⁸ Richard Vinen, *Thatcher’s Britain: The Politics and Social Upheaval of the 1980s* (London: Simon & Schuster UK, 2010), 230 ff.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 240.

⁶¹ Robert Blake, *The Conservative Party, from Peele to Major* (London: William Heinemann, 1997), 368.

and Thatcher herself on the other.⁶² This split was characterised both by “ideology and personalities”. It emerged over the Westland Affair, lingered throughout the SEA negotiations and came to a head with Thatcher’s Bruges speech on 20 September 1988.⁶³

Jim Buller, analysing the broad sweep of Conservative European policy in the context of the political science concept of statecraft, argued that the SEA “represented the zenith of Conservative influence in the 1980s and also the origins of its decline”.⁶⁴ Buller argues the SEA was the European component of Thatcher’s economic policies and at the same time a way of strengthening the hold of the Conservative Party on domestic economic policy making, which went hand in hand with the realisation in the party that European policies were the necessary counterpart to domestic economic policy in an increasingly interconnected world.⁶⁵ However, nine years later Buller argued that the SEA represented an “erosion of political sovereignty in the name of free market economics”, which entailed accepting majority voting for the Single Market, health and safety and an agreement to work on EMU in the future.⁶⁶ Buller believed that these concessions were “side payments” for the European component of Thatcher’s economic policies.⁶⁷

Nicholas Crowson argued that to a section of the Conservative Party the SEA was “Thatcherism on a European scale”.⁶⁸ To an extent Andrew Moravcsik, Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon and Robert Skidelsky also accept this argument.⁶⁹ Crowson argued that the SEA was largely endorsed by the Conservative Party because it was seen as instance when Britain

⁶² Ibid., 359–60, 367–69, 376–79, 381–83.

⁶³ Ibid., 367–9, 376–9, 381–3.

⁶⁴ Jim Buller, *National Statecraft and European Integration, The Conservative Government and the European Union, 1979-1997* (London: Pinter, 2000), 88.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 20, 48 ff., 79–82, 84–87, 165 ff.

⁶⁶ Jim Buller, ‘The European Union’, in *The Oxford Handbook of British Politics*, ed. Matthew Flinders et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 556–57.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Nicholas J. Crowson, *The Conservative Party and European Integration Since 1945: At the Heart of Europe?* (Routledge, 2006), 51.

⁶⁹ Andrew M. Moravcsik, ‘Negotiating the Single European Act: National Interests and Conventional Statecraft in the European Community’, *International Organization* 45, no. 1 (1991): 31, 50–53; Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, 324–25; Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Continental Drift*; Robert Skidelsky, ‘Britain: Mrs. Thatcher’s Revolution’, in *Recasting Europe’s Economies: National Strategies in the 1980s*, ed. David P. Calleo and Claudia Morgenstern (Lanham: Washington Foundation for European Studies, 1990), 128.

was spearheading a European policy and it served to bridge the divide between “wet” and “dry” members of the Cabinet; the “wets” wanted the UK to be involved in European integration and the “dries” saw the SEA as the European counterpart to their economic views.⁷⁰ After 1986, these cracks could no longer be papered over and the rift about membership of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) opened up a split within the Conservative frontbenchers.⁷¹ The Bruges speech in 1988 was in Crowson’s view “a rejection of her government’s previous approach to Europe”, and with it the SEA and was ultimately “an admission of failure...to find a position for Britain within Europe”.⁷²

The challenge of assessing Thatcher’s views on European integration is summed up by Hugo Young in his monograph on Britain and the EC. Young argued that Thatcher “took Britain further into Europe than anyone except Heath ... yet simultaneously all her political energy was directed against what she herself was doing. Even as she took Britain further in, she stoked the fire of those who opposed this every step of the way”.⁷³ Concerning Thatcher’s own views on the SEA, this controversy is often explained by asking the question whether or not Thatcher could have been “tricked”. On this question there is an overlap between the literature on the UK and the EC and the biographical literature. In the literature on Britain and European integration, there is one school of thought which argues that the SEA had been what Beloff called a “major British diplomatic defeat” and a “mistake” on the part of Thatcher.⁷⁴ This strand of the literature tentatively advanced the explanation by wondering if Thatcher could have been “duped”, “misled”, “betrayed” or “tricked”.⁷⁵ Gowland, Turner and Wright found it “puzzling” why Thatcher agreed to the SEA and argued that Thatcher

⁷⁰ Crowson, *The Conservative Party and European Integration Since 1945*, 51–53. For a discussion on the “wet” and “dry” divide see Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, 50–51, 123 ff.; Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 317; Hugo Young, *One of Us: A Biography of Margaret Thatcher* (London: Macmillan, 1989), 198–204; Vinen, *Thatcher’s Britain*, 117–18.

⁷¹ Crowson, *The Conservative Party and European Integration Since 1945*, 52.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 53.

⁷³ Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 306.

⁷⁴ Lord Max Beloff, *Britain and European Union: Dialogue of the Deaf* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), 95.

⁷⁵ Buller, ‘The European Union’, 557; Daddow, *Britain and Europe since 1945*, 142; Gowland, Turner, and Wright, *Britain and European Integration since 1945*, 108; David A. Gowland and Arthur S. Turner, *Reluctant Europeans: Britain and European Integration, 1945-1998* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), 267; Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 69.

failed to foresee how important the ambiguous declarations on “European unity” were.⁷⁶ They believed she was “misled and betrayed by duplicitous EC partners”.⁷⁷

Treachery could have also come from within. Buller, Gowland Turner and Wright all believe that the FCO had “tricked” or “badly misinformed” Thatcher.⁷⁸ The working relationship between Thatcher and her FCO advisors on the subject of European integration was by many accounts an uneasy one.⁷⁹ Nicholas Henderson, a senior diplomat, told Hugo Young: “you see, she doesn’t really believe that there’s any such thing as useful negotiations”.⁸⁰ Wall argued that “If, as she did, Mrs Thatcher subsequently felt that she had been double-crossed by Kohl, she was not double-crossed on the basis of official FCO advice”.⁸¹

Wall remembered: “it was said that her view of the Foreign Office was the mirror image of her view of the Church of England: she liked the Church of England as an institution but had little time for a number of the people in it, whereas she had little time for the Foreign Office as an organisation but respected a number of the individual officials in it”.⁸²

Wall believed that even though Thatcher may have had an uneasy relationship with the FCO, she trusted the individual civil servants working there. Geoffrey Howe, Michael

⁷⁶ Gowland, Turner, and Wright, *Britain and European Integration since 1945*, 108

⁷⁷ Ibid.; Gowland and Turner, *Reluctant Europeans*, 267.

⁷⁸ Ibid.; Buller, ‘The European Union’, 557.

⁷⁹ Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 58–60, 89–91; Charles Moore, *Margaret Thatcher: The Authorized Biography, Volume Two: Everything She Wants* (London: Penguin, 2015), 393–94, 401; Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 317–7, 324, 340; Paul Sharp, *Thatcher’s Diplomacy: The Revival of British Foreign Policy* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 241–42; Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, 550–51; Young, *One of Us*, 184 ff., 190, 381 ff., 557; John Dickie, *Inside the Foreign Office* (Chapmans, 1992), 112, 263; Eric J. Evans, *Thatcher and Thatcherism*, 3. ed (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 62; Ian Gilmour, *Dancing with Dogma* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 293–94; Geoffrey Howe, *Conflict of Loyalty* (London: Macmillan, 1994), 393–96; Nigel Lawson, *The View from No. 11, Memoirs of a Tory Radical* (London: Bantam Press, 1992), 110–11, 893–94.

⁸⁰ Nicholas Henderson, quoted in Young, *One of Us*, 381.

⁸¹ Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 69.

⁸² Ibid., 64. On Thatcher and the Church of England see Eliza Filby, *God and Mrs Thatcher: The Battle for Britain’s Soul* (London: Biteback, 2015).

Butler, David Williamson and Stephen Wall all have publicly denied having misled Thatcher and argued that she herself had said that she read every single word of the SEA.⁸³

Robin Renwick, Assistant Under-Secretary (European Integration), argued that “institutionally, the FCO had a near pathological fear of being left out of European construction”.⁸⁴ Charles Moore, Thatcher’s official biographer, also argued that for the FCO and Whitehall at large “the biggest fear ... was still that of being ‘left behind’”.⁸⁵ Renwick and Moore’s remarks about the FCO hark back to the thesis that Britain “missed the bus” by not having been a signatory of the EEC treaty, which argued that many of the subsequent challenges in joining the EEC stemmed from this early omission. In the same context, John Young argued that the decision to hold an IGC at the European Council in Milan, on 28-9 June 1985, brought Britain back to the same choice the country faced in 1955 of either embracing entanglement or facing being shut out of further work in the EC.⁸⁶ However, Young believed that “by 1985 Britain was committed to a European future”.⁸⁷ This is a significant assessment because it relativizes the comparison with 1955 and shows that by the 1980s, the question was no longer whether or not the UK would join the EC but how the UK should make policies as a fully-fledged member of the EC.

Biographies and memoirs

Three major biographies have been written about Margaret Thatcher in which the Single European Act features prominently.⁸⁸ Charles Moore, the former editor of the *Spectator*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph*, was asked in 1997 by Lady Thatcher if he wanted to write her authorised biography. The result was a seminal three-volume history of

⁸³ Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 336; Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Continental Drift*, 437; Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 69; Gowland, Turner, and Wright, *Britain and European Integration since 1945*, 108; Gowland and Turner, *Reluctant Europeans*, 267.

⁸⁴ Renwick, *A Journey with Margaret Thatcher*, 106.

⁸⁵ Moore, *Margaret Thatcher*, 2015, 402.

⁸⁶ Young, *Britain and European Unity, 1945-1999*, 140.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Thatcher’s speechwriter, Robin Harris, also wrote a biography of her but the Single European Act is only mentioned in passing, mainly in the context of the Bruges speech and the Maastricht Treaty. Robin Harris, *Not for Turning: The Complete Life of Margaret Thatcher* (London: Corgi Books, 2014).

Thatcher's political life. Hugo Young was a political editor at the *Sunday Times* and in 1984 became a columnist for *The Guardian*. He was self-confessedly critical of Thatcher's politics, which is reflected in his 1998 biography of her.⁸⁹ John Campbell, a biographer of David Lloyd George, Aneurin Bevan and Roy Jenkins, published a balanced two-volume biography of Thatcher in 2008 and 2009 respectively. Thatcher's three biographers all wrestle with the question of what the SEA says about Margaret Thatcher's attitudes on European integration and explain the conundrum by suggesting that she could have been deceived when she agreed to the SEA.⁹⁰ Hugo Young asked, "was there an element of betrayal here, and if so, who by whom"?⁹¹ Was this a "misunderstanding" or "are we seriously to suppose that Mrs Thatcher had not examined the words she put her name to"?⁹²

Fundamentally, all three biographers of Thatcher argued that she did not support European integration and disliked the term "European Union".⁹³ Moore even believed that Thatcher "did not understand the implications of the [Single European] Act".⁹⁴ Campbell argued that Thatcher "'gave away' more sovereignty in 1985 than Heath in 1973 or Major in 1992" but was "deceived by other leaders who broke assurances".⁹⁵ However, if she disliked European integration, why did she sign the SEA? Campbell, Moore and Young argued that Thatcher signed the SEA because she wanted to implement the Single Market.⁹⁶ Campbell believed that apart from the Single Market she wanted to "send back the rest of the menu".⁹⁷ Hugo Young put forward the explanation that Thatcher had read and understood the SEA but "wanted the Act to mean what she said it meant, and was simply not prepared to recognize

⁸⁹ Hugo Young, 'Margaret Thatcher Left a Dark Legacy That Has Still Not Disappeared', *The Guardian*, 8 April 2013, accessed 15 January 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/apr/08/margaret-thatcher-hugo-young>; Young, *One of Us*.

⁹⁰ Moore, *Margaret Thatcher*, 2015, 389–90; Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 337–38; John Campbell, *Margaret Thatcher Volume Two: The Iron Lady* (Vintage, 2008), 308–11.

⁹¹ Young, *One of Us*, 335.

⁹² Young, 336–37.

⁹³ Moore, *Margaret Thatcher*, 2015, 389–90; Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 337–38; Young, *One of Us*, 190–91, 387–88; Campbell, *Margaret Thatcher Volume Two*, 302.

⁹⁴ Moore, *Margaret Thatcher*, 2015, 407.

⁹⁵ Campbell, *Margaret Thatcher Volume Two*, 311.

⁹⁶ Campbell, 310; Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 326; Moore, *Margaret Thatcher*, 2015, 388.

⁹⁷ Campbell, *Margaret Thatcher Volume Two*, 311.

that it might mean something else as well”.⁹⁸ The alternative meaning was that European integration was “an aspiration”, which according to Young was derided by Thatcher as “Euro-guff, or Euro-twaddle – a bizarre, cultish worshipping at the altar of Jean Monnet, which would mercifully never get anywhere near full transubstantiation into the body of revealed and meaningful law”.⁹⁹

Charles Moore also resorted to religious analogies when attempting to explain Thatcher’s attitude to European integration.¹⁰⁰ Moore argued that Thatcher never subscribed to “the religion of Europeanism”.¹⁰¹ Moore believed that Thatcher was in favour of Political Cooperation but disliked terms such as “political union” and “United States of Europe”.¹⁰² She did not like what Moore called the “‘theology’ of European declarations” but her advisors said the language did not mean much and recommended accepting it as the condition of being a member of the EC.¹⁰³ According to Moore, Thatcher tried to work within the system that was provided but tried to infuse it with some sense of pragmatism, such as by selecting Lord Cockfield to become European Commissioner or by improving the workings of the Single Market.¹⁰⁴ Charles Powell told Moore that “in relation to the EEC, she had different periods – like Picasso in his painting. The first period was the budget row; the second was that of the SEA; the third – the violent stage – came on with the rising power of Delors and the issue of EMU”.¹⁰⁵ Fundamentally, Moore believed that between 1979 and 1986 she never took the time to coherently develop “her own vision for Europe” and stuck to the policies that Heath had bequeathed to her.¹⁰⁶ By that he meant the fundamentally pro-European course that since

⁹⁸ Young, *One of Us*, 336–37.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 337–8.

¹⁰⁰ Moore, *Margaret Thatcher*, 2015, 389–90.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 389.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 390–1.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 391–4.

¹⁰⁵ Lord Powell of Bayswater quoted in Moore, *Margaret Thatcher*, 2015, 408.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

1961 saw the UK as a leading member of the EC and the Conservative Party as responsible for the UK becoming a member of the EEC.

Moore's third volume of Thatcher's biography portrayed her as a "Eurosceptic" who had transferred "British sovereignty" away from the nation state with the SEA but found herself battling with her two most senior Cabinet ministers, Geoffrey Howe and Nigel Lawson, on the question of whether or not to join the ERM.¹⁰⁷ Moore argued that with the Bruges speech, on 20 September 1988, she outlined a "vision" of an outward-looking, open "European civilization", which was not centred on the EEC treaty.¹⁰⁸ However, Moore believed that even though it was critical, the speech was "careful to accept everything the EC had done to date".¹⁰⁹ Even though Thatcher was critical of Delors, on monetary integration and the Maastricht Treaty, she "was not attacking the EC and all its works; nor was she undermining the policy of her own government".¹¹⁰ Moore confirmed this more Eurosceptic line of argument in an interview with Nick Robinson, arguing that "after [Thatcher] had signed and supported the Single European Act, she came to regret it, in the mid-1980s, because she could see that it was part of a centralising project – if you like a united states of Europe – particularly with Jacques Delors pushing the single currency".¹¹¹

In the same interview, Moore said that "you can see the trajectory, she is moving from mild pro-Europeanism to a strong anti-Europeanism, in a process that took about fifteen years and in which the idea of a referendum became very much a strong part".¹¹² Moore mentions in his book that John Major was entertaining the idea for such a referendum on the Maastricht Treaty but then Thatcher's support in the House of Commons made it politically

¹⁰⁷ Charles Moore, *Margaret Thatcher: The Authorized Biography - Herself Alone* (London: Penguin, 2019), 124, 94 ff., 122 ff.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 149-51.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 646, 619 ff., 774 ff.

¹¹¹ BBC, 'Interview with Charles Moore by Nick Robinson,' *BBC Radio 4 Today programme*, 30 September 2019.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

impossible to get it through Cabinet.¹¹³ There is a danger here of seeing the SEA, EMU and the Maastricht Treaty as being on a linear trajectory that directly lead to the referendum on EU membership in 2016. This dissertation emphatically does not see the SEA in this way, but rather aims to tell the story of the SEA as one element of the unpredictable twists and turns of history.

Much of the literature mentioned above relied heavily on memoirs. This dissertation consulted them to understand the views of decision makers with the benefit of hindsight and occasionally to add some colour to the narrative. In my research I drew on memoirs to complement and bring out the findings of the archival research by comparing them to how the leading British politicians defended their role in the making of the SEA, in the context of presenting their own legacies. The memoirs by Margaret Thatcher, Geoffrey Howe and Nigel Lawson have been particularly useful. Thatcher said in her memoirs that in order to achieve the Single Market she was prepared to accept more majority voting.¹¹⁴ Indeed, she maintained that “Britain was the originator of and continued to be the driving force behind the Single Market”.¹¹⁵ Thatcher argued that when she was negotiating the SEA, the Single Market was her “overriding goal”.¹¹⁶ With hindsight, Thatcher said that despite having done her best to limit how the European Commission could use the majority voting rules, she believed that “the provisions of the Single European Act were abused in order to push corporatist and collectivist social legislation upon Britain by the back door”.¹¹⁷ Thatcher argued in her retirement that the SEA was meant to extend the Single Market but said she had failed to recognise that once the European Commission was given a competence, it would not be

¹¹³ Charles Moore, *Margaret Thatcher: The Authorized Biography - Herself Alone*, 769.

¹¹⁴ Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, 553–56; Thatcher, *Statecraft*, 372.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, 553–56.

¹¹⁷ Thatcher, *Statecraft*, 373, 375–76.

returned when the Single Market had been completed.¹¹⁸ Therefore, Thatcher concluded that “I cannot rate the European Single Act as other than a disappointment”.¹¹⁹

Geoffrey Howe played a key role in the UK’s European policy making during the 1980s. He was one of Thatcher’s longest-serving Cabinet ministers. From 1983 to 1989 he was Foreign Secretary, until he fell out with Thatcher over the question of European integration. Howe defended the SEA as a major achievement of the Thatcher government and his time as Foreign Secretary. He argued the SEA and the ERM were the two most important decisions related to the EC during his entire ministerial career.¹²⁰ Howe argued that in order to achieve the Single Market it was essential to overcome a perception of “British negativism”.¹²¹ The final shape of the deal realised many of the goals on which Howe and the Thatcher government had set their sights.¹²² The market was further liberalised and it was agreed that non-tariff barriers would be abolished on the basis of the European Commission’s White Paper. Howe remembered “we were enthusiastic protagonists [of] the Single Market – indeed [it was] our chief campaigning cry – ‘Thatcherism on a European scale’ was one of the catchphrases”.¹²³ The way in which majority voting would later also be used for social legislation illustrated to Howe that being a member of the EC was “as much part of a process as it is an event”.¹²⁴

After the re-election of Thatcher and the Conservative Party in 1983, Nigel Lawson succeeded Geoffrey Howe as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Howe replaced Francis Pym as Foreign Secretary. On 13 November 1985, Howe and Lawson attempted to persuade Thatcher to join the ERM, which she refused both then and again in June 1988.¹²⁵ Lawson said in his memoirs he was unhappy that only foreign ministers but not finance ministers were allowed

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 374.

¹¹⁹ Sic. Ibid., 376.

¹²⁰ Howe, *Conflict of Loyalty*, 448.

¹²¹ Ibid., 408.

¹²² Ibid., 456-7.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 457-8.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 566 ff.; Lawson, *The View from No. 11, Memoirs of a Tory Radical*, 927 ff.

to attend the European Council.¹²⁶ Lawson argued that because he was not there, Thatcher heeded Howe's advice and ignored his (Lawson's) earlier warnings that EMU should not be included at all in the SEA.¹²⁷ Therefore, Lawson believed that EMU had become part of the "constitution" of the EC and was for Thatcher "the genie she had allowed out of the bottle by agreeing to sign the SEA with its commitment to EMU".¹²⁸ Lawson argued that the inclusion of EMU in the preamble of the SEA and the fact that Thatcher agreed at the Hanover summit in 1988 to a study the implementation of EMU showed that "she simply failed to understand what she was about".¹²⁹ The issue of Britain's role in European integration led to the resignation of Lawson in 1989 and Howe in 1990 and contributed to the end of Thatcher's time as Prime Minister. The SEA is an important element in this story because it codified the goal of EMU in the EC treaty structure.

Literature on the history of European integration: the "relaunch"

This research is based in the literature on Thatcher and Britain's policy towards European integration. However, because this research is about the UK in the EC it also intersects with the literature on the history of European integration, from the point of view of European institutions and the entire EC. To draw a strict dividing line between the literature on Britain and that on the history of European integration risks automatically assuming a narrative of exceptionalism, which would perpetuate an "awkward partner" narrative. N. Piers Ludlow's work shows that analysing the British position and the history of European integration conjointly yields fruitful results. According to Ludlow, both Thatcher as well as her European partners were committed to economic liberalisation in the mid-1980s.¹³⁰ Thatcher, however, wanted to liberalise the Single Market as an end in itself, whereas her counterparts in the EC embedded the Single Market in a much more political vision for the

¹²⁶ Ibid., 893.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 893-4.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 893-4, 901-2.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 901-4.

¹³⁰ Ludlow, 'Problematic Partners: De Gaulle, Thatcher and Their Impact', 211; Ludlow, 'More than Just a Single Market', 52.

EC.¹³¹ European leaders were especially concerned with maintaining European integration as a force for peace in the context of the Cold War, given the challenges of conflicts in the Middle East and German reunification, which gave European Political Cooperation both a historical and a political significance.¹³² In the field of political science, Moravcsik, Wallace and Wallace have also shown how one can usefully analyse the workings of the British government alongside the history and dynamics of European integration.¹³³

The history of European integration literature has hitherto seen two waves of interest in the SEA. The first wave empirically looked at what the SEA was, its articles and consequences. This was largely based on media coverage of the European Council, Lord Cockfield's White Paper and the Cecchini report.¹³⁴ This part of the literature serves as an important empirical resource for further research on the SEA because it grappled with fundamental questions about what the SEA was, how the Single Market was established and how the SEA compares to the Maastricht Treaty. This literature can also serve as a useful guide to the thinking in academia and politics of the time. The Dooge Committee was tasked in 1984 with studying how the institutions of the EC could be reformed. De Ruyt's emphasis

¹³¹ Ibid., 50–56.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*; Moravcsik, 'Negotiating the Single European Act'; Helen Wallace, 'At Odds with Europe', *Political Studies* 45, no. 4 (1 September 1997): 677–88, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.00104>; William Wallace and Helen Wallace, 'Strong State or Weak State in Foreign Policy? The Contradictions of Conservative Liberalism, 1979–1987', *Public Administration* 68, no. 1 (1 March 1990): 83–101, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9299.1990.tb00747.x>.

¹³⁴ Paolo Cecchini, Michael Catinat, and Alexis Jacquemin, *The European Challenge: 1992 The Benefits of the Single Market* (Aldershot: Wildwood House, 1988); Michael Calingaert, *The 1992 Challenge from Europe: Development of the European Community's Internal Market* (Washington, D.C.: National Planning Association, 1989); Lord Arthur Cockfield et al., *Is the Single Market Working?* (Brussels: The Philip Morris Institute for Public Policy Research, 1996); Scott Davidson and Juliet Lodge, 'Free Movement of Goods, Workers, Services and Capital', in *The European Community and the Challenge of the Future*, ed. Juliet Lodge (London: Pinter, 1989), 111–28; Juliet Lodge, 'The Single European Act: Towards a New Euro-Dynamism?', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 24, no. 3 (1986): 203–23; Peter Ludlow, 'Beyond 1992, Europe and Its Western Partners' (Brussels, 1989); David G. Mayes, ed., *The Evolution of the Single European Market* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1997); John Pinder, 'The Single Market: A Step towards European Union', in *The European Community and the Challenge of the Future*, ed. Juliet Lodge (London: Pinter, 1989), 94–110; Jean De Ruyt, *L'Acte Unique Européen* (Brussels: Etudes Européennes, 1987); Dennis Swann, ed., *The Single European Market and Beyond: A Study of the Wider Implications of the Single European Act* (London: Routledge, 2002); Wayne Sandholtz and John Zysman, '1992: Recasting the European Bargain', *World Politics* 42, no. 1 (1989): 95–128; Mark Wise and Richard Gibb, *Single Market to Social Europe, the European Community in the 1990s* (Harlow: Longman Scientific & Technical, 1993); Jürgen Schwarze, Ulrich Becker, and Christiana Pollack, eds., *The 1992 Challenge at National Level* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1991); Lord Arthur Cockfield, *The European Union, Creating the Single Market* (Chichester: Wiley, 1994).

on the Dooge Committee being called “Spaak II” goes some way in showing the political importance that the contemporary literature attached to this committee.¹³⁵ This is significant because as chapter one of this dissertation will show, the more recent literature has underestimated the role of the Dooge Committee. Moreover, Lord Cockfield wrote a strong defence of the role of the European Commission in the creation of the Single Market.¹³⁶ The second wave of the literature began to move away from the question of what the SEA was to answering questions such as how it came into being and who played which role. This section of the literature argued that the SEA was part of a “relaunch” of the EC after the years of political and economic stagnation in the 1970s.¹³⁷ The notion that the 1970s were a lost decade in European integration is beginning to be revised with research on European monetary integration, the birth of the European Council and the institutionalisation of high-level summits, such as the Group of Seven (G7).¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Ruyt, *L'Acte Unique Européen*.

¹³⁶ Cockfield, *The European Union, Creating the Single Market*.

¹³⁷ Philip M. Budden, ‘The Making of the Single European Act : The United Kingdom and the European Community, 1979-1986’ (Ph.D., University of Oxford, 1994), <http://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:b17cfe2-9cb6-49d2-9b5d-795811eee8a1>; Philip M. Budden, ‘Observations on the Single European Act and “Relaunch of Europe”: A Less “intergovernmental” Reading of the 1985 Intergovernmental Conference’, *Journal of European Public Policy* 9, no. 1 (1 January 2002): 76–97, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501760110104181>; Paul Taylor, ‘The New Dynamics of EC Integration in the 1980s’, in *The European Community and the Challenge of the Future* (London: Pinter, 1989), 3–25; Eric Bussière, Michel Dumoulin, and Sylvain Schirmann, eds., *Milieux économiques et intégration européenne au XXe siècle : La relance des années quatre-vingt* (Comité pour l’histoire économique et financière, 2008); Antonio Varsori, ‘The Relaunching of Europe in the Mid-1980s’, in *European Integration and the Atlantic Community in the 1980s*, ed. Kiran Klaus Patel and Kenneth Weisbrode (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 226–42; N. Piers Ludlow, ‘European Integration in the 1980s: On the Way to Maastricht?’, *Journal of European Integration History* 19, no. 1 (2013): 11–22, <https://doi.org/10.5771/0947-9511-2013-1-11>; Ludlow, ‘More than Just a Single Market’.

¹³⁸ Ludlow, *Roy Jenkins and the European Commission Presidency, 1976-1980*; Eric Bussière et al., eds., *The European Commission 1973-86: History and Memories of an Institution* (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the EU, 2014), <http://doi.org/10.2792/19118>; Eric Bussière et al., eds., *The European Commission 1986-2000: History and Memories of an Institution* (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the EU, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.2792/814525>; Claudia Hiepel, *Europe in a Globalising World: Global Challenges and European Responses in the ‘Long’ 1970s* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2014); Kiran Klaus Patel, ‘Who Was Saving Whom? The European Community and the Cold War, 1960s–1970s’, *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 19, no. 1 (1 February 2017): 29–47, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1369148116685301>; Emmanuel Mourlon-Druol, ‘“Managing from the Top”: Globalisation and the Rise of Regular Summitry, Mid-1970s–Early 1980s’, *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 23, no. 4 (December 2012): 679–703, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2012.736336>; Mourlon-Druol and Romero, *International Summitry and Global Governance*; Emmanuel Mourlon-Druol, ‘Filling the EEC Leadership Vacuum? The Creation of the European Council in 1974’, *Cold War History* 10, no. 3 (August 2010): 315–39, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14682741003765430>; Mourlon-Druol, Emmanuel, ‘The Victory of the Intergovernmental Method? The Emergence of the European Council in the Community’s Institutional Set-up (1974-77)’, in *The Road Europe Travelled Along: The Evolution of the EEC/EU Institutions and Policies*, ed. Daniela Preda and Daniele Pasquinucci (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2010); Emmanuel Mourlon-Druol, ‘Regional Integration and Global Governance: The Example of the European Council (1974-1986)’, *Les Cahiers Irice* 1, no. 9 (2012): 91–104; Laurent Warloutzet, *Governing Europe in a Globalizing World: Neoliberalism and Its*

The accounts of the SEA in the history of European integration literature can be divided between those, like Green Cowles, Middlemas or Sandholz and Zysmann, who argue that “supranational entrepreneurs” were in the driving seat and others, like Milward and Moravcsik, who argue that the SEA was the outcome of interstate bargaining.¹³⁹ A variant of the first strand of the literature emphasised the role of industry, particularly the European Roundtable of Industrialists, in politically supporting the drive towards a Single Market.¹⁴⁰ Andrew Moravcsik revived the search for a theory that could explain the history of European integration by developing the concept of “liberal intergovernmentalism”,¹⁴¹ which emphasised the role of national governments as rational decision makers, based largely on economic considerations.¹⁴² Moravcsik argued that the SEA ushered in the “most important period of trade liberalization” as well as an era of institutional change for the EC.¹⁴³ The UK government wanted to liberalise the Single Market but had no aspirations of leadership in European integration.¹⁴⁴ The Thatcher government wished to avoid treaty change, weakening the Luxembourg Compromise or giving EC institutions more say but realised the need for

Alternatives Following the 1973 Oil Crisis (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), 70; Ludlow, *The Making of the European Monetary System*; Guido Thieme, ‘Helmut Schmidt Und Die Gründung Des Europäischen Währungssystems 1973-1979’, in *Aufbruch Zum Europa Der Zweiten Generation: Die Europäische Einigung 1969-1984*, ed. Franz Knipping and Matthias Schönwald (Trier: WVT, 2004), 245–68.

¹³⁹ Maria Green-Cowles, ‘Setting the Agenda for a New Europe: The ERT and EC 1992’, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 33, no. 4 (1995): 501–26; Maria Green-Cowles, ‘The European Round Table of Industrialists and the Single Market Programme, From Political to Policy Network’, in *Networks in European multi-level governance: from 1945 to the present*, ed. Michael Gehler, Wolfram Kaiser, and Brigitte Leucht (Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2009), 139–50; Maria Green-Cowles, ‘The Single European Act’, in *The Oxford Handbook of The European Union*, ed. Erik Jones, Anand Menon, and Stephen Weatherill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 107–20; Keith Middlemas, *Orchestrating Europe: The Informal Politics of The European Union 1973-95* (London: Fontana, 1995); Keith Middlemas, ‘The Party, Industry and the City’, in *Conservative Century: The Conservative Party since 1900*, ed. Anthony Seldon and Stuart Ball (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 491–92; Sandholtz and Zysman, ‘1992’; Alan S. Milward, George Brennan, and Federico Romero, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (London: Routledge, 1995); Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*; Moravcsik, ‘Negotiating the Single European Act’.

¹⁴⁰ Middlemas, ‘The Party, Industry and the City’; Middlemas, *Orchestrating Europe*; Green-Cowles, ‘Setting the Agenda for a New Europe: The ERT and EC 1992’; Green-Cowles, ‘The European Round Table of Industrialists and the Single Market Programme, From Political to Policy Network’; Green-Cowles, ‘The Single European Act’.

¹⁴¹ Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*. For a functionalist explanation of European integration, see Ernst B. Haas, *The Uniting of Europe* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1958); Leon N. Lindberg, *The Political Dynamics of European Integration* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1963). For an intergovernmental explanation, see Robert O. Keohane, *The New European Community: Decision making And Institutional Change* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1991); Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, 2nd ed. (Boston, MA: Longman, 1989).

¹⁴² Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, 2–3, 10–3, 19–24, 317 ff.; Moravcsik, ‘Negotiating the Single European Act’.

¹⁴³ Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, 314.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 319–26; Moravcsik, ‘Negotiating the Single European Act’, 31–32.

majority voting to implement the Single Market.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, Moravcsik believed that the British proposals for foreign policy coordination were a response to initiatives by the French and German governments to “relaunch” European integration with the Dooge Committee as well as the German idea to limit the Luxembourg Compromise.¹⁴⁶ More recent scholarship, for instance by Ludlow, Varsori or Warlouzet, argue that a combination of EC and national actors were responsible for achieving the “relaunch” of the 1980s.¹⁴⁷

There is a vast amount of literature on the Cold War.¹⁴⁸ Although often considered separate fields of study, the connections between the scholarship on the Cold War and European integration have begun to be studied.¹⁴⁹ Driven by the recent release of archival material many newer studies focus on the end of the Cold War, the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) and German reunification.¹⁵⁰ Margaret Thatcher’s role in the end of the Cold War as well as her views on German unification have also been examined.¹⁵¹ Poggiolini and Pravda argued that the SEA was a “brief parenthesis of active engagement” but in the light of

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 32; Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, 319–26.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 363; Moravcsik, ‘Negotiating the Single European Act’, 40.

¹⁴⁷ Ludlow, *Roy Jenkins and the European Commission Presidency, 1976-1980*, 247–48; Ludlow, ‘More than Just a Single Market’; Varsori, ‘The Relaunching of Europe in the Mid-1980s’; Warlouzet, *Governing Europe in a Globalizing World*, 180 ff.

¹⁴⁸ See John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War* (London: Penguin, 2011); Melvyn Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007); Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

¹⁴⁹ N. Piers Ludlow, ed. *European Integration and the Cold War: Ostpolitik-Westpolitik, 1965-1973* (London: Routledge, 2007); Kiran Klaus Patel and Kenneth Weisbrode, eds., *European Integration and the Atlantic Community in the 1980s* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

¹⁵⁰ On Britain and Eastern Europe, see the contributions in *Journal of European Integration History* 16, no. 1 (2010): 31–45, <https://doi.org/10.5771/0947-9511-2010-1-31>; Frédéric Bozo et al., eds., *Visions of the End of the Cold War in Europe, 1945-1990* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012); Philipp Gassert, ‘Did Transatlantic Drift Help European Integration? The Euromissiles Crisis, the Strategic Defense Initiative, and the Quest for Political Cooperation’, in *European Integration and the Atlantic Community in the 1980s*, ed. Kiran Klaus Patel and Kenneth Weisbrode (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 154–76; Frédéric Bozo, Andreas Röder, and Mary Elise Sarotte, eds., *German Reunification: A Multilateral History* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017); Bernard Blumenau, Jussi M. Hanhimäki and Barbara Zanchetta, *New Perspectives on the End of the Cold War: Unexpected Transformations?* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018); Ralph L. Dietl, *The Strategic Defense Initiative: Ronald Reagan, NATO Europe, and the Nuclear and Space Talks, 1981–1988* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2018).

¹⁵¹ See Richard Vinen, ‘Thatcherism and the Cold War,’ in *Making Thatcher’s Britain*, ed. Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 199–217; Ilaria Poggiolini, ‘Thatcher’s Double-Track Road to the End of the Cold War: The Irreconcilability of Liberalization and Preservation,’ in *Visions of the End of the Cold War in Europe, 1945-1990*, ed. Frédéric Bozo et al. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 266–79; Detlev Mares, ‘Margaret Thatcher and German Reunification,’ (Paper presented at ‘Awkward Relations? Britain and Germany in Europe since the Second World War’, Magdalene College, Cambridge University, 2016); Archie Brown, *The Human Factor: Gorbachev, Reagan, and Thatcher and the End of the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

Thatcher's Bruges speech it exposed the "basic failure of the British Europeanists to promote a fresh start".¹⁵² Maria Eleonora Guasconi has linked the SEA with the end of the Cold War.¹⁵³ She argued that once the SEA was agreed, Gorbachev began to worry about being excluded by a "fortress Europe" and expressed an interest in establishing closer economic links between the USSR and the EC. Thatcher is only mentioned in passing because she met Gorbachev in 1984 and was in favour of the Single Market. Guasconi focused her account on the EPC aspect of the SEA and looked at how this changed Gorbachev's thinking. However, in her account of how the SEA came about she emphasised the Single Market and argued that the SEA "was not originally designed to deal with foreign policy issues".¹⁵⁴ My research on the British policy making towards the SEA shows that for Margaret Thatcher in particular, foreign policy issues played a role from the start in the shaping of the SEA.

In summary, the scholars and commentators working on the UK in the EC looked at the role of the UK in becoming and staying a member of the EC, whereas those focusing on the history of European integration analysed the emergence of the ECSC/EEC/EC/EU as a political construct. The SEA has been portrayed by the literature on the UK in the EC as an act to liberalise the Single Market. For instance, Ludlow argued that whichever view one takes on Thatcher's position in the negotiations towards the SEA, it was "beyond dispute" that Thatcher was in favour of creating the Single Market.¹⁵⁵ To Ludlow, an answer to the question of what legacy Thatcher left in regards to the European integration project should thus focus on the SEA.¹⁵⁶ Implicitly or explicitly, the Single Market has therefore become the dominant feature in most explanations of the SEA. Most of the literature argued that Margaret Thatcher started her political career with mildly pro-European views and once in power

¹⁵² Ilaria Poggiolini and Alex Pravda, 'Britain in Europe in the 1980s: East & West. Introduction,' *Journal of European Integration History* 16, no. 1 (2010): 7–17, <https://doi.org/10.5771/0947-9511-2010-1-7>.

¹⁵³ Maria Eleonora Guasconi, 'The Single European Act, European Political Cooperation, and the End of the Cold War,' in *New Perspectives on the End of the Cold War: Unexpected Transformations?*, ed. Bernhard Blumenau, Jussi M. Hanhimäki, and Barbara Zanchetta (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 187–200.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 189.

¹⁵⁵ Ludlow, 'Problematic Partners: De Gaulle, Thatcher and Their Impact', 211.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 214.

became progressively more critical of the direction in which European integration was heading. A question that has often been asked is how she could agree to the SEA in 1985, sign it in 1986, but then turn to criticising both the SEA and European integration in its entirety from 1988.

The existing literature explained the mismatch between Thatcher's rhetoric and her actions in two ways. One explanation argues that it had been a mistake to agree to the SEA and wonders whether or not Thatcher was "tricked". The second school of thought highlighted the advantages of the SEA and argued that it had been a diplomatic success for Thatcher. One thing all accounts of the SEA have in common is that, while they situate the act as an important milestone, they do not examine in detail how the UK government engaged in the negotiations that brought this act about. By analysing the diplomacy and decision making of the UK government towards the SEA, my research will contribute to a fuller understanding of Britain's role in the EC in the 1980s and Thatcher's views on the subject of European integration. Analysing Thatcher's thinking and her policies during the mid-1980s will help to understand how she transitioned from being a supporter of the EC during the 1975 referendum to criticising it after 1988. It is on the question of Thatcher's views on the EC, her role in European policy making, and the diplomacy of the UK towards the EC that this dissertation can add a puzzle piece that has hitherto been missing.

[Contribution to the literature, methods and sources](#)

This Ph.D. dissertation offers a thorough assessment of the evolution of British policy towards the negotiation of the Single European Act. Delving deeply into British archival sources has made it possible to assess the interactions between Whitehall departments, particularly the FCO and central government in devising policies towards the SEA. An examination of French and German diplomatic sources has enabled an assessment of the progress of British diplomacy that analyses how British leaders dealt with their European counterparts and to an extent learns how this was received. Therefore, my

dissertation is an addition to literature that seeks to explain Britain's historical relationship with the EC. This research helps to fill a gap in this literature by looking at the detailed policy formation process of the British government towards the SEA. Moreover, my research offers a new element in the story of how Margaret Thatcher's attitudes towards European integration evolved. By analysing newly declassified archival sources, my research offers a detailed study on the contribution and role of the UK government towards the SEA. Consulting French and German sources has enriched my reading of the UK sources, given me some appreciation of their own policy and diplomacy, and given me a wider canvas upon which to assess Britain's policy making and diplomacy towards the SEA.

This research is a multi-archival and multilingual historical research of high-level diplomatic meetings between heads of governments, ministers and diplomats which aims to find out how the UK government engaged in the negotiations towards the SEA. Methodologically, the approach is based on a tried and tested method of conducting a historical analysis based on archival sources, with the aim of reconstructing events as a historical narrative.¹⁵⁷ In Peter Hennessy's words, this research attempts to "distil the frenzy".¹⁵⁸ By doing so, this research reconstructs events without the benefit of hindsight by looking at how these events appeared to people experiencing them at the time. My research has relied on memos and correspondence to trace debates, decisions and analyse the making of policy. My narrow focus on the British policy towards the SEA in 1984-5 gave me an opportunity to comb through the archival sources and produce a detailed account of events. This research has benefitted from the thorough documenting and archiving system of the British civil service and the accurate cataloguing at the UK National Archives. Moreover, Thatcher's style of communicating suited my methodology. By all accounts, Thatcher was a voracious reader of memos in the red boxes, which were annotated, underlined and sent back

¹⁵⁷ See Richard J. Evans, *In Defense of History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 2000); E. H. Carr, *What Is History?*, 3rd ed. (London: Palgrave, 2001); G. R. Elton, *The Practice of History* (London: Fontana, 1967).

¹⁵⁸ Peter Hennessy, *Distilling the Frenzy: Writing the History of One's Own Times* (London: Biteback, 2012).

to her private secretaries to communicate her decisions or views to Whitehall. According to Charles Moore, Thatcher “enjoyed political gossip, but it was the paper, rather than plotting on the sofa or discussion in Cabinet, which she saw as her primary means of governing”.¹⁵⁹

The multi-archival but very detailed focus meant that I chose to restrict the focus of my research on a narrow time frame: the timeline begins with the Dooge Committee in 1984, where many of the ideas for the SEA were gathered, and ends with the European Council in December 1985, where the political agreement for the SEA was reached. Many of the ideas that fed into the SEA could have been traced back further and many of the consequences of the SEA lasted well beyond the timeframe of this study. However, the focus here lies entirely on the negotiations that led to the SEA and how the UK government interacted therein. The question of ratification, how the text was put into legal language, the different side-statements that were added later and the implementation of the SEA lie outside the scope of my research. Equally, this research is not an enquiry into what the parliamentary party, grassroots movements, transnational actors or pressure groups made of the SEA. Neither is this dissertation a study about how the EC institutions worked, how EC laws, mechanisms and policies came into existence, or how votes were or were not been taken. By the end of 1985, the third enlargement negotiations of the EC were concluded and would result in the accession of Spain and Portugal in 1986. The workings and history of European Political Cooperation are also outside the scope of this study, which was formalised by the SEA but was in 1984-5 already a fully functioning informal framework.

N. Piers Ludlow has pioneered a multi-archival approach in the writing of the history of Britain and European integration. A particularly important trailblazer in the field is his monograph *Dealing with Britain* in which he drew on archives from five countries and the EU to retrace the first application of Britain to the EEC, from 1961 to 1963.¹⁶⁰ In his account

¹⁵⁹ Moore, *Margaret Thatcher*, 2019, xiv.

¹⁶⁰ Ludlow, *Dealing with Britain*.

Ludlow went beyond the established focus in the literature on why the UK decided to join in the first place to analysing how the UK government fared in the application negotiations.¹⁶¹ Ludlow's work contributed to a body of literature that looked at the first two application negotiations for Britain to join the EEC/EC.¹⁶² For this research I have borrowed aspects of this methodology but I have also adapted them for the purpose of my own research. My research is not a comparison of how different delegations saw each other and negotiated with each other. However, studying how the UK government engaged in a series of negotiations allows my research to set UK policy within an international framework. By looking at archives in the UK, Germany and France, I have triangulated the recently declassified UK sources with the documents I have found in other archives. In bilateral and multilateral meetings not everyone keeps records all the time. By drawing on government archives in three different countries, more sources, accounts and thoughts could be included in the historical narrative. Therefore, the first benefit of the multi-archival approach is to put this research onto a more solid footing of primary sources. The second benefit of looking at sources from different government archives is that it gives a perception of how Thatcher's position towards the SEA was seen by her French and German counterparts. The different perspectives have hopefully added a new dimension and a degree of colour to my account.

The multi-archival approach complemented and enriched my reading of British sources. Moreover, it gives the reader a feeling for how the French and German negotiating positions towards the SEA and towards Britain evolved, which enabled this dissertation to put Britain's policy into a fuller European context. However, the records of France and Germany which I have consulted are more fragmentary than the British sources. The German archives were more accessible, whereas the French National Archives gave me only very narrowly focused *extraits* of a small number of files from the Mitterrand papers. To see these

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² See Parr, *Britain's Policy towards the European Community*; Ellison, 'Accepting the Inevitable: Britain and European Integration'; Melissa Pine, *Harold Wilson and Europe: Pursuing Britain's Membership of the European Community* (I.B. Tauris, 2007).

documents, I had to apply for a *dérogation*, which is an approval from the French Ministry of Culture. Therefore, it was not possible to reconstruct the French and German thread of policy making in the same way as I have done for Britain using the National Archives. This dissertation has taken French and German *prises de positions* to glean core elements of French and German negotiation stances, which helped to assess the central question of how effective UK diplomacy was. The point of consulting these sources was to cross-check the British sources and to gain some understanding of the French and German positions in these negotiations. The views of French and German governments in certain crucial meetings, especially the German point of view in the meeting between Kohl and Thatcher in May 1985, were very important to develop a more rounded account of events.

Richard Evans suggested that conducting historical research was like trying to do a jigsaw puzzle where the different pieces were strewn all around the house.¹⁶³ The pieces for my jigsaw puzzle were scattered all around Western Europe. In terms of access to the sources, the mid 1980s are interesting because of the novelty of the newly declassified primary sources.¹⁶⁴ My main focus was to analyse the records at the UK National Archives in Kew. My second most important repository of sources were the *Bundesarchiv* in Koblenz and the *Politische Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts* in Berlin. I was also permitted to consult selected extracts of the Mitterrand papers at the *Archives Nationales* in Paris and the *Centre des Archives Diplomatiques du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères* in Nantes. Furthermore, I consulted the Thatcher Papers at the Churchill Archives Centre in Cambridge, which provided valuable background knowledge on Thatcher's private correspondence. The Margaret Thatcher Foundation hosts a website with a treasure trove of digitised records, which have been particularly useful to find specific documents from either the Prime Ministerial files or

¹⁶³ Evans, *In Defense of History*, 89.

¹⁶⁴ In the UK National Archives, 30 years was the time frame after which sources were normally declassified. Since 2013, a 20-year rule is being implemented. The National archives are currently in a transition phase between these two rules and are releasing files from the second half of the 1980s and the early 1990s, at a rate of two years' worth of material per annum. See National Archives, '20-Year Rule', *The National Archives* (blog), accessed 12 February 2016, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/our-role/plans-policies-performance-and-projects/our-projects/20-year-rule/>.

the Thatcher papers. The Delors papers at the Historical Archive of the European Union in Florence gave me a window into the correspondence and views of Jacques Delors. The Conservative Party Archive in Oxford provided me with an impression of the perspectives of the various legislative actors involved. The Confederation of British Industry Archive in Warwick holds records on its correspondence with other trade associations in the EC as well as with the European Round Table of Industrialists. The last four repositories of sources as well as the records from Oral History projects served this research in providing background information, which provided context rather than material with which to directly trace the evolution of government policy.

My evidence gathering at the archives always began with a conversation with the archivist and a thorough look at the catalogue. To learn “how archives worked” I attended a seminar on the structure of the different repositories at the UK National Archives. I found it especially useful to learn about the shift from the paper-based chronological catalogue to the digital database. The paper-based catalogue goes up to the late 1970s. With the records of the 1980s, the catalogue became exclusively an online catalogue.¹⁶⁵ In the background of this online database is a catalogue structure that is similar to the paper catalogue in the sense that it is structured numerically, chronologically, has a description and a former reference. It can be searched by key word (from title and description), departmental reference or by record creator. In order to better understand how the online catalogue is almost a mirror image of the paper-based version, it was important to browse through the paper records first. Moreover, I not only learned how the catalogue was structured but also how documents were classified,

¹⁶⁵ The UK National Archives discontinued printing the paper catalogue from 31 March 2011. The last PREM record on the paper catalogue is PREM19/385, 16 January 1980. The online “discovery” catalogue replaced the various online and offline records and by August 2018 contained 32 million records. See The National Archives, ‘The National Archives - “Your Catalogue’s Rubbish!”’, *The National Archives Blog* (blog), 3 August 2018, accessed 21 June 2019, <https://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/your-catalogues-rubbish/>; Jonathan Cates, ‘Discovery: Developing a National Archives’ Catalogue’, accessed 21 June 2019, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2016/01/Discovery-Copenhagen-Paper-Jonathan-Cates-2.pdf>.

the seven levels of records and the principles that guided the classification of archival records.¹⁶⁶

To begin with, I looked through the catalogue and the archival sources in a linear and systematic way. In this process I examined every Prime Ministerial file (PREM) that was classified in the archives as being on “European policy”, dating from 1983 to 1986. This approach was intended to give me an overview of the issues that went across the Prime Minister’s desk in and around the time of my research. This overview would later serve as a *fil rouge* on the importance of topics and departments to my analysis. Inherent in this approach is an assumption of top-down decision making in government. From this analysis I learned that if I wanted to understand how the SEA came about, I had to focus on 1985, especially on the time from when the Dooge report was finished in spring 1985 to when the IGC was concluded in December 1985. I then followed the same approach with an analysis of the FCO records in which I analysed in depth every box in the FCO records on the “European Community” which mentions the “Intergovernmental Conference”. This process was recorded in copious manual notes, photographs and indexed with keywords.

In the second stage of gathering data at the UK National Archives I wanted to make use of the new functions that the *Discovery* database offers. As opposed to the linearity of the first approach, the key-word search of the catalogue looked at the same files but systematically searched for key words in the title or the description of a file. The process was informed by the approach of systematic literature reviews used in business and medical studies but also the search functions of databases in general. Since these search functions have been incorporated into the catalogue of the UK National Archives, I felt that I had to harness the power of electronic databases. The problem with search functions in databases is that one

¹⁶⁶ The seven levels of records are “department, division, series, subseries, sub-subseries, piece, item”. The principles that guide the cataloguing are “accuracy, understandability, simplicity, reasonable consistency, correct use of the template”. The National Archives, ‘Cataloguing Paper Records: Guidance for Government Departments’, 2017, 7, 10–11, <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/cataloguing-guidance.pdf>.

only gets useful results if one asks the right question. The beauty of searching systematically with key words is that it can be repeated and is verifiable.¹⁶⁷ My approach attempted to whittle down broad areas of interest, which would have produced thousands of largely meaningless results, into specific key words that produced specific results. Based on the previous linear search approach I made a list of the key words that were most relevant in my reading through PREM and FCO files.¹⁶⁸ Subsequently, I had to formulate this list of key words in a way that the database search function could use to perform a search with meaningful results. To do so I had to add key words and punctuations in order to build a formula for each search of the catalogue. The process is laid out in detail in Appendix Two. The result was a set of targeted lists of sources that corresponded to the key words I was looking for.

The results of this systematic search through the *Discovery* catalogue were useful sets of references that were relevant for each particular topic of my research and served to cross-check the findings of my linear search through the primary sources. In the evaluation stage of my research, I systematically worked through the documents identified in the search process and read through the files in order to learn about the course of policy, decision makers' opinions and identify important documents. This process was recorded in handwritten notes, which I classified by folder and indexed with key words. This structure was mirrored digitally on my computer and on the cloud platform Microsoft OneDrive.¹⁶⁹ Therefore, when I started writing I could draw on a set of indexed and searchable key words as well as handwritten notes. Before I began writing a chapter, I always looked through all my indexes and drew up a list of notes as well as digital files that addressed the issue I was going to write about. Then I read through my notes of the relevant files and selected the files that were most relevant to this particular topic. Using this process, I began to systematically look

¹⁶⁷ See Appendix Two for a more detailed explanation of the systematic catalogue search.

¹⁶⁸ See Appendix Two for list of key words.

¹⁶⁹ As per 3 February 2020, I have accumulated 33,598 files in my archival research.

through my pictures of sources in order to re-read the original documents. This process was again accompanied by taking notes, which in effect was a hybrid process of synthesising sources further and beginning the process of creating a narrative of events that was reconstructed from the sources I have analysed.

On a theoretical note, my research fundamentally but rather loosely followed, like so many other historians before me, the urging of Leopold von Ranke to write history in an objective manner and to avoid doing so with hindsight.¹⁷⁰ Ranke's views have been famously criticised by E. H. Carr, who argued that "the facts speak only when the historian calls on them".¹⁷¹ Carr argued that there was an inherent bias in the writing of history and the selection of facts, which together with concerns of present times and the identity of the author influenced the way history was written.¹⁷² G. R. Elton countered Carr's views by arguing that even though the historian "cannot invent his experiment" a "historical truth" still existed independently of the researcher.¹⁷³ Therefore, history was not an experiment that could be designed and repeated.¹⁷⁴ Elton saw history as "an unending search for truth".¹⁷⁵ Elton acknowledged, however, that even the most rigorous survey of sources cannot hide the fact that it is a selection of sources and that such sources have to exist to denote facts in the first place.¹⁷⁶ Richard Evans argued that what Elton missed was the aspect that sources can be approached from different perspectives.¹⁷⁷ I have approached the archival sources as windows into the past and tried to understand how decision makers saw events at the time, without the benefit of hindsight.

¹⁷⁰ Ernst Schulin, 'Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886)', in *Europa-Historiker, Ein Biographisches Handbuch*, ed. Heinz Durchhardt et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 129–51.

¹⁷¹ Carr, *What Is History?*, 4.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ Elton, *The Practice of History*, 71–78.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 72–73.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 70, 84.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 78–87.

¹⁷⁷ Evans, *In Defense of History*, 84.

In summary, my contribution to the literature lies in surveying recently declassified primary sources from the National Archives, in triangulating the results with a selection of German and French primary sources, and in writing a historical narrative of how the UK government interacted with the other EC countries in the negotiations towards the SEA. In its approach this study lies in the tradition of the literature that looks at the British position and policy making towards the EC. My Ph.D. dissertation contributes to this literature with a study of British policy making towards the SEA and fills a gap in the literature on the UK and the EC by analysing newly released archival sources, from multiple archives and in multiple languages. My work also interacts with the biographical literature on Thatcher and has been informed by the literature on this history of European integration. The primary sources for this dissertation were drawn from the Prime Ministerial and FCO records at the UK National Archives. The records of other departments were consulted when the evidence showed that they were involved or had anything to say about the SEA negotiations, such as for instance in Whitehall consultations. The Oral History archives added colour and context. I have drawn on multiple archival sources to interpret British policy and diplomacy in the context of French and German policies as well as to broaden my source base with accounts from different perspectives.

Structure

The structure of this Ph.D. dissertation is chronological. Chapter one begins by tracing the legacy of the British Budget Question (BBQ) in 1984, and with an explanation of the institutions that shape European policy and diplomacy in the UK government. This chapter then analyses how a policy document entitled “Europe – the Future” was written, and argues that it was a way of taking part in a larger debate between EC governments about how to develop the EC. This paper outlined the UK government’s aim to formalise the hitherto informal process of PoCo and advocated extending the Single Market. The paper served as an opening position for the British government in the Dooge Committee that discussed how to reform the institutions of the EC. This chapter also argues that the importance of the Dooge

Committee in the making of the SEA has been underappreciated by the literature. The Dooge Committee served as an important forum where ideas could be shared, and preliminary compromises could be worked out. This was important because the compromises reached in the Dooge Committee prepared the ground for future discussions in the IGC.

The second chapter focuses on an Anglo-German summit, on 18 May 1985, because this bilateral relationship played a crucial role and showed how differently Margaret Thatcher and Helmut Kohl perceived European integration in 1985. Thatcher's encounter with Kohl was the only bilateral meeting with another head of government which she attended to prepare for the Milan European Council on 28-9 June 1985. This chapter argues that the formalisation of PoCo became Thatcher's accepted policy aim to develop the EC in a more intergovernmental direction. Subsequently, this chapter analyses on the basis of three different first-hand accounts how Thatcher and Kohl met and how their conceptions of European integration differed. The chapter argues that winning Kohl's backing for Thatcher's PoCo paper was an important step in her strategy to lead the EC into the formalisation of PoCo within an intergovernmental agreement that would be outside the treaty structure of the EC. Thatcher planned to win Kohl's support for the PoCo paper and to present it personally as a high-level initiative to the European Council. Except for seeking Kohl's backing, and informing Mitterrand, no other consultations were held. The involvement of officials was kept to a minimum. This chapter argues that Thatcher was unsuccessful in convincing Kohl to support her paper in the European Council because of the differences in outlook and views on European integration between the two leaders.

The third chapter explains why the Milan European Council, on 28-9 June 1985, was an important turning point for Thatcher's European policy making and for the entire EC. This chapter traces the progress of Thatcher's initiative to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo in the preparations for the European Council in Milan. Firstly, in a short meeting with François Mitterrand, both Thatcher and Mitterrand declared themselves against holding an

IGC to change the EEC treaty. Mitterrand and Kohl's reluctance to hold an IGC seemed to strengthen Thatcher's position in suggesting an intergovernmental agreement outside the EEC structure. Secondly, Geoffrey Howe presented the PoCo paper to his fellow foreign ministers but said that it was a personal initiative that Thatcher wanted to present herself to the European Council, which meant that officials were not allowed to discuss it until then. Thatcher's PoCo proposal failed to receive the backing from her fellow heads of government because Kohl and Mitterrand jointly introduced a paper as a counter-proposal, which adopted Thatcher's PoCo proposals but was designed to amend the EEC treaty and was to be given the title "Treaty of European Union". This chapter argues that the meeting of foreign ministers was a missed opportunity to gain multilateral support for the PoCo initiative. Moreover, the Milan European Council was a watershed in the way in which Thatcher approached European integration. The moment when Thatcher was outvoted in the Milan European Council on whether or not to hold an IGC represented the end of her ambition to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo and the beginning of the UK government's cautious and more reactive engagement in the IGC.

Chapter four analyses how the British position in the IGC evolved. The detailed bargaining for the SEA happened in the IGC and was finalised in the European Council. After Thatcher's attempt to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo failed, the question was how her government would engage in a conference that she had explicitly not wanted. This chapter traces how Thatcher allowed Geoffrey Howe and the FCO officials to negotiate in the IGC but how she withheld her commitment in principle until the outcome of the IGC had become clear. Howe devised a negotiation strategy that aimed to take part in the ongoing discussions without presenting any new proposals, which he called a "questioning approach". This chapter analyses how Howe's approach contributed to bringing the IGC to a successful conclusion, how Thatcher had to abandon her plans for an intergovernmental agreement outside the EC treaty structure and consented to changing the EEC treaty. Thatcher agreed at the Luxembourg European Council, on 2-3 December 1985, to embed the SEA into the EC

treaty structure, which meant that the SEA would amend the EEC treaty. Thatcher assented to changing the EEC treaty because the content of her PoCo proposals were included and the Single Market would be created. On the question of monetary integration, Nigel Lawson departed in ECOFIN from Howe's "questioning approach" and advocated that all mention of EMU should stay outside the SEA. This chapter argues that Howe and Lawson differed on the presentation of policy rather than its content. Lawson's more confrontational style, coupled with backing from Delors and the French government, contributed to galvanising support for EMU in the IGC, which resulted in a commitment to the issue in the preamble of the SEA. Once the SEA was agreed, the focus of the British government in presentational terms shifted from emphasising foreign policy to highlighting the benefit of an enlarged Single Market.

The Conclusion argues that the SEA was a watershed for Thatcher and for the UK's relationship with the EC. Margaret Thatcher proposed to lead the EC into an intergovernmental agreement that codified the hitherto informal practices of PoCo. By doing so, Thatcher took part in the discussions of how to shape the future of the EC. After the BBQ was resolved, Thatcher presented an intergovernmental agreement as alternative to other plans that were being discussed at the time, such as the "Draft Treaty on European Union" of the European Parliament. Thatcher did not present a vision but presented a proposal that aligned with her views of a more intergovernmental way of European cooperation, while at the same time respecting the status quo of the existing EC in a genuine attempt to shape the future of the entire EC. In this process Thatcher showed her willingness to lead the EC, in cooperation with France and Germany, into the codification of PoCo, which the conclusion describes as her European moment. Thatcher's paper did not become the intergovernmental agreement she had envisaged. When instead an IGC was convened, Thatcher permitted the FCO to engage in exploratory negotiations. Her original PoCo proposals and a commitment to extend the Single Market were included in the SEA, which were all in Thatcher's interest. However, the act also significantly broadened the remit of the EC, which Thatcher had tried to either limit or avoid. Based on the archival sources analysed for this dissertation, the conclusion argues that it

would be too simplistic to portray Thatcher's legacy in European integration as one of a sceptic, a disbeliever, or an anti-European, as parts of the literature have done. After the ratification of the SEA, Thatcher reformulated her views of a more intergovernmental EC in her landmark speech at the College of Bruges. This speech and the SEA are part of Thatcher's contradictory legacy that the UK government has been grappling with ever since.

Chapter 1. Dooge Committee: “madcap schemes” of “European Union”?

The literature on the history of European integration characterises the 1980s as a time when the European Community (EC) experienced a “relaunch” of the process of European integration. An important milestone was the Genscher-Colombo report of 1981, in which the foreign ministers from Germany and Italy advocated closer political and security ties in the EC.¹⁷⁸ In 1983 the European Council approved a “Solemn Declaration of European Unity”.¹⁷⁹ In February 1984 the European Parliament endorsed a “Draft Treaty on European Union”, sometimes also called the “Spinelli Treaty”, after the MEP and veteran federalist Altiero Spinelli.¹⁸⁰ At the European Council in Fontainebleau, on 25-6 June 1984, two Committees were set up to study the social aspects of the EC (Adonnino Committee) and the institutional aspects of the community (Dooge Committee).¹⁸¹ Firstly, this chapter intends to explain the legacy of the British Budget Question (BBQ). Secondly, it will examine a policy paper of the UK government, entitled “Europe – the Future”, which was an important moment when the British government set out proposals on how to resolve the problem of reform of the EC following the BBQ. Thirdly, this chapter considers the institutional structures through which the UK government and Whitehall managed their policy making towards the EC. Fourthly, this chapter analyses the policy making of the UK government in relation to the Dooge Committee. The Dooge Committee was so important because many of the issues that were discussed in this committee came to form part of the IGC in autumn of 1985. The Dooge Committee consisted of eleven “personal representatives”, each with a mandate from a head

¹⁷⁸ Cuccia, ‘The Genscher-Colombo Plan’; Weiler, ‘The Genscher-Colombo Draft European Act’; Lappenküper, ‘Die Deutsche Europapolitik Zwischen Der „Genscher-Colombo-Initiative“ und Der Verabschiedung Der Einheitlichen Europäischen Akte (1981–1986)’.

¹⁷⁹ European Council, ‘Solemn Declaration on European Union’, *Bulletin of the European Communities* no. 6/1983 (1983): 24-29, <http://aei.pitt.edu/1788/>; European Council, ‘The European Council, Stuttgart, 17-19 June 1983’, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, no. 6/1983 (1983), <http://aei.pitt.edu/1396/>.

¹⁸⁰ ‘Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union’, *Journal of the European Communities*, no C77/33 (14 February 1984), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1575022904069&uri=OJ:JOC_1984_077_R_0022_01.

¹⁸¹ The Dooge Committee was officially called “Ad Hoc Committee on Institutional Affairs” and the Adonnino Committee was called “Ad Hoc Committee on a People’s Europe” but both soon became to be known by the names of their chairmen.

of government, and also included a representative of the European Commission. The remit was broad in the sense that it was focused on “institutional” questions and was only limited by the knowledge that the Adonnino Committee was meeting at the same time to discuss how the EC could be made more relevant to ordinary citizens. However, the latter was more technical, largely comprised of civil servants, and had practically no direct effect on the IGC. The broad themes of the debate in the Dooge Committee revolved mainly around the Single Market, foreign policy cooperation and the question how to make decision making more effective, through more majority voting and by limiting the Luxembourg Compromise.

This chapter argues that the Dooge Committee was much more important than the existing literature assumes. The Dooge Committee was significant because it charted the possibilities for a compromise on how to reform the EC and prepared a list of measures as to how this could be done, many of which would be discussed during the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) in the second half of 1985. The final report of the Dooge Committee suggested that an IGC should be called, which was the process set out by the EEC treaty of 1957 to negotiate changing the provisions in that treaty. The issue of changing the EEC treaty encapsulated two different ways of developing the EC; either through formal treaty change, by holding an IGC, or increase cooperation outside the existing EC treaty framework. Two stages can be defined in the work of the Dooge Committee. In the first stage, visionary but vague proposals clashed with suggestions that were more specific and limited in their scope. During the second stage, delegates wrote a compromise report, which would serve as a useful base for the discussions in the IGC, during the second half of 1985. The Dooge Committee was therefore an important discussion forum that prepared the ground for the IGC, defined topics for possible treaty change and negotiated areas of potential compromise. In the Dooge Committee the UK advocated specific areas of cooperation, namely extending the Single Market on the basis of the existing EEC treaty and formalising foreign policy coordination (PoCo) outside the EEC treaty. More broadly, the position of the UK government was also

affected by the legacy of the BBQ, a conflict in which Thatcher had fought for five years to secure a rebate on the UK contributions to the budget of the EC.

The literature has not yet sufficiently recognised the importance of the Dooge Committee in the process of making the SEA. There is a clear dividing line between the literature from the 1980s, which devoted more attention to the Dooge Committee and the more recent literature, where the Dooge Committee was only mentioned in passing. I therefore agree with Philip Budden that the literature has undervalued the role of the Dooge Committee.¹⁸² Much of the literature began the story of the SEA with a White Paper, in which the European commission outlined a series of measures to abolish non-tariff barriers to trade, and presented the Dooge Committee briefly as a deliberative body that happened earlier on the timeline.¹⁸³ In the earlier literature, Budden and Jean de Ruyt argued, the Dooge Committee was meant to follow in the footsteps of the Spaak Committee but was more vague, both in its original remit and in its recommendations.¹⁸⁴ Andrew Moravcsik and Anthony Teasdale argued that the Dooge Committee was a deliberative body where representatives of governments met and in Moravcsik's words, merely "agreed to disagree".¹⁸⁵ The British position in the Dooge Committee has largely been portrayed as cautious interaction, with a healthy dose of scepticism towards essentially continental ideas.¹⁸⁶ John Young argued that the Dooge Committee "appeared like an attempt to frighten Thatcher", Stephen George believed that the British and French representatives "frequently clashed", whereas Hugo

¹⁸² Budden, 'The Making of the Single European Act', 203–4.

¹⁸³ Crowson, *Britain and Europe*; Crowson, *The Conservative Party and European Integration Since 1945*, 50–53; George, *An Awkward Partner*, 177–79, 183; Gifford, *The Making of Eurosceptic Britain*, 71–73, 93–96; Gilbert, *Surpassing Realism*, 173–74; Green-Cowles, 'Setting the Agenda for a New Europe: The ERT and EC 1992'; Green-Cowles, 'The Single European Act'; Greenwood, *Britain and European Cooperation Since 1945*, 113; Moravcsik, 'Negotiating the Single European Act'; Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, 331, 360–63; Urwin, *The Community of Europe*, 226–27; Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 44, 50; Young, *Britain and European Unity, 1945-1999*, 137, 140; Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 331.

¹⁸⁴ Budden, 'The Making of the Single European Act', 193 ff.; De Ruyt, *L'Acte Unique Europeen*, 51–57.

¹⁸⁵ Moravcsik, 'Negotiating the Single European Act'; Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, 361; Teasdale, 'The Life and Death of the Luxembourg Compromise'.

¹⁸⁶ Wall, *The Official History of Britain and the European Community, Volume III*, 292–97; Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 44, 50; Moore, *Margaret Thatcher*, 2015, 394–95; Gifford, *The Making of Eurosceptic Britain*, 71, 93; Gilbert, *Surpassing Realism*, 173–74; Young, *Britain and European Unity, 1945-1999*, 137, 140; Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, 331, 360–63; Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 331; Greenwood, *Britain and European Cooperation Since 1945*, 113; George, *An Awkward Partner*, 177–79, 183.

Young suggested that the policies discussed in the Dooge Committee were “congenial to the European Thatcher”.¹⁸⁷ De Ruyt argued that the footnotes of the report of the Dooge Committee revealed how Denmark, Greece and to a lesser extent the UK, were “manifestly ‘marginalised’”.¹⁸⁸

The limitation of these accounts is that they have underestimated the constructive role that the UK government played by proactively engaging in the Dooge Committee, by proposing policies and searching for a solution that would work for the whole of the EC. My analysis of primary sources of the British policy making towards the SEA shows that the Dooge Committee played an important role in laying the groundwork for the IGC, where the SEA was negotiated. The topics that were discussed in the Dooge Committee reappeared again at the IGC in the second half of 1985, which will be discussed in chapter four. The list of topics that were discussed in the IGC and the opening position of each country in the IGC negotiations was very similar to the discussions in the Dooge Committee. However, despite recognising the importance of the Dooge Committee, Rifkind did not succeed in convincing the other delegates of the British view, which argued that the EC could be reformed without the need for any changes to the EEC treaty. Because Thatcher had pronounced herself against changing the EEC treaty, the question of whether or not the founding treaty of the EEC should be changed was going to become an important point of contention for the entire year of 1985.

1. 1. From the “Bloody British Question” to “Europe – the Future”

Between 1979 and 1984 all proposals to reform the EC were overshadowed by the BBQ, which was a dispute between the UK and the rest of the EC about whether or not the UK was contributing its fair share to the EC budget.¹⁸⁹ The dispute was rooted in the way

¹⁸⁷ George, *An Awkward Partner*, 183; Young, *Britain and European Unity, 1945-1999*, 137; Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 331.

¹⁸⁸ “manifestement ‘marginalisés’” (my translation) Ruyt, *L’Acte Unique Europeen*, 54.

¹⁸⁹ Historical Archives of the European Union, Helen Wallace Papers, Box HW-14. “Britain and the European Community: The Budget Problem” (Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 27/09/82); N. Piers Ludlow, ‘A Double-Edged Victory, Fontainebleau and the Resolution of the British Budgetary Problem, 1983-4’ (Paper presented at

contributions to the EC were calculated, and how the Common Agricultural Policy was financed, which disadvantaged the UK on the basis of its imports – especially of agricultural produce – from countries outside the EEC.¹⁹⁰ The dispute pitted Thatcher’s insistence on receiving “my money” against the EC’s concept of “own resources”, by which money once given to the EC was no longer a contribution of an individual country but belonged to the EC.¹⁹¹ Roy Jenkins, president of the European Commission from 1977 to 1981, was so frustrated by the dispute that he referred to this debate as the “bloody British question”.¹⁹² Jenkins remembers how “not only I but the whole Community was rarely allowed to think about anything else during this period”.¹⁹³ N. Piers Ludlow argues that the BBQ in effect “had come to block any real prospect of wider Community advance” and resolving the issue was “a vital pre-condition for the surge forward in the European integration process that would ensue over the 1985-1992 period”.¹⁹⁴ In the history of the UK policy towards the SEA, this dispute is important because to Britain’s partners in the EC the conflict represented five years in which too much time was wasted talking about Margaret Thatcher’s money and left a series of pent-up desires to tackle reforms of the EC. Whilst the BBQ itself lies outside the scope of this dissertation, it forms an important backdrop to the history of the British policy making towards the SEA.

On a diplomatic level, the BBQ left a legacy that concerned the tenacity that Thatcher had displayed in this debate. When she arrived as newly-elected Prime Minister she was condescendingly called “la fille de l’épicier” – the grocer’s daughter – by Henri Simonet,

‘Reshaping Europe. Towards a Political, Economic and Monetary Union, 1984-1986?’, Stiftung Universität Hildesheim, 2019); Wall, *The Official History of Britain and the European Community, Volume III*, 136 ff.; Caspar J. Bienek, ‘The Resolution of the British Budget Question: Did Britain Ask to Be Sidelined?’ (MA Dissertation, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, 2016).

¹⁹⁰ The comparatively smaller size of the agricultural sector and a different way of subsidising farmers also played a role. Ibid.

¹⁹¹ The EEC treaty stipulates that no country can ask to receive exactly the same amount back from the community budget as it puts in.

¹⁹² Roy H. Jenkins, *A Life at the Centre* (London: Pan Books, 1994), 491; Ludlow, *Roy Jenkins and the European Commission Presidency, 1976-1980*, 208 ff.

¹⁹³ Roy Jenkins, *European Diary: 1977-1981* (London: Collins, 1989), 545.

¹⁹⁴ Ludlow, ‘A Double-Edged Victory, Fontainebleau and the Resolution of the British Budgetary Problem, 1983-4’, 1, 21.

the Belgian foreign minister, but with steely determination negotiated a 66% rebate on the UK's contribution to the EC budget.¹⁹⁵ Very importantly, this refund would be in place until the overall financing mechanism of the EC was changed and was not the one-off refund which had been repeatedly offered over five years. Nigel Lawson, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, argued that "Margaret's bloody-mindedness was the essential ingredient" to settling the BBQ.¹⁹⁶ According to Roy Jenkins, the flipside was that Thatcher lost a great deal of goodwill in the European Council.¹⁹⁷ How much this affected the negotiations for the SEA is difficult to ascertain. Hugo Young likens the question to a finite amount of "chips", which Thatcher chose to spend on the BBQ, but could not spend on anything else.¹⁹⁸

Emile Noël, Secretary General of the European Commission, told Hugo Young that Thatcher "obtained much more than was reasonable".¹⁹⁹ Young believed that Thatcher's "bad manners were certain to worsen the manners of everyone else she would need to help her at some time. They raised the temperature and burned in the memory" of other leaders.²⁰⁰ Young argues that these leaders agreed to settling the BBQ as the "prize" for "the relaunch Mitterrand had set himself to getting started", which "Thatcher, in her hour of victory appeared to go along with".²⁰¹ Ludlow argued that in the long term the resolution of the BBQ turned out to be a "double-edged victory" for Thatcher because "banging the table was elevated to the default approach to European negotiation".²⁰² My research suggests that during the negotiations for the SEA this more confrontational approach did not yet come to the fore as strongly as it would with Thatcher's Bruges speech in 1988, except on the question of monetary integration, which will be considered in chapter four.

¹⁹⁵ Jenkins, *European Diary*, 529; Ludlow, 'A Double-Edged Victory, Fontainebleau and the Resolution of the British Budgetary Problem, 1983-4,' 5; George, *An Awkward Partner*, 149; Young, *Britain and European Unity, 1945-1999*, 130.

¹⁹⁶ Lawson, *The View from No. 11, Memoirs of a Tory Radical*, 110.

¹⁹⁷ Jenkins, *European Diary*, 606; Jenkins, *A Life at the Centre*, 508.

¹⁹⁸ Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 325.

¹⁹⁹ Emile Noël quoted in *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 324.

²⁰² Ludlow, 'A Double-Edged Victory, Fontainebleau and the Resolution of the British Budgetary Problem, 1983-4', 1-2, 23-24.

For Margaret Thatcher the dominating sentiment at the end of the Fontainebleau summit, on 26 June 1984, was one of relief and satisfaction. Thatcher remembered that the discussions after the settlement of the BBQ became “very good humoured”.²⁰³ Thatcher said that she was ready to discuss reforming the EC and that she had fought an election on a manifesto that was committed to the EEC treaty and the Luxembourg Compromise.²⁰⁴ She further presented a paper at the Fontainebleau European Council, entitled “Europe – the Future”, which argued for reforming the Single Market and the EC institutions and for creating a common foreign policy, but did not advocate changing the EEC treaty.²⁰⁵ Piers Ludlow argued that “*Europe – the Future* was not in other words just a tactical ploy. Instead it should be seen as a genuine plea for Europe to press ahead, primarily in the direction of greater commercial liberalisation but also towards more effective foreign policy cooperation”.²⁰⁶

Stephen Wall said that this paper “is probably the most complete and coherent statement of European policy made by any British government”.²⁰⁷ Wall argued that with the “Europe – the Future” paper Thatcher showed “a real vision for the future, especially [for] the Single Market, one of the primary, and then unfulfilled, objectives of the original Treaty of Rome”.²⁰⁸ According to Wall, Thatcher’s success was that her views on further liberalising the Internal Market was accepted by the Dooge Committee.²⁰⁹ Therefore, Wall believed that Thatcher could “lay a better claim than any other EC head of government to be the author of

²⁰³ Underline in the original. Account by Margaret Thatcher of the European Council on 25-6 June 1984 in Fontainebleau, p. 10, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/139100>.

²⁰⁴ Informal record of the European Council on 25-6 June 1984 in Fontainebleau, based on notes written by Geoffrey Howe, p. 24, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/139074>.

²⁰⁵ TNA PREM19/1230, “Europe – the Future,” n.d.; CAB148/237, “OD(E)(84)10 Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee Sub-Committee on European Questions, Europe the Future,” 6 September 1984; ‘Europe — the Future*’, *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 23, no. 1 (1 September 1984): 73–81, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5965.1984.tb00060.x>.

²⁰⁶ Emphasis in the original. Ludlow, ‘A Double-Edged Victory, Fontainebleau and the Resolution of the British Budgetary Problem, 1983-4’, 21.

²⁰⁷ Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 41. When he wrote the third volume of the *Official History of Britain and the European Community*, Wall included the paper in its entirety as an appendix. See Wall, *The Official History of Britain and the European Community, Volume III*, 342 ff.

²⁰⁸ Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 41.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 47.

the Single Market project that culminated in the Single European Act”.²¹⁰ Budden argued that the SEA was part of a process of codification of policies, which were in fact already happening informally.²¹¹ Budden believed that in this process the UK government declared “a genuine Common Market” as its overriding policy objective.²¹² He saw the “Europe – the Future” paper as the “clearest, most pro-European policy statement a Thatcher government had made”.²¹³ Therefore, the literature shows that the “Europe – the Future” paper was an important policy document for the UK government. Before examining how this paper came about, the structures of government and diplomacy need to be introduced with which UK policy towards the EC was made.

1. 1. 1. Diplomacy “triumvirate”: Cabinet, Foreign Office and UK mission to the EC

The question as to how this paper came into being offers a useful point of reflection on the institutions through which the British government assessed and devised policies towards the EC. Michael Butler, the head of the UK representation to the EC (UKRep), spoke once of a “triumvirate” of European policy making.²¹⁴ According to Butler, the three parts of the “triumvirate” were Butler himself, as the head of UKRep, David Williamson as head of the European Secretariat and deputy secretary of the Cabinet Office (who chaired both the ministerial and civil service committees on European policy), and a senior official from the FCO, each of which shall be considered in turn.²¹⁵ Michael Butler argued that since the UK joined the EC this “triumvirate” of European policymakers had been very important in shaping the policy recommendations that ministers would receive. Every Thursday Michael Butler attended the Committee of Representatives to the EC (COREPER) in Brussels and then on Fridays flew to London to brief the FCO and the Cabinet Office. It was at these “triumvirate” meetings where the suggestions on European policies were debated and

²¹⁰ Ibid., 48.

²¹¹ Budden, ‘The Making of the Single European Act’, 7, 86–89, 412 ff.

²¹² Ibid., 88.

²¹³ Ibid., 87. Budden also reproduced the entire document as an annex to his Ph.D. dissertation.

²¹⁴ British Diplomatic Oral History Programme (henceforth BDOHP) interview with Sir Michael Butler, conducted by Malcolm McBain, 1 October 1997, p. 29, <https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/bdohp>.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

recommendations for ministers were prepared. Ministers then debated and agreed these recommendations in Cabinet committees or sometimes the full Cabinet.

UKRep, the first element of Butler's "triumvirate", was the focal point in charge of representing the UK in the EC and reporting important events back to the British government.²¹⁶ Michael Butler, and after his retirement David Hannay, represented the diplomatic connection between the UK government and the EC institutions. Butler argued in his valedictory despatch that UKRep, and how it worked with the Cabinet Office, was admired as one of the "major British assets" by other delegations in Brussels.²¹⁷ Rodric Braithwaite, head of Chancery at UKRep from 1975-1978, said that at UKRep "policy [was] represented by one man" who was the head of the mission.²¹⁸ In Brussels, the head of UKRep worked closely with the European Commission and also with the missions of other countries. UKRep was therefore the central conduit of information between the UK government and the EC institutions, including the permanent missions of other European countries to the EC.²¹⁹ Evidence for such a flow of information can be found in the daily instructions from the FCO in the form of telegrams that were sent back and forth between Brussels and London.²²⁰

The second element of the "triumvirate" was the FCO. On a ministerial level, Rifkind reflected in his memoirs that "to be the Minister for Europe was important but not as grand as it might sound. Our relations with the European Community were so fundamental to our national interests that Geoffrey Howe, as Foreign Secretary, quite rightly devoted much of his own time to European matters" and he would give way to the Prime Minister "on the most important European occasions".²²¹ Therefore, Rifkind argued that "the real power on

²¹⁶ See Alasdair Blair, 'Permanent Representations to the European Union', *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 12, no. 3 (1 September 2001): 139–58, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592290108406217>.

²¹⁷ TNA FCO30/6177, M. Butler to G. Howe, 10 October 1985, 9; folio no. 472, "Sir Michael Butler's valedictory despatch summary," n.d.

²¹⁸ BDOHP interview with Sir Rodric Braithwaite, conducted by John Hudson, 28 January 1998, p. 17-8, <https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/bdohp>.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Braithwaite argued that these telegrams had a "disciplining effect" that made sure the head of UKRep was in charge. Ibid.

²²¹ Sir Malcolm Rifkind, *Power and Pragmatism: The Memoirs of Malcolm Rifkind* (London: Biteback Publishing, 2016), secs 2728–30, 2732–33.

European policy was with Margaret Thatcher and Geoffrey Howe”.²²² On an official level, since the UK had joined the EEC, a group of senior civil servants had been very interested and were favourably disposed towards European integration, such as Michael Butler, David Hannay, Nicholas Henderson and Robin Renwick.²²³ Butler remembered how a desk officer in Paris, who was frustrated because of the lack of interest that ministers and officials showed in the ECSC, explained Jean Monnet’s ideas to him. He reflected that “I became strongly imbued with this vision myself in 1950 and have held to it very firmly ever since”.²²⁴ This meant that a group of senior FCO officials brought to their jobs a commitment to the cause of a united Europe.

At the time when the UK joined the EEC in 1973, these officials were influential in shaping the departmental structure in the FCO. Butler became head of the European Integration Department in 1972 and split the department in two: European Integration (Internal) and European Integration (External).²²⁵ Rodric Braithwaite became the first head of the “external” department and Butler was in charge of the “internal” one. A political director was in charge of Political Cooperation (PoCo) and reported directly to the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Foreign Secretary. The economic side of the community reported through the Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (European Community). Therefore, the departmental structure in the FCO was characterised by two clearly separate categories of issues, with separate lines of reporting. However, Butler remembered that even though this division made sense in the 1970s, it increasingly did not work very well because political and economic issues were so interrelated.²²⁶

²²² Ibid., 2741-2

²²³ See BDOHP interviews with Colin Budd, Michael Butler, David Hannay, Nicholas Henderson, Robin Renwick and Stephen Wall, <https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/bdohp>.

²²⁴ BDOHP interview with Michael Butler, p. 3.

²²⁵ Ibid., 14. See organogram in Appendix Four.

²²⁶ Ibid., 22-3.

The third element of the “triumvirate” was the Cabinet Office and by extension the Cabinet. The Cabinet is responsible for the collective formation of government policy.²²⁷ Approximately 20 Cabinet ministers attend the full Cabinet meetings. The Prime Minister sets the agenda. This is the forum where interdepartmental differences are reconciled on a ministerial level. Ministers are responsible for their own department but share a collective responsibility for the decisions of Cabinet. Peter Hennessy argued that Margaret Thatcher held fewer Cabinet meetings and created fewer Cabinet committees than all her post-WWII predecessors.²²⁸ In addition to Cabinet meetings, ministers often met on an ad-hoc basis and corresponded with them in writing.²²⁹ In Cabinet committees, discussions are normally prepared in detail for the more summative discussions in the full Cabinet.²³⁰ The decisions taken in the Cabinet Committees are usually, in effect, ratified by the full Cabinet. According to Peter Hennessy, in 1985 the existence and composition of Cabinet committees and sub-committees were secret to the public, in order to maintain collective responsibility.²³¹ However, Thatcher’s style of governing was cast into the media spotlight when Michael Heseltine resigned during the Westland Affair, which is an episode that lies outside the scope of this research.²³²

Most Cabinet discussions on UK policy making took place in the Cabinet sub-committee on European questions of the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee (OD(E)).²³³ This was a very important forum to discuss European policy making, which in turn prepared

²²⁷ See Peter Hennessy, *Cabinet* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986); Peter Hennessy, *Whitehall* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1989); Patrick Dunleavy and R. A. W. Rhodes, eds., *Prime Minister, Cabinet and Core Executive* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995); Simon James, *British Cabinet Government*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1999); Cabinet Office, ‘Cabinet Manual’, accessed 16 April 2019, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-manual>.

²²⁸ Hennessy, *Cabinet*, 92 ff.

²²⁹ Hennessy argued that particularly the “Franks report” (Falkland Islands Review, Report of a Committee of Privy Counsellors) highlighted how reluctant Carrington was to bring issues before Cabinet and his reliance on ministerial correspondence. *Ibid.*, 101 ff., 113 ff.

²³⁰ Committees can be *ministerial* (attended by ministers) or *official* (attended by civil servants) or *mixed* (a form that Heath pioneered but that was discontinued when Wilson became Prime Minister). Committees can be *standing* (lasting as long as the Prime Minister’s tenure) or *ad hoc* (single issue or meeting irregularly). See Hennessy, *Cabinet*, 30–31.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 26.

²³² *Ibid.*, 106 ff.

²³³ TNA CAB148/237, 248.

the discussions in the assembled Cabinet.²³⁴ OD(E) was chaired by Geoffrey Howe, had regular members but the attendance of ministers varied depending on what was discussed, with invitations being extended to ministers on an ad-hoc basis. The recommendations that flowed from OD(E) meetings, and were ratified by the full Cabinet, determined the negotiating position of the UK government in the EC. The only ad-hoc committees in 1984-5 that dealt with European policy making were on “bilateral relations with certain countries”.²³⁵ It is in itself interesting that European policy making was predominantly discussed in a subcommittee of Overseas and Defence, which could indicate that Thatcher and her ministers judged the PoCo element of these discussions to be very important.

On an official level, the Cabinet Office fulfilled an important function in reconciling disagreements between different Whitehall departments. The European Secretariat at the Cabinet Office was created in 1973 and was responsible for coordinating government policy across Whitehall, i.e. with other ministries, and for preparing either the full Cabinet or Cabinet Committees.²³⁶ Its precursor was the European Unit, which was set up when the Duchy of Lancaster’s office was moved to the Cabinet Office in 1971.²³⁷ The head of the European Secretariat was David Williamson, who had been seconded from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. The preparations for Cabinet meetings by the different Whitehall departments were coordinated through an Official Steering Committee on European Questions (EQS), chaired by David Williamson, which prepared the OD(E) meetings and coordinated the work of civil servants across Whitehall.²³⁸ Finally, there was a related group of civil servants, similar to EQS but more focused on routine business, called the Official Committee on European Questions (EQO), through which departments also shared papers and discussed the views of different Whitehall departments.²³⁹ A sub-committee of this official

²³⁴ TNA CAB128/78/11, 19, 21-3; 79; 1-5, 7-8, 16-9; 81/3-4, 14, 16, 20-7, 31, 35, 37.

²³⁵ TNA CAB177/30-1; CAB130/1263, 1283, 1314

²³⁶ The European Secretariat was one of six secretariats of the Cabinet Office. The others being the Economic Secretariat, Overseas and Defence Secretariat, Home Affairs Secretariat, Science and Technology Secretariat and Security and Intelligence secretariat. Hennessy, *Cabinet*, 25.

²³⁷ TNA CAB193; See also O’Neill, *Britain’s Entry Into the European Community*.

²³⁸ TNA CAB134/4806-7, 4899-900; Hennessy, *Cabinet*, 27.

²³⁹ TNA CAB134/4795-4806, 4887-91.

committee looked at legal aspects of the EC membership and another one discussed the enlargement of the EC to include Spain and Portugal,²⁴⁰ which lies outside the scope of this dissertation. The ministerial and official structure explained in this section underpins the decision making and policy formation covered in this dissertation. The next section shall look at an important paper on European policy, which Thatcher presented to the European Council on 26 June 1984.

1. 1. 2. Debate participation: “Europe – the Future”

The “Europe – the Future” paper was one of three papers which Margaret Thatcher shared with her European counterparts during 1984 and the first half of 1985. Firstly, on 9 March 1984, Thatcher had shared a paper on the “Future Financing of the Community” with François Mitterrand, which proposed a way to measure the contributions of a member state to the EC budget.²⁴¹ With this paper Thatcher wanted to propose a solution to the British Budget Question. Secondly, the “Europe – the Future” paper, which Margaret Thatcher presented at the European Council in Fontainebleau on 25-6 June 1984, advocated extending the “Common Market” and developing a “common approach to external affairs”.²⁴² The paper was meant as a contribution to the discussions on “the future of the European Community”.²⁴³ The third paper, which Thatcher presented to Helmut Kohl on 18 May 1985, proposed to codify PoCo. For Margaret Thatcher such papers were an important tool to set out ideas, take part in debates and to convince her European counterparts at the highest political level. With the last two papers, Thatcher wanted to steer the debate in the European Council away from treaty change and towards an intergovernmental agreement on foreign policy coordination.

Helmut Kohl played an important role in the UK government’s policy making towards the EC. The “Europe – the Future” paper was not only an answer to an ongoing

²⁴⁰ TNA CAB134/4799, 4892, 4994.

²⁴¹ TNA PREM19/1227, M. Thatcher to F. Mitterrand, 9 March 1984; “Future Financing of the Community” n.d.

²⁴² TNA PREM19/1227, “Europe – the Future”.

²⁴³ TNA PREM19/1227, R. Bone to J. Coles, “French and German Ideas on the Future of the European Community,” 4 June 1984; J. Coles to R. Bone, “Paper on the Future of the European Community,” 6 June 1984; J. Coles to M. Thatcher, “Future of Europe,” 6 June 1984.

debate but was also in part written with the aim of securing Kohl's support and to strengthen Anglo-German relations in the EC. He was the only head of government who received an advance copy of both the "Europe – the Future" paper in 1984 as well as the PoCo proposals in 1985. On 28 February 1984, Thatcher mentioned to Kohl in a bilateral meeting that she "would produce a paper on how to take Europe forward and use its influence to greater advantage in the wider world" and promised to share it at their bilateral meeting after the summer holidays.²⁴⁴ Thatcher told her Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs, John Coles, that she wanted the paper to be a "longer term exercise".²⁴⁵ David Williamson, the head of the European Secretariat in the Cabinet Office, said that the "paper for Chancellor Kohl" was designed "not to join in competitive rhetoric about European Union" but to present "our own ideas for making the Community work better both externally as a greater force in the world and internally by making the Common Market more real and effective".²⁴⁶

The "Europe – the Future" paper was written to take part in a discussion on how to "relaunch" the EC. Much of the broader political impetus for such a "relaunch" came from François Mitterrand. In 1984 Mitterrand played an important role as chair of the European Council in Fontainebleau, on 25-6 June 1984, where the BBQ was resolved. However, his ambition for the EC had a more federalist component. On 24 May 1984, Mitterrand made a speech at the European Parliament in which he said that once the BBQ was settled, he would support calls for a "European Union", such as the EP's "Draft Treaty on European Union", championed by the MEP Altiero Spinelli, and said he was in favour of extending the competences of the EC into social, environmental and technological fields.²⁴⁷ Moreover, Mitterrand suggested that he would support the notion of "variable geometry" to cooperate in

²⁴⁴ TNA PREM19/1245, J. Coles to B. Fall, "Visit of Chancellor Kohl," 28 February 1984, attachment: "Record of a Conversation between the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany at 1550 hours on Tuesday, 28 February 1984 at 10 Downing street," 28 February 1984, 12.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.; J. Coles to M. Thatcher, "Paper on the future of the European Community," 1 March 1984.

²⁴⁶ TNA PREM19/1229, D. Williamson to J. Coles, "Paper for Chancellor Kohl ("Europe – the Future") and Reactions to Franco German Statements on the Future of the Community," 1 June 1984; R. Bone to J. Coles, "Paper on the future of the European Community," 1 June 1984.

²⁴⁷ Francois Mitterrand, 'Speech by French President Francois Mitterrand, President of the Council of Ministers, before the European Parliament', (Strasbourg, 24 May 1984), accessed 11 November 2019, <http://aei.pitt.edu/12031/>.

“education, health, justice [and] security” in a way that “complements , rather than competes with” the EEC treaty.²⁴⁸ The British government wrote the “Europe – the Future” paper to advocate a European common foreign policy and extending the Single Market. This paper was partly a response to Mitterrand’s initiative but was more generally a position paper to take part in the debate on the “relaunch” of the EC.

Thatcher approved the “Europe – the Future” paper on 6 June 1984.²⁴⁹ It was written in the institutional setting described in the previous section.²⁵⁰ Its main author was Robin Renwick, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the FCO (responsible for European integration), with assistance from Michael Butler, head of UKRep, and David Williamson, head of the European Secretariat in the Cabinet Office.²⁵¹ In Whitehall, the paper went through a restricted consultation process that only included senior officials of the Cabinet Office, DTI, MAFF and the Treasury.²⁵² Roger Bone, Assistant Private Secretary to Geoffrey Howe, said that because it was “intended to be a communication from the Prime Minister to Chancellor Kohl personally” it did not need to receive “clearance throughout Whitehall”.²⁵³ Geoffrey Howe argued that the paper was “by far the most effective way of influencing the debate” on the “future of the European Community” and “by putting forward our own ideas on the lines set out in the paper for Chancellor Kohl [the UK government could] set the agenda for the discussions likely to take place at and after Fontainebleau in a manner consistent with our interests”.²⁵⁴ The paper “Europe – the Future” was shown to Kohl on a personal level at a bilateral meeting on 8 June 1984.²⁵⁵ Upon the urging of Crispin Tickell,

²⁴⁸ Ibid. The term “Variable geometry” suggested that future European integration could be split into “two tiers”, with the countries that supported deeper integration pursuing such policies on their own. See Taylor, ‘The New Dynamics of EC Integration in the 1980s’; Young, *Britain and European Unity, 1945-1999*, 133–41; Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 64–65.

²⁴⁹ Handwritten note by M. Thatcher on J. Coles to M. Thatcher, “Future of Europe,” 6 June 1984.

²⁵⁰ See also Appendix One and Four.

²⁵¹ TNA PREM19/1229, R. Bone to J. Coles, “Paper on the future of the European Community,” 1 June 1984; Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 41.

²⁵² TNA PREM19/1229, R. Bone to D. Peretz, “Paper on the future of the European Community,” 5 June 1984.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ TNA PREM19/1227, R. Bone to J. Coles, “French and German Ideas on the Future of the European Community,” 4 June 1984.

²⁵⁵ TNA PREM19/1229, J. Coles to R. Bone, “Paper on the future of the European Community,” 7 June 1984; PREM19/1245, R. Butler to L. Appleyard, 9 June 1984, attachment: “Record of a bilateral meeting between the

who had been Roy Jenkin's Chef de Cabinet, Thatcher agreed that on the day after Kohl had received the paper, France, Italy and the President of the European Commission should also receive a copy.²⁵⁶

Margaret Thatcher did not formulate a vision with "Europe – the Future", in the sense of Harold Macmillan's "grand design" that set the UK on a path to join the EEC. The primary sources that detail how Thatcher commissioned and approved both this and the PoCo paper of 1985 show that these two papers proposed policies that reflected Thatcher's broader views of the need for a coherent Western response in the Cold War and her preference for liberalised markets. John Coles, Margaret Thatcher's Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs, told the FCO that Thatcher "envisaged the paper concentrating primarily on the future of the Community in its relations with the outside world" and wanted to propose ways of improving the foreign policy coordination (PoCo) of the EC.²⁵⁷ After the Fontainebleau European Council in June 1984, Thatcher tasked the Cabinet and Whitehall with finding areas where common standards could lower barriers to trade for businesses in the UK.²⁵⁸ Robert Armstrong, the Cabinet Secretary, wrote a memo arguing that Thatcher wanted the government to "be ready to put forward within the Community specific initiatives of potential benefit to the United Kingdom".²⁵⁹ The Cabinet sub-committee on European questions of the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee (OD(E)) was asked to consider how common standards could help British companies trade more with other EC countries. When they replied, Charles Powell introduced their efforts to Thatcher in the following terms:

"this is the response to **your request** for an initiative at Fontainebleau which would be **a contribution to the relaunch of the Community in the real interests of the UK**. ... If you agree, I propose to reply emphasising **the**

Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and Chancellor Kohl and Herr Genscher at the summit meeting at 1800 hours on Friday 8 June 1984," 9 June 1984.

²⁵⁶ TNA PREM19/1229, J. Coles to C. Tickell, "Paper on the Future of Europe," 8 June 1984; C. Tickell to J. Coles, "Paper on the Future of Europe," 11 June 1984.

²⁵⁷ PREM19/1227, J. Coles to R. Bone, "Paper on the Future of the European Community," 2 March 1984.

²⁵⁸ TNA PREM19/1228, R. Armstrong, "European Community," 11 May 1984.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

importance you attach to having concrete and substantial proposal of obvious benefit to Britain.²⁶⁰

Geoffrey Howe told Thatcher that “OD(E) agreed that it was very much in the United Kingdom’s interest” to reduce barriers to trade caused by differing technological standards.²⁶¹ The OD(E) minutes discussed the need to find common standards to reduce barriers to trade and innovation.²⁶² Kenneth Baker, speaking as Minister for Information Technology, argued that the UK should “take advantage of Franco-German progress on mutual acceptance of national standards”.²⁶³ In OD(E) ministers “argued that Europe must not become merely the manufacturing arm of the United States and Japanese research and technological efforts”.²⁶⁴ OD(E) was favourably disposed towards encouraging research and development but found the existing approaches too narrow. Essentially, ministers were against “subsidies and grants to persuade companies [to develop technologies] when they would not otherwise do [so]”.²⁶⁵ Ministers argued that “the United Kingdom should focus the arguments on the job-creating potential of an Internal Market where standards were no longer a barrier”, because both officials and ministers argued that market fragmentation was the reason why companies traded less across borders in the EC than they could and that it would be in the interest of the UK economy to free up these barriers to trade.²⁶⁶

In summary, with the “Europe – the Future” paper Thatcher’s government wanted to influence the debate on the future of the EC by suggesting foreign policy cooperation and extending the Single Market. These were the two central policy aims that Thatcher’s

²⁶⁰ Emphasis added. TNA PREM19/1228, C. Powell to M. Thatcher, “European Community: Industrial standards and removing barriers of collaboration between enterprises,” 4 July 1984.

²⁶¹ TNA PREM19/1228, G. Howe to M. Thatcher, “European Community: Industrial standards and removing barriers to collaboration between enterprises,” 4 July 1984.

²⁶² TNA CAB148/237, “OD(E)(84) 3rd Meeting, Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee Sub-Committee on European Questions, Minutes of a Meeting held in Conference Room A, Cabinet Office, Whitehall on Thursday 21 June 1984 at 9.00 am,” 21 June 1984; “OD(E)(84)4 Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee Sub-Committee on European Questions, Standards and Industrial Collaboration,” 19 June 1984.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 1.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 2; See also OD(E)(84)4; CAB134/4806, EQS(84) 6th Meeting and EQS(84)13.

government would pursue for the rest of 1984 and 1985. The paper was putting forward a set of policies that served as an alternative to the EP's "Draft Treaty on European Union" and Mitterrand's visionary but vague ideas for a "relaunch" of European integration. The "Europe – the Future" paper was presented at the European Council in Fontainebleau, on 25-6 June 1984, with the intention of demonstrating that the UK government wanted to move beyond the dispute on the BBQ and was putting forward ideas on how to develop the EC further. Moreover, the "Europe – the Future" paper guided Malcolm Rifkind in his discussions in the Dooge Committee, which will be examined in the subsequent two sections of this chapter. The scramble to give Kohl the "Europe – the Future" paper in advance, before any of the other heads of government had seen it, suggests that both Thatcher and Howe saw Kohl as a key ally. They believed that Kohl would help Thatcher in her attempt to convince the European Council of the ideas set out in this paper. This focus on convincing Kohl, before a European Council meeting, would become a defining feature of Thatcher's approach to the European Council in 1985, which will be explored further in chapter two.

1. 2. James Dooge in the shadow of Paul-Henri Spaak and Altiero Spinelli

In the early literature on the history of European integration two among many other federalist visionaries hold an important place: Paul-Henri Spaak and Altiero Spinelli.²⁶⁷ As chairman of the committee that bore his name, Spaak contributed to a report that became the basis for the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) on the Common Market and Euratom, which led to the EEC treaty in 1957. Altiero Spinelli was a prominent federalist thinker in the Italian resistance movement, who became European Commissioner and Member of the European Parliament. Both Spaak and Spinelli were in their own ways very influential figures

²⁶⁷ Walter Lipgens argued that the idea of a united Europe was rooted in the resistance movements during WWII and later shaped by the emerging bipolar world order. Equally seminal was Alan Milward's criticism of Lipgens for revering "European saints" and writing a "chronicle of fringe political groups" in the sense that the resistance movements had less direct impact on the formation of the ECSC or the EEC than nation states. Walter Lipgens, *Die Anfänge Der Europäischen Einigungspolitik, 1945-1950* (Stuttgart: E. Klett, 1977); Walter Lipgens, *A History of European Integration Vol.1. 1945-1947: The Formation of the European Unity Movement* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982); Milward, Brennan, and Romero, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*, 16–7, 27, 318.

in the European integration project. The Dooge Committee drew on the legacy of these two luminaries of European integration. The European Council in Fontainebleau, on 25-6 June 1984, founded a committee “along the lines of the Spaak Committee” which would be constituted of “personal representatives of the heads of state or government” and was tasked with finding ways of improving the institutions of the EC.²⁶⁸ According to Geoffrey Howe’s informal record of the Fontainebleau European Council, François Mitterrand suggested that another “Spaak Committee” was needed to find a compromise on questions of “voting/anonymity”.²⁶⁹ Mitterrand argued that there were no “right” or “wrong” solutions but that “personal representatives of heads of government” should bring “some order” into the different ideas that were currently being discussed.²⁷⁰

The Dooge Committee was constituted of government representatives as well as independent “personal representatives” of the EC heads of government. Immediately after it was called, Helmut Kohl enthusiastically said that it should consist of the “best people ... from outside the institutions”.²⁷¹ The delegates did not attend in any professional capacity but were simply mentioned as “representative of” a head of government.²⁷² Margaret Thatcher was represented by Malcolm Rifkind, the minister of state for Europe at the FCO. Rifkind recounts in his memoirs that unlike most other members, who he believed were arguing along the lines of their personal opinions and were not reflecting their governments’ positions he had to seek Thatcher’s “approval” for any recommendations that he wished to make.²⁷³ Rifkind did not feel constrained by this. He argued that because these issues were of “national importance”, having to seek Thatcher’s blessing “added to my negotiation strength on the committee. If they wanted a united report, they would need to accommodate not only me but

²⁶⁸ European Council, ‘The European Council, Fontainebleau, 25-26 June 1984’, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, no. 6/1984 (1984), <http://aei.pitt.edu/1448/>.

²⁶⁹ Informal Record by Geoffrey Howe of European Council, 25-6 June 1985 in Fontainebleau, Margaret Thatcher Foundation, 24, <https://www.margarethatcher.org/document/139074>.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁷¹ Informal Record by Geoffrey Howe of European Council, 24.

²⁷² Ad. hoc Committee for Institutional Affairs, ‘Report to the European Council’ (Brussels: 29-30 March 1985), 9. Archive of European Integration, Pittsburgh University, http://aei.pitt.edu/997/1/Dooge_final_report.pdf.

²⁷³ Rifkind, *Power and Pragmatism*, sec 2760, 2768.

her.²⁷⁴ Rifkind recalled that he was fighting for a unanimous report, which the UK government could support. However, on Rifkind's recommendation footnotes were used as a mechanism to voice reservations and thus forestall the need for a "minority report".²⁷⁵ Rifkind remembered that under Thatcher "the United Kingdom was a fervent enthusiast of a proper Single Market".²⁷⁶ Rifkind argued that in retrospect, the argument about whether or not to hold an IGC was his "main reservation" in the Dooge Committee; yet at the same time he argues that "the most historic consequence of our report was the Single European Act".²⁷⁷ In essence, he was saying that he may not have wanted to negotiate changes to the EEC treaty, but once the IGC was underway the Dooge Committee made history.

Malcolm Rifkind distinguished between three kinds of delegates who attended the Dooge Committee.²⁷⁸ The first group were ministers, the second group were government officials and the third group attended in no official but rather in a "personal" capacity.²⁷⁹ The Committee was chaired by James Dooge, a former Irish foreign minister and leader of the Senate. Helmut Kohl had wanted Karl Carstens, a former president of Germany, to head the committee but Fitzgerald prevailed with his nomination.²⁸⁰ Germany was represented by Jürgen Ruhfus, former German ambassador to the UK and *Staatssekretär*, i.e. holding the equivalent rank of a permanent secretary in the German foreign ministry.²⁸¹ Italy was represented by Mauro Ferri, a former MEP. Belgium was represented by Fernand Herman, a former minister and MEP. Denmark was represented by Otto Møller, under-secretary at the Danish foreign ministry. France was represented by Maurice Faure, a former minister and

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 2764

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 2768-77

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 2764

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 2777-82

²⁷⁸ TNA FCO30/6168, "House of Commons minutes of evidence taken before the European legislation committee, Wednesday 15 May 1985," 3.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

²⁸⁰ Budden, 'The Making of the Single European Act', 206-9.

²⁸¹ Budden, 2013; Ruyt, *L'Acte Unique Européen*, 52; Ilse Dorothee Pautsch et al., eds., *Akten Zur Auswärtigen Politik Der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1985*, vol. 2, *Akten Zur Auswärtigen Politik Der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2016), 1952.

signatory of the EEC treaty in 1957.²⁸² Greece was first represented by Gregori Varfis, former secretary of state for Europe, who was later nominated for the European Commission and then replaced with Ioannis Papantoniou, an advisor to the prime minister and former member of the European Parliament. Luxembourg was represented by Jean Dondelinger, a former permanent representative to the EC and head of the *sécrétariat général* of the Luxembourg government, roughly the equivalent of the Cabinet Secretary in the UK.²⁸³ Dondelinger would later head the preparatory group of the IGC. The Netherlands were represented by Willem Van Eekelen, permanent secretary in charge of European integration.²⁸⁴ The European Commission was represented by Frans Andriessen, who was replaced in January 1985 by Carlo Ripa di Meana, both European Commissioners.²⁸⁵

There was heavy symbolism in calling the Dooge Committee the second Spaak Committee, which at the same time created high expectations from members of this committee. By casting the Dooge Committee in the light of the halcyon days of the creation of the EEC, the expectation was to find a way to unify its members by reviving the past and at the same time creating something new. The task of the Dooge Committee was to propose solutions on how to make the institutions of the EC function better. Both the German and the UK governments at various points looked at how the Dooge Committee differed from the Spaak Committee of 1956. The important difference between the German and the British approach was that in Germany this reflection was put in a summary of the first Dooge Committee meeting and was presented directly and personally to the German Chancellor.²⁸⁶

²⁸² French government, 'Maurice Faure - Base de Données Des Députés Français Depuis 1789 - Assemblée Nationale', accessed 6 August 2019, http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/sycomore/fiche/%28num_dept%29/2932.

²⁸³ Luxembourg government, 'Organigramme', 14 April 2015, accessed 6 August 2019, <https://maee.gouvernement.lu/fr/le-ministere/organigramme.html>; Luxembourg government, 'General Secretariat', 2 January 2018, accessed 6 August 2019, <https://maee.gouvernement.lu/en/directions-du-ministere/secretariat-general.html>.

²⁸⁴ Netherlands government, 'Dr. W.F. (Willem) van Eekelen', accessed 6 August 2019, https://www.parlement.com/id/vg09li0pnz3/w_f_wim_van_eekelen.

²⁸⁵ Ruyt, *L'Acte Unique Européen*, 52; Budden, 'The Making of the Single European Act', 206–14.

²⁸⁶ Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (henceforth PAAA), B200, Bd. 130380, J. Ruhfus to H. Kohl, "Zur Unterrichtung, ad hoc-Ausschuss für Institutionelle Fragen, Ergebnisvermerk über die 1. Sitzung am 28.09. in Brüssel, Palais Egmont," 1 October 1984.

In the UK government, the reflections on this question happened six weeks before the Dooge Committee was wound up and only went as high as to Patrick Fairweather, the head of the European Community department (internal) at the FCO.²⁸⁷ There is no record of this reflection ever going to Howe or Thatcher. Would the Dooge Committee be able to live up to these expectations? How would the UK government, which had withdrawn from the process after the Messina conference of 1955 and was thus not a founding member of the EEC, interact in this committee?

1. 3. Dooge Committee discussions: “wide differences of approach”

From 28 September 1984 the Dooge Committee met every fortnight on a Wednesday evening and on the entire Thursday at the Palais Egmont in Brussels. At its first two meetings, the Dooge Committee discussed how it was going to approach the deliberations it was tasked to hold. In the first stage of the debate, the proposals of the different countries were brought together. At this stage the Dooge Committee was very much the talking shop that the literature believed it to have been. Nevertheless, this stage provided an important forum to share ideas and to hammer out preliminary compromises that could yield ideas for possible policy proposals. At this point the Dooge Committee was a forum to debate ideas. The battle of ideas was about what kind of EC the member states wanted to build, which was after all what it was tasked to do. At the heart of this debate was the question of what internal and external issues the EC should concern itself with, what new powers member states wanted to transfer to the institutions of the EC and whether reforms should happen inside or outside the EEC treaty. In the early stages of the Dooge Committee alliances were fluid and minds were open, especially since as “personal representatives” of the heads of government the delegates had a certain degree of independence from their governments.

²⁸⁷ TNA FCO30/6162, A. McNess to P. Fairweather, “Practical arrangements for the Messina Conference, Spaak Committee and the treaty-making conference,” 12 February 1985.

Before the Dooge Committee met for the first time, high-ranking French and German officials had a secret meeting in Bonn to coordinate their positions.²⁸⁸ These meetings showed that France and Germany saw their bilateral relationship as one of the central driving forces in the EC but also that they wanted to exert their influence inconspicuously. According to the German archival records, the German delegation told Helmut Kohl that the “atmosphere” of the Franco-German meeting had been “excellent” and the German side had had the impression that on most points France and Germany were in agreement and that they would be the “pacemakers” of the upcoming Dooge Committee talks.²⁸⁹ The German delegation argued that such coordination of positions should happen in a “discreet” way, should avoid giving smaller countries the impression that they were being outvoted, and would not preclude bilateral negotiations with other countries.²⁹⁰ For the officials of France and Germany, their aim to coordinate in the Dooge Committee meant that they would be arguing for more work in the EC on European Political Cooperation (EPC), security, economic and financial policies.²⁹¹ On the other areas the meeting was more vague and consisted mainly of Germany listening to the French officials as to what they had in mind. The officials agreed at this meeting that they wanted to steer the Dooge Committee towards calling for a treaty commitment on EPC, proposing a new secretariat and a Secretary General.²⁹² Both countries agreed that if what they called the “Spaak Committee” could not find an agreement on these issues by January 1985, then France and Germany should come forward with their own solutions and bilaterally find a way to continue with a smaller group of countries.²⁹³

²⁸⁸ National Archive of the Federal Republic of Germany, Bundesarchiv der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (henceforth BArch), B136/30681, I. Stabreit to H. Kohl, “Vertrauliches treffen von MDg. Stabreit und MDg. Ungerer (in Begleitung von VLR I Peter Hartmann) mit den französischen Beamten Pierre Morel (Elysée) und Guy Legras (französisches Aussenministerium) im Bundeskanzleramt am 19 September zur weiteren Abstimmung und der deutschen und französischen Haltung in Fragen des Aufbaus einer Europäischen Union (insbesondere im sog. ‘Spaak-Komitee’),” 20 September 1984.

²⁸⁹ “ausgezeichneter Atmosphäre”, “Schrittmacherfunktion” (my translations) Ibid., 2.

²⁹⁰ “diskret” (my translation) Ibid.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² Ibid., 3.

²⁹³ Ibid., 7.

The wish lists of both countries for the Dooge Committee were very different from each other. Germany wanted a larger political framework. Immo Stabreit, department head responsible for economic cooperation at the German Federal Chancellery, told Helmut Kohl that the declared aim of both countries was to write a “new treaty” to achieve a “European Union”.²⁹⁴ The German officials wanted the Dooge Committee to work on defining the “European Union”, agree to a new treaty that would create a political framework to strengthen the EC institutions and give “political meaning” to the payments that “richer countries” were making into the EC.²⁹⁵ France was more concerned with improving the existing way of working in the EC and suggested abolishing the Luxembourg Compromise, the convention that allowed a country to invoke a “vital national interest” to defer a vote in the Council of Ministers. Pierre Morel, foreign policy advisor to Mitterrand, and Guy Legras, head of European department at the French foreign ministry, suggested that the Luxembourg Compromise should either be abandoned, phased out within 10 years, as Altiero Spinelli had suggested, or only be used in exceptional circumstances, as France had originally intended in 1966.²⁹⁶ The importance Morel and Legras attached to the debate in the Dooge Committee on how to develop the institutions of the EC is shown by them referring to this as “horizontal problems”, because they underpinned all other thematic areas under discussion and therefore had to be resolved first.²⁹⁷ These bilateral discussions showed that to France it was more important to find specific ways to make decisions more effectively, rather than pronounce larger political aims, which was what Germany was favouring. Therefore, the Franco-German relationship, on the subject of the Dooge Committee, can be characterised by a willingness to work together bilaterally behind the scenes despite holding very different views.

The first discussion in the Dooge Committee took place on 10-11 October 1984. In a largely symbolic act, Altiero Spinelli, the veteran federalist and MEP, and Pierre Pfimlin, the

²⁹⁴ “neuen Vertrag” (my translation) Ibid.

²⁹⁵ “politischen Sinn”, “reichere Staaten” Ibid., 8.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 5.

²⁹⁷ “horizontale Probleme” (my translation) Ibid.

president of the European Parliament, were invited to address the Dooge Committee and present the “Draft Treaty on European Union” of the EP. In his presentation, Spinelli blamed the European Council, as the only “intergovernmental” body, for a lack of progress towards European Union.²⁹⁸ Spinelli argued that to break the stalemate the EP’s “draft treaty” should be negotiated in an Intergovernmental Conference and then ratified by all EC countries because it provided for a strong executive.²⁹⁹ He suggested that once it was ratified by enough countries to cover two thirds of the EC’s population then the “European Union” would exist.³⁰⁰ Mauro Ferri, the Italian delegate, agreed with this suggestion so much that he reintroduced it as his own proposal on the subsequent day.³⁰¹ Ruhfus, the German delegate, said that it was the declared aim of Kohl to work towards a “European Union”.³⁰² Supporting words also came from the representatives of the Benelux countries.³⁰³ Therefore, the early discussions in the Dooge Committee showed that delegates were listening to federalists, such as Spinelli, and were positively disposed towards the “Draft Treaty on European Union” of the EP.

The mood in the Dooge Committee was initially marked by disagreement but also a willingness on the part of all delegates to work towards a common solution that would work for all EC member states. The federalist-minded aspect of the debate was only one part of what happened in the Dooge Committee. Ruhfus’ impression was that the “newer member states were more reticent,” with Rifkind emphasising that steps had to be “practical”.³⁰⁴ Møller, the Danish delegate, was for EPC but against treaty change and Varfis, the representative from Greece, warned that European integration should not disadvantage poorer

²⁹⁸ TNA FCO98/2025, folio no. 10, telegram no. 3255, D. Butler to FCO, “Ad Hoc Committee on Institutions (Dooge Committee) 10/11 October,” 11 October 1984; PAAA, B200, Bd. 130380, J. Ruhfus, “Ad hoc-Ausschuss für Institutionelle Fragen, Ergebnisse der 2. Sitzung am 10./11. Oktober 1984 in Brüssel, Palais Egmont,” 16 October 1984.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² PAAA, B200, Bd. 130380, J. Ruhfus to H. Kohl, “Zur Unterrichtung, ad hoc-Ausschuss für Institutionelle Fragen, Ergebnisvermerk über die 1. Sitzung am 28.09. in Brüssel, Palais Egmont,” 1 October 1984.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ “neuen MS waren zurückhaltender”, “praktische” (my translation) Ibid.

EC member states.³⁰⁵ Pfmilin and Spinelli as well as Herman and Faure all submitted wide-ranging papers on the political objective of “European Union” and Rifkind submitted a more specific paper on the Single Market.³⁰⁶ According to David Butler, head of UKRep, the subsequent debate in the Dooge Committee revealed “wide differences of approach”, ranging from those who wanted a “new treaty” to those who wanted no change at all.³⁰⁷ At the end of the meeting, a lively debate ensued on the form that an interim report should take. Ruhfus suggested that Faure should write a draft but there were objections from Møller and Papantonio.³⁰⁸ Ferri then suggested that everyone should write a report.³⁰⁹ Dooge eventually said he could not stop Faure from writing a draft.³¹⁰

The British paper on the Single Market was discussed at the third meeting. When presenting the paper, Malcolm Rifkind stressed that he believed what was needed was a clear set of objectives and a schedule.³¹¹ Rifkind argued that all delegates supported the aim of creating a Single Market but there was disagreement on how to achieve this.³¹² Most delegates, particularly Andriessen, Dondelinger, Herman, Faure, Ferri and Ruhfus, argued that extending the Single Market also meant reforming the institutions, allowing for majority voting and involving the EP to a larger degree.³¹³ Andriessen and Ruhfus added that harmonisation of different laws, especially on indirect taxes, plant as well as animal health,

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ Andriessen and Varfis submitted papers on "variable geometry", Dooge a "basic outline", Faure a paper on "security policy", Herman on “EMS” as well as “economic policy and unemployment”, Møller on “new technologies”, Rifkind on the “internal market” and Ruhfus submitted his “EPC” paper. PAAA, B200, Bd. 130380, “Arbeitsaufträge der ersten Sitzung des Ad hoc-Ausschusses am 28. September 1984,” n.d.; TNA FCO98/2025, folio no. 10, telegram no. 3255, D. Butler to FCO, “Ad Hoc Committee on Institutions (Dooge Committee) 10/11 October,” 11 October 1984; PAAA, B200, Bd. 130380, “Politischer Bericht, vorläufige Übersetzung”, n.d.; “Comité Spaak II, Discussion Politique Générale: Rapport M. Faure (10 October 1985), note de travail par Fernand Herman,” n.d.; “creating a genuine Common Market” n.d.

³⁰⁷ TNA FCO98/2025, folio no. 10, telegram no. 3255, D. Butler to FCO, “Ad Hoc Committee on Institutions (Dooge Committee) 10/11 October,” 11 October 1984.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ TNA FCO98/2025, folio no. 19, telegram no. 3470, D. Butler to FCO, “Ad Hoc Committee on Institutions (Dooge Committee) 24/25 October: Internal market,” 25 October 1984.

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Ibid.

and the free movement of people was also required.³¹⁴ Papantonio suggested that liberalisation had to include a level of resource transfer from richer to poorer countries.³¹⁵ Møller and Van Eekelen made the case that the present treaties were sufficient to allow for extending the Single Market and that all that was required was political resolve.³¹⁶ Dooge asked Rifkind to improve his text to reflect the feedback he had received, especially to improve ways of making decisions, such as majority voting, write a timetable, reconcile it with the Adonnino Committee and allow for more harmonisation of laws.³¹⁷

The feedback that Rifkind received to the paper on extending the Single Market reflected two fundamental shortcomings of the paper in the eyes of his continental counterparts. One was that the paper was essentially a catalogue of policies on liberalising elements of the Single Market, such as lorry quotas or international bus travel and services. The speaking notes for Ruhfus argued that Germany supported Rifkind's initiative but that the picture Rifkind painted of the Single Market was "like a simplified woodcarving" of the complex reality of the Single Market.³¹⁸ Waldemar Mueller-Thuns, a department head at the German Federal Ministry of Economics, argued that Rifkind's proposals were in line with German thinking but were essentially a list of technical proposals, with an emphasis on services.³¹⁹ Mueller-Thuns argued that what the paper was lacking was a political framework, without which the Single Market could not be built.³²⁰ What was also lacking was a broader, overarching political approach. To provide this, Mueller-Thuns was advocating expanding the European Monetary System, harmonising indirect taxes and introducing qualified majority voting, even though he recognised that in individual cases this could go against Germany's

³¹⁴ PAAA, B200, Bd. 130380, "Sitzung des ad hoc-Ausschuss für Institutionelle Fragen am 24./25. Oktober 1984 in Brüssel, Ausbau des Binnenmarktes, Gesprächsführung," 22 October 1984.

³¹⁵ TNA FCO98/2025, folio no. 19, telegram no. 3470, D. Butler to FCO, "Ad Hoc Committee on Institutions (Dooge Committee) 24/25 October: Internal market," 25 October 1984.

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ "holzschnittartig vereinfacht" (my translation) PAAA, B200, Bd. 130380, "Sitzung des ad hoc-Ausschuss für Institutionelle Fragen am 24./25. Oktober 1984 in Brüssel, Ausbau des Binnenmarktes, Gesprächsführung," 22 October 1984.

³¹⁹ PAAA, B200, Bd. 130380, W. Mueller-Thuns to J. Ruhfus, "Ad-hoc-Ausschuss für institutionelle Fragen," 24 October 1984.

³²⁰ Ibid.

interests.³²¹ Therefore, there was a fundamental difference between how the UK and Germany approached the discussions in the Dooge Committee. From Mueller-Thuns' statement one can see that in the German government the thinking about reforming EC policies and institutions happened in the context of an overarching political framework. In the British government on the other hand policies were analysed individually and without putting forward an overarching political vision.

In the eyes of the other Dooge Committee members, the second shortcoming of Rifkind's paper was that it listed policy aims but did not yet outline how they were to be achieved. This paper posed difficult questions as to which institutions would be put in charge and where decisions on conflicting objectives would be taken, but did not offer specific solutions. These issues cut to the heart of the question why the Single Market had never been fully completed. There were still persistent non-tariff barriers to trade, even though creating a large European market was an objective that had been endorsed in the EEC treaty of 1957. Faure and Herman remarked in the second meeting of the Dooge Committee that even though everyone agreed on the aim of a Single Market, there still was "paralysis", which they believed was the explanation why the institutions of the EC had to be reformed.³²² In their view that was why policy aims, such as the ones Rifkind was putting forward, were not enough. Most members of the Dooge Committee believed what Mueller-Thuns told Ruhfus, which was that a political framework and better functioning institutions were essential to reach exactly those policy aims that Rifkind was advocating. What was thus required was an institutional framework that made a reality of the shared commitment of the EC countries to the Single Market and which would provide a forum to take decisions on details such as lorry quotas or how much fuel a lorry was allowed to hold in its tank when crossing a border. For the Dooge Committee the question was thus as follows: would the assembled representatives

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² TNA FCO98/2025, folio no. 19, telegram no. 3470, D. Butler to FCO, "Ad Hoc Committee on Institutions (Dooge Committee) 24/25 October: Internal market," 25 October 1984.

find a way to agree on a proposal for reforming the institutions of the EC and would they be able to convince the heads of government who had appointed them to implement such a framework?

The task of proposing an institutional framework of reform was made more difficult by the wide remit of the Dooge Committee. Apart from decision making, which underpinned all other issues, and internal questions such as the Single Market, a further prominent issue was external unity and a common foreign policy, called European Political Cooperation (EPC) on the continent and Political Cooperation (PoCo) in the UK. Ruhfus was tasked with writing a paper on the issue. He submitted a paper that advocated creating a “common foreign policy” by formalising EPC consultations, introducing majority voting on a selection of issues (mainly human rights), consulting with the EP, instituting a secretariat in Brussels with a Secretary General, creating common embassies in remote countries and coordinating voting at the United Nations.³²³ The paper was generally positively received, with the exception of Dooge and Møller. Dooge in this instance spoke as the Irish representative and without mentioning Irish neutrality rejected every aspect of the paper, arguing that until the Single Market had been completed there was no point thinking about a common foreign policy.³²⁴ Møller expressed himself in favour of the status quo. Malcolm Rifkind supported Ruhfus’ “excellent paper” wholeheartedly, except for the issue of majority voting.³²⁵ Rifkind argued that majority voting on PoCo posed constitutional difficulties but that this might be solved with a “commitment” to engage in PoCo and “a safeguard for important national interests”, by which he meant the Luxembourg Compromise.³²⁶

³²³ TNA FCO98/2025, folio no. 20, telegram no. 3469, D. Butler to FCO, “Ad Hoc Committee on Institutions (Dooge Committee) 24/25 October: Political Cooperation,” 25 October 1984; PAAA, B200, Bd. 130380, J. Ruhfus, “Note on European Political Cooperation,” n.d.; “Ad hoc-Ausschuss für Institutionelle Fragen, Optionenpapier zur Europäischen Politischen Zusammenarbeit, Gesprächsvorschlag,” 23 October 1984.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Ibid.

With this PoCo paper, Ruhfus had found an issue on which both the UK and the German governments could potentially agree. The German paper contained ideas that found wider resonance in the FCO, which would become more pronounced in the first half of 1985. Reading this German paper one can find many issues that would resurface in a British paper on PoCo in spring 1985 (such as formalising PoCo consultations, common embassies, coordination at international organisations). The paper that the FCO was going to write took on board many of the themes that Ruhfus had presented to the Dooge Committee but would put them firmly on an intergovernmental footing. Moreover, the UK government would later suggest that any PoCo agreement between EC governments should lie squarely outside the EEC treaty. The British paper slimmed down the institutional, or political, dimension of the German EPC proposals. As will be explained in the next chapter, the British paper would suggest that the European Parliament should only be updated, rather than given equal say with the Council of Ministers in new laws and directives. The secretariat would be part of the European Commission and not a new organisation. The important difference between the British and the German approach was that the British paper did not include majority voting and that the main forum of discussion was the European Council. Therefore, the British PoCo paper of 1985 would be much more intergovernmental in its aim than the German paper in the Dooge Committee. In the first half of 1985, this paper was going to become the core element of the UK government's European policy making, which will be examined in chapter two.

1. 4. Dooge report: "a compendium of ideas"

The interim report, which Maurice Faure had initiated, was presented at the Dublin European Council, on 3-4 December 1984, where however it was received largely without any discussion. Nevertheless, the Dooge Committee was given a mandate to write a commonly agreed final report.³²⁷ This report was presented on 29-30 March 1985 but the

³²⁷ Most of the time of the Dublin European Council was taken up with finalising the Iberian enlargement. TNA PREM19/1479, G. Howe to M. Thatcher, "European Community," 27 November 1984; FCO98/2026, folio no. 55, "European Council, Dublin, 3/4 December 1984, Future of Europe, including Interim Report of Dooge Committee and 'People's Europe' Committees, Brief by Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 28 November 1984;

discussion of the final report was moved to the Milan European Council on 28-9 June 1985.³²⁸ The Interim Report made clear that the Dooge Committee had a mandate from the European Council, which was meant to suggest ways regarding how “European cooperation” inside and outside the EC could be improved, along the lines of the “Spaak committee” of 1955.³²⁹ In the debates on how to turn the interim report into a final report, the overarching question was whether the members of the Dooge Committee would be able to agree to a coherent set of recommendations. If the Dooge Committee could unanimously agree to a report with clear policy recommendations then this could serve as a potential blueprint for action, much as the Spaak Committee had done in 1957 for the EEC treaty. A weak or heterogenic report on the other hand would give licence to controversy and dissent amongst its members. Malcolm Rifkind also faced the challenge of reconciling the debates in the Dooge Committee with the instructions he received from the Prime Minister to limit the scope of the committee’s recommendations. The debates between November 1984 and March 1985 would in that sense determine the historical importance of the Dooge Committee.

As explained above, with the support of Ruhfus, Faure had taken it upon himself to write his own version of an interim report, which would serve as a discussion paper for the final report.³³⁰ Rifkind was sceptical of an early report, arguing together with Møller and Papantoniou that it was “premature” to issue a report before the recommendations of the Dooge Committee were clear, but was faced with a majority view that a strong and substantial report was necessary.³³¹ Faure’s report was discussed, amended and refined from the end of October until it was presented as a final report to the European Council in Dublin on 3-4 December 1984. Faure focused in his first interim report on the institutional aspect of the EC

European Council, ‘The European Council, Dublin, 3-4 December 1984’, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, no. 12/1984 (1984), <http://aei.pitt.edu/1400/>.

³²⁸ European Council, ‘The European Council, Brussels, 29-30 March 1985’, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, no. 3/1985 (1985), <http://aei.pitt.edu/1434>.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

³³⁰ TNA FCO98/2025, folio no. 23, telegram no. 3484, D. Butler to FCO, “Ad Hoc Committee on Institutions (Dooge Committee) 24/25 October: General Discussion,” 26 October 1984.

³³¹ *Ibid.*

and suggested that majority voting should be introduced for all “implementing decisions” but unanimity should be retained for “decisions of principle”.³³² Faure further suggested that the Luxembourg Compromise should be “institutionalised” but had to be “objectively justifiable”.³³³ However, Faure also said that his report did not represent the views of the French government. Rifkind was sceptical and asked Faure to define what “objectively justifiable” meant.³³⁴ Moreover, Rifkind argued that only national governments could have the “last word” on invoking the Luxembourg compromise.³³⁵

Margaret Thatcher read Michael Butler’s summaries of the discussions in the Dooge Committee and began to form her own thoughts on the proposals that were being put forward. Her Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Charles Powell, introduced the summary of the Dooge Committee’s interim report to Thatcher by saying “there is some pretty good lunacy here” and suggesting that the FCO should write a report on the Dooge Committee.³³⁶ Thatcher underlined these words and assented. Her thoughts about these telegrams were relayed back to the FCO by Powell. He wrote to Colin Budd, Howe’s Assistant Private Secretary, saying that Thatcher was “alarmed by some of the ideas” that were discussed in the Dooge Committee.³³⁷ Thatcher was particularly unhappy with the idea to write a new treaty but also disliked the proposals to limit the Luxembourg Compromise and give the EP power over the revenues of the EC.³³⁸ Thatcher saw that Rifkind supported Ruhfus’ paper on PoCo but warned that she would not like to see majority voting introduced to PoCo.³³⁹ Powell said that Thatcher was “dubious about taking on a formal commitment to consult” on PoCo.³⁴⁰

³³² Ibid.; TNA FCO98/2025, folio no. 27, “Comité Spaak II, Avant-projet de rapport à déposer devant le Conseil Européen de Dublin,” n.d.

³³³ Ibid.; TNA FCO98/2025, folio no. 23, telegram no. 3484, D. Butler to FCO, “Ad Hoc Committee on Institutions (Dooge Committee) 24/25 October: General Discussion,” 26 October 1984.

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ TNA PREM19/1230, C. Powell to M. Thatcher, handwritten note on telegram no. 3484, D. Butler to FCO, “Ad hoc Committee on Institutions: Dooge Committee, 24/25 October, general discussion,” 26 October 1984.

³³⁷ TNA PREM19/1230, C. Powell to C. Budd, “Ad Hoc Committee on Institutions,” 30 October 1984.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ TNA PREM19/1230, C. Powell to C. Budd, “Ad Hoc Committee on Institutions,” 29 October 1984.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

Robin Renwick, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the FCO (responsible for European integration), wrote to Derek Thomas, the political director (responsible for PoCo consultation with other EC countries) that he did not believe in majority voting on PoCo but that the UK had to be seen to go along with the “rhetorical flourishes about the political development of Europe” in the Dooge Committee in order to see progress in extending the Single Market.³⁴¹ Renwick thus argued that PoCo and the Single Market were linked. Therefore, if the UK could not play a “positive-sounding part” in these discussions then France and Germany would come up with their own initiative.³⁴² To convince Thatcher of this link between the Single Market and PoCo, Renwick prepared a draft letter for Howe to Thatcher.³⁴³ This draft letter argued that Chancellor Kohl wanted “some kind of ‘European Union’” to come out of the Dooge Committee. Renwick argued that Thatcher should accept the formalisation of PoCo as long as it was not legally binding. Renwick suggested that Thatcher should convince Kohl that the British paper “Europe – the Future” was “at least as valid as the more idealistic approach [Kohl] favours and a good deal more realizable in practice”.³⁴⁴ The most important point was not to be seen by Kohl as “the main opponent of his ideas” but to emphasise that the “practical differences” between the positions of the UK and Germany were small and that “practical” steps had to be taken.³⁴⁵ This letter does not appear to have ever been sent to Thatcher but it foreshadows the writing of the PoCo paper of 1985, Thatcher’s meeting with Helmut Kohl and her insistence to keep it out of the EC treaty structure.

When the Dooge Committee’s interim report was discussed again on 7-8 November 1984 the debate became heated. Faure suggested a report that outlined a “majority” and a “minority” view, which was “forcefully” criticised by Rifkind, Van Eekelen, Møller and

³⁴¹ TNA FCO98/2025, folio no. 31, R. Renwick to D. Thomas, “Anglo-German summit: Development of the Community”, 30 October 1984.

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ TNA FCO98/2025, draft letter G. Howe to M. Thatcher, “Anglo-German summit: Development of the Community,” n.d.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

Papantonio.³⁴⁶ Rifkind said that if such a course was followed then positions would prematurely harden and further discussions would no longer serve any purpose.³⁴⁷ Herman countered that Rifkind was “repeating the same old story as has been heard from the UK since Messina” but later offered an apology.³⁴⁸ The German records argued that even though Rifkind, Møller and Papantoniou entered a fundamental reserve on the interim report they still were prepared to continue working on the basis of it.³⁴⁹ The rest of the meeting was devoted to discussing majority voting and whether any kind of “objective” invocation of the Luxembourg Compromise was possible.³⁵⁰ The meeting ended inconclusively but the idea of a report that split the Dooge Committee into two groups seemed to have been killed off by Rifkind’s vigorous defence. Interestingly, despite resisting the suggestion of a majority/minority report at this stage, Rifkind himself would later reintroduce the idea of a section referring to a majority and minority in the final report, but only for the part that dealt with majority voting, which will be looked at further below. UKRep was instructed by the FCO that the formal position of the UK government was that Rifkind would continue to suggest improvements but was not yet ready to make commitments, especially not on strengthening the EC institutions, nor on calling an IGC to negotiate changes to the EEC treaty.³⁵¹

On 16 November 1984, Colin Budd sent Thatcher the report that she had asked for two weeks earlier. Budd reported that the views in the Dooge Committee were heterogenic, some were “quite unrealistic” and that it was impossible to say how events would turn out.³⁵² He argued that for the UK government three proposals were the most important ones: Rifkind’s paper on the Single Market, Ruhfus’ ideas on PoCo and Faure’s draft interim

³⁴⁶ TNA FCO98/2026, folio no. 40, telegram no. 3645, D. Butler to FCO, “Ad Hoc Committee on Institutions (Dooge Committee) 7/8 November: Nature of Report to European Council,” 8 November 1984.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ PAAA, B200, Bd. 130381, J. Trumpf, “Ad-hoc Ausschuss für Institutionelle Fragen; Ergebnisse der 4. Sitzung am 07./08. November 1984 in Brüssel, Palais Egmont,” 12 November 1984, 2.

³⁵⁰ TNA FCO98/2026, folio no. 42, telegram no. 3666, D. Butler to FCO, “Ad Hoc Committee on Institutions (Dooge Committee) 7/8 November: Institutions and Faure’s Draft Interim Report,” 8 November 1984.

³⁵¹ TNA FCO98/2026, folio no. 46, P. Fairweather to D. Williamson, “Dooge Committee,” 13 November 1984.

³⁵² TNA FCO98/2026, folio no. 216, C. Budd to C. Powell, “The Dooge Committee,” 16 November 1984.

report. On the Single Market, Budd argued that Rifkind's proposals were welcomed in the Dooge Committee but that after the Iberian enlargement more majority voting was necessary in order "to prevent filibusters by the smaller member states". Budd suggested that provided the Luxembourg Compromise remained in place, the UK had "nothing to lose" by examining majority vote on a "case by case basis". Budd argued that Ruhfus' PoCo paper "follows the lead which we gave in 'Europe – the Future'" and that endorsing it in its entirety would "go a long way to satisfying Chancellor Kohl's wish to see positive results from the work of the Dooge Committee". Moreover, Budd said that majority voting for PoCo and an "obligation to consult" would both be unacceptable to the UK. Geoffrey Howe was in favour of formalising such informal practices only if it did not result in binding obligations. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Budd argued that Faure's report was a "compendium of ideas". Budd told Powell that what was clear from these discussions was that the other countries wanted to achieve something more ambitious than just completing the Single Market.³⁵³

Colin Budd said that Geoffrey Howe had instructed Rifkind he should "steer the [Dooge] Committee's work in a direction we could accept".³⁵⁴ Charles Powell suggested to Thatcher that the FCO needed to know her thoughts on how to take the discussions further.³⁵⁵ Powell assumed that certain ideas from the Dooge Committee were unacceptable to Thatcher, such as "objective tests" for the Luxembourg Compromise, a "declaratory treaty on European Union", majority voting on PoCo, giving more powers to the European Parliament and taking part in EMS.³⁵⁶ Powell proposed that it might be acceptable to "formalise existing commitments" on PoCo in a non-binding way in order to "head off much more ambitious ideas".³⁵⁷ In response, Margaret Thatcher scribbled by hand "no" next to that point and commented that "In view of our manifesto ... I do not see how we can?".³⁵⁸ Charles Powell

³⁵³ Ibid.

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

³⁵⁵ TNA PREM19/1478, C. Powell to M. Thatcher, "The Dooge Committee", 16 November 1984.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Handwritten note by M. Thatcher on Ibid.

replied that “I have some difficulty in interpreting your comments ... we are already saying no to virtually all the things you dislike”.³⁵⁹ Powell argued that the paramount task was to “rein the Germans and others back from some of their more madcap schemes: a new Treaty: a political entity etc.”. Powell suggested that to do so Thatcher should give some ground but should determine clear limits on how far the UK government was prepared to go. Firstly, majority voting should be examined on a “case by case basis”, while keeping the Luxembourg Compromise intact. Secondly, Powell suggested that “existing commitments in PoCo” should be formalised. “What’s the point?” of formalising PoCo, Powell asked rhetorically?³⁶⁰ “In the real world none at all. But it might help head the Germans and others off something far more ambitious”.³⁶¹

The outcome of this exchange between Powell and Thatcher was a letter that Charles Powell wrote to Colin Budd in which he listed all issues that Thatcher believed that the UK government should oppose in the Dooge Committee: firstly, “majority voting in PoCo or any other commitment which hinders us from acting in defence of essential British interests”; secondly, “extension of the powers of the European Parliament”; thirdly, “‘objective tests’ for invoking the Luxembourg Compromise”; fourthly, “a new European Treaty”; fifthly, The UK would not join the Exchange Rate Mechanism; sixthly, “Community social legislation”; seventhly, “Community preference in arms procurement”.³⁶² Powell said that Thatcher wanted Rifkind to take a “slightly more open position” in the Dooge Committee, on the issues of PoCo and majority voting, but insisted that “the Luxembourg Compromise should be preserved intact”. Powell argued that what Thatcher could accept was to “formalise existing informal arrangement” of PoCo as long as this did not “hinder our ability to promote our interests as we think best”.³⁶³ Powell’s memo shows how the Prime Minister’s office had

³⁵⁹ TNA PREM19/1478, C. Powell to M. Thatcher, “Dooge Committee”, 20 November 1984.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² TNA PREM19/1478, C. Powell to C. Budd, “The Dooge Committee”, 21 November 1984; FCO98/2026, folio no. 50, C. Powell to C. Budd, “The Dooge Committee”, 21 November 1984.

³⁶³ Ibid.

placed limits on what Rifkind and the FCO could agree to in the Dooge Committee. Most importantly, any discussion of changes to treaties and institutions were for Thatcher out of the question. What Powell was in effect saying was that the only course of action the British government would sanction was formalising the existing informal PoCo arrangements.

This memo is a significant piece of evidence that shows the strictures which Thatcher placed on what Rifkind could or could not accept in the Dooge Committee. The possible contradiction between formalisation and doing so in a non-binding way was never really addressed. As described above, Powell had earlier argued to Thatcher that if PoCo was formalised this would prevent any proposals for treaty change by Germany. Powell's preoccupation with Germany reflects a wider current in the British government's policy making, which saw Germany as the key ally in convincing other members of the European Council. To some extent this could have been reflective of Germany's much stronger economic position in the 1970s and 1980s, relative to other European countries and even the USA, and a readiness to play a more active role in international diplomacy, both within the EC and towards the USA.³⁶⁴ The focus of the UK government's European policy making on Germany, could also have been designed as a way to break into the Franco-German axis, which however was never clearly formulated as policy. The next chapter shows that in the FCO the idea of breaking into the Franco-German relationship was occasionally alluded to, especially in the context of wanting to influence Kohl before Mitterrand had a chance to do so. Such considerations served to make the focus of the British government on Germany and on Kohl even more pronounced. Yet with regards to the Dooge Committee, a focus on Germany risked overlooking Faure's prominent position in this committee. When France and Germany agreed on an issue in the EC then it had a high likelihood of succeeding. Ruhfus' support of Faure's interim report in the Dooge Committee was just one small case in point.

³⁶⁴ See Haeussler, *Helmut Schmidt and British-German Relations*; N. Piers Ludlow, 'The Real Years of Europe?: U.S.–West European Relations during the Ford Administration', *Journal of Cold War Studies* 15, no. 3 (2013): 136-161, <https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/522712>.

The Franco-German consultations before both the Dooge Committee and the Milan European Council showed that both countries were aware of their important positions and tried to use them to their advantage.

On 30 November 1984, Rifkind briefed Thatcher personally on the progress of the work done in the Dooge Committee.³⁶⁵ He euphemistically likened the interim report to the story of the curate's egg, which although it was completely rotten was described as "good in parts" by the curate because he was overawed by having breakfast with the bishop. Rifkind said that the interim report looked like an "unrealistic" final report. The redeeming features of this interim report were the commitment to the Single Market, the plan to reduce the number of European commissioners and the codification of PoCo. The "less palatable" parts of the curate's egg were the ideas to give the European Commission and the EP more power, the idea to phase out the "use of the veto", i.e. the Luxembourg Compromise, and the increased use of majority voting. Rifkind believed that these ideas were in part driven by Helmut Kohl wanting a "qualitative leap" forward. However, Rifkind argued that there was still enough time to combat such ideas and steer them towards "practical proposals", without the UK isolating itself in the negotiations.³⁶⁶

The interim report of the Dooge Committee took as its fundamental problem the "10 years of crisis", arguing that in terms of GDP growth the European economies were being outpaced economically as well as technologically by Japan and the USA.³⁶⁷ In the interim report, the Dooge Committee argued that the answer to the EC's problems was "a true political entity among European states, i.e. a European Union".³⁶⁸ To achieve the "European Union", decisions in the Councils of Ministers should be made by qualified majority voting, except on new policies or enlargement of the EC and new member states.³⁶⁹ The right to

³⁶⁵ TNA PREM19/1478, R. Renwick to M. Thatcher, "Dooge Committee", 30 November 1984.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁷ TNA FCO30/6162, "Ad. hoc Committee for Institutional Affairs, Interim Report to the European Council (Dublin, 3-4 December 1984)," 11-2.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

invoke a “vital interest”, i.e. the Luxembourg Compromise, should become temporary, and had to go through, a more formalised process that would still have to be defined.³⁷⁰ On the former proposal, Rifkind placed a reserve but agreed in principle to the increased use of majority voting. On the latter issue, five other countries refused to take a position.³⁷¹

The interim report advocated a series of measures to improve the working of the Single Market, such as recognising common standards that included not just goods but also insurance, liberalising public procurement, some form of technological cooperation, a “common transport policy”, the “free movement for European citizen”, standardisation of taxation, the “free movement of capital” and monetary integration.³⁷² The European market was thus understood very broadly as “homogenous internal economic area”.³⁷³ Because of this holistic view the report advocated that part of the aim was to equalise living standards in the EC.³⁷⁴ An integral step towards this new market where everyone was on the same level was the ECU as a currency, which would not only be traded by central banks as a reserve currency but would be developed into a fully-fledged currency.³⁷⁵ In addition, the interim report called for more foreign policy coordination, a secretariat, security cooperation and coordinating the positions of EC countries at international organisations, such as the United Nations.³⁷⁶ Rifkind entered one reserve in the section on the EMS, which objected to a European currency, a central bank and European Monetary Fund.³⁷⁷ However, unlike Denmark and Greece, the UK did not enter a reserve to the preface.

Even though the final report was handed to the European Council in March it was not going to be discussed in detail until the European Council in Milan on 28-9 June 1985. In the debate on turning the interim report into a final report, the picture that emerged in the

³⁷⁰ Ibid.

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Ibid., 13-4.

³⁷³ Ibid., 13.

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 14.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 14-5.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., 16-8.

³⁷⁷ Ibid., 15.

Dooge Committee was one where the Danish and the Greek representatives objected to almost every paragraph and all other countries focused on a more selected use of placing reserves on texts. The footnotes in the interim as well as the final report say almost more than the text of the report about where each country stood. The final Dooge Committee report contained seventeen formal reservations by Greece (three comments of dissent, which was not a formal objection but merely expressed a diverging point of view), two by Denmark (seven comments of dissent), three by Germany (no comment of dissent), none by France and only one by the UK (two comments of dissent).³⁷⁸ The use of reserves was important because they publicly recorded divergences. Rifkind had suggested that reserves should be recorded in the footnotes because this would prevent a majority/minority report and to allow all delegates to continue working on the report, even though they might not subscribe to all proposals. Placing reserves in the Dooge report also allowed the FCO to say to other departments that Rifkind had recorded their doubts.³⁷⁹ Moreover, the objections in the footnotes conceivably avoided presenting Thatcher with a long list of issues that she by all accounts would have rejected out of hand. It was, therefore, successful in minimising the internal conflict over grand sounding plans of European unity.

Patrick Fairweather, head of European Community Department (Internal) at the FCO, argued that concerning the issue of majority voting Rifkind had “a tricky hand to play [because] we [were] not in favour of any amendment [of] the treaties”.³⁸⁰ The Interim Report of the Dooge Committee advocated “new general voting principles”, under which the decisions in the Council of Ministers should be made by a simple or qualified majority, except for “new areas of action and new accessions”.³⁸¹ Malcolm Rifkind placed a general

³⁷⁸ Ad. hoc Committee for Institutional Affairs, ‘Report to the European Council’ (Brussels: 29-30 March 1985).

³⁷⁹ TNA FCO30/6162, G. Howe to N. Lawson, “FCS84/334 EMS and the Dooge Committee,” 28 December 1984.

³⁸⁰ TNA FCO30/6162, folio no. 54, P. Fairweather to R. Renwick, “Dooge Committee: Amendments to Interim Report,” 8 February 1985.

³⁸¹ TNA FCO30/6162 “Ad. hoc Committee for Institutional Affairs, Interim Report to the European Council (Dublin, 3-4 December 1984),” 20; folio no. 54, P. Fairweather to R. Renwick, “Dooge Committee: Amendments to Interim Report, Annex 1, majority voting,” 8 February 1985.

reserve on this text.³⁸² Fairweather suggested going “a little beyond our formal position” by accepting that any final report of the Dooge Committee would have to include an element of majority voting.³⁸³ To this end, Fairweather suggested that majority voting should be accepted to the full extent of the existing EEC treaty but any additional majority voting should be dealt with on a “case by case examination of treaty provisions now requiring unanimity”.³⁸⁴ Fairweather argued that such a study was designed “not to identify possible candidates for majority voting, but to bring others to accept that amendment of these articles is not practicable”.³⁸⁵

It is significant that Fairweather believed a detailed examination of majority voting would not lead to more majority voting but would bury the question in a detailed study. David Williamson, head of the European Secretariat at the Cabinet Office, believed that the UK could consider allowing more majority voting in the Council of Ministers but argued that weakening the Luxembourg Compromise was out of the question.³⁸⁶ Williamson was convinced that as long as the Luxembourg Compromise was intact then more majority voting could be in the interest of the UK. Therefore, the UK government wanted to keep a clear distinction between provisions for majority voting and the Luxembourg Compromise, with the informal practice to invoke a “vital national interest” to delay or prevent being outvoted in the Council of Ministers.³⁸⁷

On 18 February 1985, Rifkind told Geoffrey Howe that he was facing a “difficult situation” in the Dooge Committee and that he would like to agree to holding an IGC in exchange for concessions on majority voting and the European Parliament.³⁸⁸ Howe replied

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ TNA FCO30/6162, folio no. 54, P. Fairweather to R. Renwick, “Dooge Committee: Amendments to Interim Report,” 8 February 1985.

³⁸⁴ Ibid. “Annex 1, majority voting,” 8 February 1985. Many decisions in Councils of Ministers were at the time taken unanimously even though the EEC treaty allowed for majority voting.

³⁸⁵ TNA FCO30/6162, folio no. 54, P. Fairweather to R. Renwick, “Dooge Committee: Amendments to Interim Report,” 8 February 1985.

³⁸⁶ TNA PREM19/1478, D. Williamson to C. Powell, “Dooge Committee,” 10 January 1985.

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ TNA FCO30/6162, folio no. 69, Minutes of meeting between G. Howe and M. Rifkind, “Dooge Committee”, 18 February 1985.

that he “could not agree in advance” of the European Council to an IGC. However, Howe suggested that “something a bit more positive than the existing footnote” should be said. Howe argued that Rifkind should aim to “get options into the paper” but that these should be worded as “the views of some members of the committee ... and not as a British/Greek/Danish position” because “their position was harder than ours”.³⁸⁹ In this discussion between Rifkind and Howe one can see that agreeing to more majority voting was designed to take part constructively in the discussions of the Dooge Committee but to do so only to a limited extent. On the one hand, this more positive approach was hemmed in by the notion expressed by Patrick Fairweather: the hope that studying detailed questions of majority voting would convince other countries that it was undesirable. On the other hand, this more open approach was limited by referring all questions about an IGC to the European Council and thus to Margaret Thatcher, who would have to decide for the British government if she could agree to holding an IGC with the objective to change the EEC treaty. The briefings for Rifkind are very clear that the decision on whether or not an IGC would be held “must be left entirely open for heads of government to decide”, which would happen at the European Council on 28-9 June 1985 in Milan.³⁹⁰

The final version of the report of the Dooge Committee, although in substance not much different from the interim report, has nevertheless a number of interesting additions. A paragraph was inserted that argued that the Dooge Committee’s aim was not to write a treaty but to point out goals and measures that would bring back the “vigour and ambition” of European integration.³⁹¹ The next step on the road to implement the Dooge Committee’s recommendations, just like after the Spaak committee, should be an IGC to thrash out a “draft

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ TNA FCO30/6164, P. Fairweather to R. Renwick and M. Rifkind, “Dooge Committee 27-28 February 1985,” 26 February 1985; “Brief P, Dooge Committee: 27/28 February, question of an Intergovernmental Conference, points to make”, n.d.

³⁹¹ Ad. hoc Committee for Institutional Affairs, ‘Report to the European Council’ (Brussels: 29-30 March 1985), 12.

European Union treaty”.³⁹² The final report strengthened this recommendation by using the term “propose”, which to some extent implied that this was a unanimous recommendation of the Dooge Committee.³⁹³ The report argued that the proposed conference should be based on the Dooge Committee, the *acquis communautaire*,³⁹⁴ the “Solemn declaration of European Union”, signed by heads of government in the European Council on 19 June 1983, and the “Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union”, passed by the European Parliament on 14 February 1984.³⁹⁵ The final report of the Dooge Committee closed with the words that the intended treaty would “constitute the founding of [the] European Union”.³⁹⁶

The final version of the report softened the recommendations for majority voting significantly.³⁹⁷ Instead of suggesting majority voting in all cases, the final version of the report stated that most members of the Committee were generally arguing for such a position but were also recognising that some decisions had to be taken unanimously.³⁹⁸ A minority in the Dooge Committee, namely Denmark, Greece and the UK, argued that when enough time had been spent discussing an issue, a vote should be called but only whenever the EEC treaty allowed. Moreover, they argued that the Luxembourg Compromise should remain in place. The difference between the two lay largely in the aspect of whether more majority voting than the EEC treaty prescribed should be allowed or whether the current treaty provisions were sufficient. In a nutshell, it was the difference between changing the EEC treaty or not. To split the argument into a majority and minority position was an idea that Rifkind put forward.³⁹⁹ He argued that splitting the recommendations was seen as a way, by the delegates who were

³⁹² TNA FCO30/6162 “Ad. hoc Committee for Institutional Affairs, Interim Report to the European Council (Dublin, 3-4 December 1984),” 5, 23; A. McNess to P. Fairweather, “Practical arrangements for the Messina Conference, Spaak Committee and the treaty-making conference,” 12 February 1985.

³⁹³ Ad. hoc Committee for Institutional Affairs, ‘Report to the European Council’ (Brussels: 29-30 March 1985), 32.

³⁹⁴ The collective body of EC legislation.

³⁹⁵ TNA FCO30/6162 “Ad. hoc Committee for Institutional Affairs, Interim Report to the European Council (Dublin, 3-4 December 1984),” 23.

³⁹⁶ Ibid.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ These countries were Luxembourg, France, Italy, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and the representative the European Commission. See Ad. hoc Committee for Institutional Affairs, ‘Report to the European Council’ (Brussels: 29-30 March 1985), 27-8.

³⁹⁹ TNA FCO30/6161 M. Rifkind to G. Howe, “Dooge Committee,” 15 February 1985.

in the minority, to make sure that the Dooge Committee report also recorded their views which could potentially make it easier to convince the Prime Ministers of Denmark, Greece and the UK to agree to an IGC.⁴⁰⁰

The final report showed that Rifkind had followed Geoffrey Howe's instructions to include more "options" into the final report and to present it as a broad difference of views. Because members put their names in support of each option into the footnotes, Rifkind could not prevent this looking like a British, Danish and Greek minority position, which was an impression Howe had originally wanted to avoid. However, presenting these two options meant doing exactly what Rifkind had refused to do earlier, when on 7-8 November he criticised the notion of a minority report with the argument that it would prematurely harden views and make further discussions impossible. The implicit recognition in splitting the paragraph on majority voting into two parts, was that on the subject of changing the EEC to include more majority voting the views of all members had ossified with the UK, Denmark, and Greece building a minority that refused to contemplate such a policy.

The Dooge Committee was only discussed in the full Cabinet on 21 March 1985, when its final report was finished. The Cabinet discussions reveal that the government considered the strategy chosen for the Dooge Committee "had enhanced respect for the arguments which we were advancing".⁴⁰¹ Rifkind was lauded for the way he defended the position of the UK on "controversial issues", such as the European Parliament.⁴⁰² The Cabinet believed that when the final report of the Dooge Committee was made public "it would become clear that the views of other Community Governments were closer to those of the United Kingdom than might appear from the positions taken by some non-Government representatives in the Committee itself".⁴⁰³ What is interesting in this paragraph is how

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ TNA CAB128/81/11, "Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on Thursday 21 March 1985 at 10.30 am," 21 March 1985, 5. In the same meeting the Cabinet also agreed that the Iberian enlargement would be largely positive for the UK. Ibid., 4.

⁴⁰² Ibid., 5.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

convinced the Cabinet members were that the other countries' positions were moving towards the position of the UK government.

Just as the Dooge Committee had begun with a discussion on the historical importance of the Spaak Committee, so was this discussion raised again when the Dooge Committee was wound down. The question in March 1985 was whether the Dooge Committee should be continued to form a more permanent institution, or cease to exist after it had submitted its final report?⁴⁰⁴ The FCO was aware that Thatcher had expressed herself in favour of the latter option.⁴⁰⁵ With a permanent role, the Dooge Committee could potentially have eclipsed the Spaak committee in historical influence or prominence. However, the Dooge Committee was never given such a permanent role. In this the view of the UK government was aligned with the majority. The Dooge Committee's impetus may also simply have petered out. When its final report was submitted to the heads of government, the forum of debate on the future of the EC was back again in the intergovernmental realm. The questions for the next two chapters will be what national leaders, and the UK government in particular, would make of the ideas, visions and proposals and the compromises that were discussed in the Dooge Committee. Would they call an IGC? Would they formalise PoCo/EPC? Would they extend the Single Market? Would they resolve to give more power to the EP? In March 1985 these were still a series of ideas that had as yet to publicly attract high-profile backing from a head of government. The subsequent ten months would decide the fate of these ideas.

In conclusion, this chapter explained the legacy of the BBQ and how the paper "Europe – the Future", which Margaret Thatcher presented to the European Council in Fontainebleau on 25-6 June 1984, became the opening position of the British government in the Dooge Committee. Moreover, by examining how the Cabinet, the FCO and UKRep

⁴⁰⁴ TNA FCO30/6165 J. Dooge to B. Craxi, "draft letter SN 1038/85 (SPAAK II)," 20 March 1985.

⁴⁰⁵ TNA FCO30/6166, J. Shepherd to P. Fairweather, "European Council: Dooge," 21 March 1985.

interacted, this chapter clarified the underpinning assumptions of this dissertation on the structures in government and Whitehall that assessed policy options and devised policy. The UK government suggested formalising existing informal practices of foreign policy coordination (PoCo) and extending the Single Market. The Dooge Committee went through two stages. The first stage saw a large number of proposals being debated. This stage ended with Maurice Faure writing an interim report that helped to turn these ideas into a list of proposals. In the Dooge Committee, Malcolm Rifkind tried to minimise the use of reserves to show a level of commitment of the UK government to the ongoing discussions. The Danish and Greek representatives, Møller and Papantonio, added many more footnotes than Rifkind. On the proposals to give the EP more power, or to extend the EMS, Rifkind entered a reserve. In discussing these issues and in pre-charting their possible compromises, the Dooge Committee was already preparing the ground for the IGC which would take place a year later.

The Dooge Committee was a battle of competing ideas about what the EC was and how it could be developed in the future. In the second stage of the Dooge Committee, the question was which of the recommendations should make it into the final report. At this stage, the deliberations of the Dooge Committee met with the critical scrutiny of Margaret Thatcher and her advisor Charles Powell. Powell said that Thatcher was “alarmed” at how wide-ranging the policy proposals of the Dooge Committee were. To limit its scope, or the scope of what Rifkind could agree to, Thatcher gave the FCO a list of all the policies she would not accept, such as majority voting for PoCo, extending the EMS and European social legislation. Thatcher assented to two policies that Rifkind could pursue further. Firstly, Rifkind was permitted to agree to a case-by-case examination of introducing majority voting. Secondly, Thatcher agreed to a codification of hitherto informal PoCo practices, such as consultations and common positions at international organisations, as long as this did not lead to any binding commitments in the process of forming foreign policies. These strictures which Thatcher imposed on the Dooge Committee would chart the course of action that the UK government was going to follow in 1985 and would be reflected in a paper in which the UK

government proposed the codification of PoCo. This paper will be looked at in the next chapter in the context of a meeting between Kohl and Thatcher.

Chapter 2. Thatcher's bid to lead the EC into foreign policy coordination: "wooing" Helmut Kohl

Margaret Thatcher and Helmut Kohl met on 18 May 1985 at Chequers, the country seat of the British Prime Minister. This meeting was a vital staging post because it influenced the outcome of the European Council in Milan. The Anglo-German summit at Chequers was the only high-level bilateral meeting that Thatcher accepted before the European Council in Milan. Apart from Kohl, the Prime Ministers of Belgium and Italy also asked for a meeting with Thatcher.⁴⁰⁶ Their requests for meetings were turned down because Thatcher said that there was "no time".⁴⁰⁷ Thatcher refused these meetings against FCO advice, who explained to her that especially a meeting with Bettino Craxi, the Italian Prime Minister, could have helped shoring up support against the idea to hold an IGC to negotiate changing the EEC treaty.⁴⁰⁸ The meeting between Thatcher and Kohl illustrated how different the views of the two leaders on European integration were. By devoting an entire high-level summit to convincing Kohl and refusing to meet anyone else, Thatcher showed that she perceived Kohl to be a key ally in the European Council.

The meeting with Kohl brought to the fore Thatcher's own views on the EC, which centred on liberalising markets and strengthening the West in the Cold War. When Geoffrey Howe, the foreign secretary, suggested to her a paper on foreign policy coordination (PoCo) she enthusiastically described it as a "stroke of genius" and agreed to share it privately with Kohl.⁴⁰⁹ The way Thatcher espoused this initiative as her own shows that she did not have a vision for European integration that she set out in a document, like for instance Harold Macmillan's "grand design" of 1961 to take Britain into the EEC, but rather held a set of views that informed her policy making. Howe told Thatcher that with this PoCo paper she

⁴⁰⁶ TNA FCO30/6168, "Bilateral (and other) meetings in Lead-Up to Milan European Council, (28/29 June)," n.d.; TNA PREM19/1491, C. Budd to C. Powell, "European Community: Milan European Council," 30 May 1985; C. Powell to C. Budd, "European Community: Milan European Council," 1 June 1985.

⁴⁰⁷ Handwritten note by M. Thatcher on Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 134, G. Howe to M. Thatcher, "Development of the European Community," 15 April 1985.

could present her own initiative to Kohl in order to shape the agenda early, “impress” him and head off “far-fetched ideas”, such as an Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) to change the EEC treaty.⁴¹⁰ The records of the meeting between Thatcher and Kohl show that she put forward the PoCo paper because she wanted to present an alternative proposal to counter what she saw as introspective, protectionist and possibly anti-American ideas. Therefore, with this paper she wanted to break down barriers to free trade and strengthen the Western security aspect of the EC, without changing the institutional setup of the EC or any of its treaties.

The idea of writing a paper to advance the proposals of the British government came from Robin Renwick, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the FCO (responsible for European integration), who was an important advisor to Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe and accompanied him to European Council meetings. He had already been influential as main author of the “Europe – the Future” paper, which was introduced in the previous chapter. Thatcher accepted the suggestion and agreed to present it personally as a high-level initiative at the upcoming European Council. With this paper, Howe and the FCO prompted Thatcher to clarify her own thinking on European integration, which was a way for Howe to deal with the unknown component of Thatcher’s views on how to develop the EC further. Moreover, for Renwick, writing such a paper could have been motivated in part by the notion of breaking into Franco-German leadership of the EC. The British ambassador to Germany, Julian Bullard, suggested to Renwick that the UK would be confronted with a Franco-German initiative, which he believed had to be pre-empted with “a proposal of our own”.⁴¹¹

For the FCO, this encounter between Kohl and Thatcher also was an important element in their overall strategy that they had displayed in the Dooge Committee, which was to steer the ongoing discussions on developing the European Community in a direction that would be acceptable to the UK. Robin Renwick wrote to ambassador Bullard, saying that the

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹¹ TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 150, J. Bullard to R. Renwick, “European Union,” 15 April 1985.

FCO “attached the greatest importance” to this meeting and that the intention was to persuade Kohl to “start following the kind of course we believe would lead to positive results. Otherwise we must indeed expect more emphasis to be placed on Franco-German initiatives”.⁴¹² What these initiatives would be was not yet clear at the time, but these words show a concern that European policies could be determined by Bonn and Paris. Bullard had been told by German sources that the German government was thinking of forming a “core-Europe” to establish a cooperation with those EC countries that were willing to sign a new treaty on “Political Cooperation; security; counter-terrorism; and perhaps cultural, educational and scientific cooperation”.⁴¹³

In their bilateral meeting, Thatcher gave Kohl a paper, which came to form a central part of the UK government’s strategy to prepare for the upcoming European Council in Milan. This paper, and the way in which Thatcher gave it to Kohl, reveals much about the British policies towards European integration in 1985. The summit at Chequers was significant because it showed the specific policy aims and strategies of Thatcher. Analysing Kohl’s policy aims and his reaction to Thatcher’s paper adds context and allows this chapter to comment on the successful and unsuccessful elements of the British approach. At this high-level bilateral meeting it became clear how important Germany was for British policy making towards the EC. Whilst the meeting showed commitment to European integration on Thatcher’s part, it also revealed the limits of these commitments to Kohl. This chapter looks at what Thatcher wanted to achieve in her meeting with Kohl, which was the only high-level bilateral meeting she had before the European Council, and how this compares to what her German counterpart wanted to accomplish. The first section of this chapter examines the British negotiating aims for the meeting between Thatcher and Kohl. The second part examines the German negotiating position. The third part of this chapter looks at the first-hand accounts of the meeting in order to explain how the two strategies came together.

⁴¹² TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 151, R. Renwick to J. Bullard, “European Union,” n.d.

⁴¹³ TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 150, J. Bullard to R. Renwick, “European Union,” 15 April 1985.

Finally, the elements are drawn together to show the successes and the shortcomings of the strategy to prepare a European Council meeting by lobbying the German Chancellor. This chapter argues that in spring 1985, Thatcher's European policy making was focused on convincing Kohl to back her initiative to codify PoCo. The differing conceptions of European integration by both leaders and their uneasy relationship was cast into the spotlight by their bilateral meeting. When subsequently the UK government also sought the backing of France, Thatcher's PoCo paper became an initiative with which she wanted to lead the EC into the codification of foreign policy coordination in the EC.

The bilateral meeting with Kohl has not yet been analysed by the existing literature. It has mainly been recorded in the biographical literature. For instance, Hugo Young argues that after the European Council in Fontainebleau, "Thatcher began to utter sentiments that were impeccably *communautaire*".⁴¹⁴ There was, in Young's view, "a whiff of collaborative promise" in the air.⁴¹⁵ In her memoirs Thatcher explained that the paper on PoCo which she presented to Kohl was motivated by some of the "waver[ing]" or on occasion "downright hostile" attitudes of other EC member states during the Falklands War.⁴¹⁶ She argued that the PoCo paper was designed to "strengthen the West" in the Cold War.⁴¹⁷ In addition to foreign policy cooperation, Thatcher wanted to further develop the Single Market, make the processes of how decisions were reached in the community better, and make more use of new technologies.⁴¹⁸ Thatcher argued that she was against changing the treaties because she felt that "all my instincts warned me of what federalist fantasies might appear if we opened this Pandora's Box".⁴¹⁹ Thatcher remembered the content of the paper to have been "ostentatiously *communautaire*".⁴²⁰ Thatcher's recollection was that "Chancellor Kohl

⁴¹⁴ Young, *One of Us*, 388.

⁴¹⁵ Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 329.

⁴¹⁶ Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, 548.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 458-9.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 549.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, 548.

seemed pleased” with the PoCo paper.⁴²¹ Geoffrey Howe mentioned this meeting between Thatcher and Kohl only in passing to illustrate his point that foreign policy coordination was an issue on which agreement in the EC was possible.⁴²² Interestingly, neither Kohl nor his foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, mentioned the meeting in their memoirs.⁴²³

2. 1. British negotiation aims: “stroke of genius”

The strategy of the British government for the bilateral summit with the German Chancellor was to avoid an IGC and press for decisions to be made at the upcoming European Council meeting in Milan.⁴²⁴ In the FCO, Robin Renwick feared that a conference that combed through the EEC treaty in search of articles where majority voting could be introduced would be met with opposition from other departments in Whitehall.⁴²⁵ However, as explained in the last chapter, Thatcher was prepared to consider a case-by-case extension of majority voting within the scope of the EEC treaty. Renwick reiterated the proposal Howe had made to the Prime Minister, arguing that invoking the Luxembourg Compromise should be formalised and some decisions delegated to lower-level councils. Moreover, Renwick argued that nobody, including Kohl, wanted to abolish the Luxembourg Compromise. Lastly, the perceived gulf between British and German views on the European Parliament was in Renwick’s view overstated.⁴²⁶

The PoCo proposals, which Thatcher would hand over personally to Kohl, advocated collaboration in foreign policy and security in a Western framework, mainly NATO.⁴²⁷ These proposals were designed in a way that would allow governments to act independently and meant they were not forced into any foreign policy commitments in advance.⁴²⁸ The PoCo

⁴²¹ Ibid. 548–49.

⁴²² Howe, *Conflict of Loyalty*, 455.

⁴²³ Helmut Kohl, *Erinnerungen: 1982-1990* (München: Droemer, 2005); Hans-Dietrich Genscher, *Rebuilding a House Divided, A Memoir by the ARchitect of Germany’s Reunification* (New York: Broadway Books, 1995); Hans Dietrich Genscher, *Erinnerungen* (Berlin: Siedler, 1995).

⁴²⁴ TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 20, C. Budd to C. Powell, “Chancellor Kohl’s visit to Chequers, 18 May,” 10 May 1985, full briefing for Thatcher attached. See “Development of the Community, Our objectives” n.d.

⁴²⁵ TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 151, R. Renwick to J. Bullard, “European Union,” n.d.

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

⁴²⁷ TNA FCO30/6168, “Draft Agreement on Political Cooperation,” n.d.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

paper was thus a purely intergovernmental agreement to codify the hitherto informal foreign policy practices and was in no way a plea for European unity. The fact that this paper would neither please Helmut Kohl nor François Mitterrand was its main shortcoming, which both the ambassadors to France and to Germany pointed out when they saw it.⁴²⁹ The strategy of the British government was firstly to persuade Kohl in a high-level meeting with Thatcher of the merit of these ideas.⁴³⁰ Secondly, Mitterrand would be approached indirectly, and according to the British ambassador to France “very privately”, through Roland Dumas, the French minister for European Affairs.⁴³¹ Thirdly, with a minimum involvement of government officials, Renwick suggested that Thatcher could present the paper as a personal initiative at the Milan summit, where the heads of government themselves would decide how to develop the question of the future of the European Community.⁴³² Other countries should not see the document in advance and only receive a copy just before the Milan European Council to avoid these proposals being watered down before Thatcher presented them.⁴³³ In effect, Renwick suggested that Thatcher could, in cooperation with Germany and France, lead the EC into codifying the hitherto informal practice of PoCo.

The PoCo paper was written by Robin Renwick in the same institutional setting as the “Europe – the Future” paper, which was explained in the previous chapter. In essence, this paper advocated recognising the status quo and formalising Political Cooperation in exactly the way it was already practiced in order to become a “coherent force in international

⁴²⁹ TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 163, telegram no. 378, J. Fretwell to FCO, “EC Institutional reform,” 6 May 1985; folio no. 150, J. Bullard to R. Renwick, “European Union,” 15 April 1985.

⁴³⁰ TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 134, G. Howe to M. Thatcher, “Development of the European Community,” 15 April 1985. The German government had suggested that Horst Teltschik should meet Charles Powell for preliminary talks. However, the UK government refused this, saying that Thatcher would like to talk to Kohl in person about the upcoming European Council in Milan. PAAA, B200, Bd. 130388, “Vermerk, Gespräch des britischen Botschafters mit StS Ruhfus am 15.05.1985 zur Vorbereitung der Gespräche des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18./19.05.1985,” 15 May 1985.

⁴³¹ Underline in the original. TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 163, telegram no. 378, J. Fretwell to FCO, “EC Institutional reform,” 6 May 1985; R. Renwick to J. Fretwell Fretwell, “Development of the Community,” 9 May 1985; FCO30/6168, folio no. 165, R. Renwick to L. Appleyard, “Secretary of state’s meeting with the Prime Minister: Development of the European community,” 7 May 1985.

⁴³² TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 151, R. Renwick to J. Bullard, “European Union,” n.d.

⁴³³ TNA FCO30/6168, folio no. 168, R. Renwick to J. Fretwell, “Development of the Community,” 9 May 1985.

relations” and engage more “in joint action in world affairs”.⁴³⁴ The objective was to get governments talking to each other about the challenges in international affairs, reach agreed positions at international organisations, avoid arguing against the interests of other EC members and keep those EC countries informed that were not there.⁴³⁵ Moreover, when a country determined a position in world affairs it would take into account the views of other EC countries.⁴³⁶

With the PoCo paper the UK government suggested that EC countries should collaborate in foreign policy and security matters in organisations of “western security”, which should include NATO, the UN and WEU.⁴³⁷ In these organisations no EC country should vote for, or co-sponsor, a resolution that “might gravely affect the vital interests” of another EC country.⁴³⁸ Finally, in this Atlantic security context the countries involved should also increase their collaboration in research and development of weapons technology.⁴³⁹ The British government envisaged the PoCo paper as an intergovernmental agreement. The European Council would be the main discussion forum, but both the European Commission and the European Parliament should be kept informed.⁴⁴⁰ Crucially, none of the agreements proposed would change any of the treaties of the European Communities.⁴⁴¹ This meant that in essence, the UK government was proposing a standalone agreement which would not amend the EEC treaty and therefore lay outside the treaty framework of the EC.

Two observations can be made about the PoCo paper, one relating to the history of the UK and the EC, and another one to the Cold War. Firstly, the suggestion that PoCo should be based on NATO or WEU is in some ways strangely similar to “plan G” from 1956, when during the negotiations for the EEC treaty the UK government proposed the formation of a

⁴³⁴ TNA FCO30/6168, “Draft Agreement on Political Cooperation”, n.d.,

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, art. 1, 5.

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, art. 2.

⁴³⁷ *Ibid.*, art. 8.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*, art. 5.

⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, art. 3-4.

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*, art. 4.

free trade area, based on the OEEC.⁴⁴² The similarity lies in the notion that if the spectre of supranationality was again to be feared – this time in the guise of a new treaty on “European Union” – the answer should lie in the revitalisation of pre-existing intergovernmental organisations. In this context the British PoCo paper advocated that foreign policy coordination in the EC should be based on existing treaties and not prevent any form of national foreign policy. Therefore, the paper could be interpreted in a sense of attempting to lead the EC in a direction that would lead the discussions away from the notion of supranationality. This is however, where the similarities end. PoCo was not the “destructive embrace” that Gladwyn Jebb had wanted to give the nascent EEC.⁴⁴³ By 1985 the UK had become part of the EC, the USA had not just intervened to denounce EFTA, and the discussion was not only focused on trade but also on security.

Secondly, the PoCo paper was focused on security collaborations through the frameworks of NATO and WEU. Such a focus, combined with the sentence that these organisations would work towards “western security” gave this paper a distinct Cold War theme.⁴⁴⁴ If one looks at the wording of the PoCo paper, it is set in a way such that it does not commit countries to specific actions but rather to interact more in principle inside existing Western security forums, especially NATO. For instance, in article eight on defence collaboration, it is not clear whether these are monetary or foreign policy commitments. It is hard to believe that this vagueness was not deliberate. Surely it is not a coincidence that the areas of collaboration proposed coincided with one of the principal strengths of the UK, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and strong NATO member. As such the PoCo

⁴⁴² James Ellison, ‘Perfidious Albion? Britain, Plan G and European Integration, 1955–1956’, *Contemporary British History* 10, no. 4 (1 December 1996): 1–34, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13619469608581411>; Kaiser, *Großbritannien Und Die Europäische Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft, 1955-61: Von Messina Nach Canossa*, 68 ff.; Ludlow, *Dealing with Britain*, 26–30; Milward, Brennan, and Romero, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*, 428–31; Milward, *The Rise and Fall of a National Strategy, 1945-1963*, 249–64; Parr, *Britain’s Policy towards the European Community*, 1; Martin Schaad, ‘Plan G – A “Counterblast”?’ *British Policy towards the Messina Countries, 1956*, *Contemporary European History* 7, no. 1 (March 1998): 39–60, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777300004756>.

⁴⁴³ Gladwyn Jebb quoted in Kaiser, *Großbritannien Und Die Europäische Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft, 1955-61: Von Messina Nach Canossa*, 59.

⁴⁴⁴ TNA FCO30/6168, “Draft Agreement on Political Cooperation,” art. 8.

paper attempted to codify the practice of Political Cooperation as it stood in 1985, having emerged informally since the early 1970s, and did not propose any new policies.

The internal comments of the FCO on the PoCo paper noted that it reflected already existing commitments and that many of the consultations proposed in the paper were in fact already practised by the UK.⁴⁴⁵ The necessary provisions had already been agreed in 1977 but the PoCo paper was worded in a way that the UK could always vote independently in the UN Security Council. Moreover, the FCO comments argued that the PoCo paper “in no way” impaired the ability of the UK to “go it alone” and if required the UK could disregard the positions of other EC countries at international organisations.⁴⁴⁶ This document also drew on the existing EC treaties and current discussions on how to “relaunch” European integration. The preamble was taken from the treaties and article one from the Luxembourg Report, which in 1970 already argued for a form of Political Cooperation. Article two drew on the “solemn declaration on European unity” made in 1983. The existing agreements in the community on these issues were linked to a provision in the paper “Europe – the Future”, which the previous chapter examined, and which also suggested that positions and engagements at international organisations should be coordinated.⁴⁴⁷

Margaret Thatcher accepted this paper and agreed to show it to Helmut Kohl and propose it herself to the European Council. As with the “Europe – the Future” paper, the PoCo paper was not a vision but was a statement of policies that Thatcher felt she could accept because they reflected her views. One can see in this paper a commitment to strengthen the West in the Cold War. Moreover, creating the Single Market was in line with the reforms of Britain’s economy that Thatcher was pursuing at home. Thatcher’s views on the notion of “European Union” were more complex and ambivalent. They combined a broad commitment to the EC in principle, which she had shown in the referendum campaign on EEC

⁴⁴⁵ TNA FCO30/6168, “Draft agreement on Political Cooperation: Commentary,” n. d.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ The European Commission was proposed to be in charge of the coordinating and would house the small secretariat but was not be given additional powers.

membership in 1975, with scepticism towards anything that looked like idealism or federalism. One of her most coherent statement on European integration, before the SEA was agreed, was a speech to the Franco-British Council, which Edward Heath set up to foster a better understanding between both countries, on 30 November 1984. In this speech, Thatcher outlined what she understood by the term “European Union” and why she was uncomfortable with the notion:

“Several distinguished Europeans gave me advice on what to speak about tonight. They all suggested **European Union**. I think I rather shocked them by replying that I would need to know what is meant by it before I could tell whether I was for it or against it. Unhappily **I must report that those who advised the subject did not cast much light on its meaning**. Let me say at once: I do not believe that we shall ever have a United States of Europe in the same way that there is a United States of America. The whole history of Europe is too different. **I do believe however that for Nations of the European Community freely to work together and to strengthen their cooperation is just as worthy a purpose**. But to submerge their identity and variety would be contrary to the instincts of our peoples and therefore could not bear fruit. It is on the basis of working towards common goals, of using our strength and influence together that you will find Britain a strong advocate for a more united Europe. **We want to see greater unity of the Community market, greater unity of Community action in world affairs, greater unity of purpose and action in tackling unemployment and the other problems of our time and greater unity in the development and application of new technology. That is what I understand by a united Europe.**”⁴⁴⁸

These paragraphs show that by the end of 1984, Thatcher was committed to the EEC as it stood in 1984-5 and wanted to work towards breaking down barriers in Europe and strengthening the foreign policy coordination of the EC. In essence, she was comfortable with the status quo. Yet her view of the EC was clearly intergovernmental in the sense that it was based on an assumption of the nation state as the building block of international organisations. As such, as this quote clearly shows, these nations should work together to achieve shared aims. Yet they should not give up their “identity” or powers to a larger bloc, whatever its aim. Therefore, what she disagreed with was broad ambitions instead of precise policy, and

⁴⁴⁸ Emphasis added. Thatcher papers, Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge University (henceforth THCR), THCR5/1/5/284, Speech by Margaret Thatcher at Franco-British Council dinner, 30 November 1984, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105804>.

regulation instead of free markets. The quotes above show that Thatcher did not believe in open-ended commitments, but rather wanted to know the clear bounds of a policy before agreeing to it – except perhaps in her broader belief in markets. The themes of making the EC outward looking, by giving its member states a more coherent foreign policy, and more market led were the two core themes of both the “Europe – the Future” paper of 1984 as well as the PoCo proposals of 1985. With the latter, Thatcher wanted to lead the EC into an intergovernmental agreement to codify the hitherto informal practice of foreign policy coordination in order to give the foreign policy of EC countries more coherence and to make the community more outward looking.

Geoffrey Howe had a different idea of European integration, which emphasised that European integration was a process and relied on forming good relationships with other countries. For Howe, the tactical purpose of the PoCo paper was to present a series of policy options to forestall more “far-fetched ideas” of reforming the EC.⁴⁴⁹ By “far-fetched ideas” Howe meant an IGC and everyone demonstrating “how ‘European’ they can be”.⁴⁵⁰ Based on advice from Robin Renwick, Howe argued that this paper would “make a considerable impression” on Helmut Kohl.⁴⁵¹ Howe believed that presenting such a paper was important because “whoever puts forward their own ideas first will be able to oblige the others to work on that basis”.⁴⁵² These comments show how authorship of initiatives was seen as a way to shape the negotiations from the outset. Yet at the same time he also had to manage his own relationship with Thatcher. In his memoirs, Howe explained that it was actually Kohl himself who had given him the idea to approach Germany bilaterally.⁴⁵³ Kohl remarked to Howe, curiously in the gentlemen’s restroom, that Thatcher should “woo” her counterparts more, which in Kohl’s view would be more effective than her “argumentative” approach.⁴⁵⁴ Howe

⁴⁴⁹ TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 134, G. Howe to M. Thatcher, “Development of the European Community,” 15 April 1985.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

⁴⁵³ Howe, *Conflict of Loyalty*, 293, 408–9.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., 293.

said in his memoirs that it was the idea of “urging Margaret to ‘woo people’ more openly” which was at the back of his mind when he suggested that Kohl should be invited to an “intimate” meeting at Chequers in order to present the paper as a collaborative initiative.⁴⁵⁵ Kohl may not have meant what Howe interpreted and probably did not realise that an off-hand remark at the bathroom sink was behind his invitation to Chequers.

The focus on Germany was a defining element in Thatcher’s European policy making in spring 1985. One can see this in how the PoCo paper was written and the way it was presented to convince Helmut Kohl first and win his support at the upcoming European Council meeting. One of the principal architects of this approach was Robin Renwick, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the FCO (responsible for European integration), who was an important advisor on European policies to Geoffrey Howe. Renwick had already written the “Europe – the Future” paper, which is explained in the first chapter. The institutional background was the same and is also explained in chapter one. The PoCo paper, the approach of “impressing” Kohl and to use this paper to focus the discussion in the European Council on new proposals were all suggested by Robin Renwick.⁴⁵⁶ Renwick recommended that Howe should seek the approval from Thatcher to proceed with this approach. Bringing the discussion away from treaty change and to a new intergovernmental agreement was important because amending the EEC treaty was only in the UK’s interest if the Luxembourg Compromise could be extended to all articles, which was not deemed to be realistic. Moreover, Renwick believed that avoiding an IGC was not going to be easy because Italy and the Benelux countries would continue to push for an IGC. Renwick argued that the best approach to avoid holding an IGC was to take the necessary decisions on the highest political level in the European Council in Milan, on 28-9 June 1985, which the summit with Kohl was supposed to prepare.⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., 408-9.

⁴⁵⁶ TNA FCO98/2364, R. Renwick, “meeting with the Prime Minister,” 11 April 1985.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

The PoCo paper was written in the context of a bilateral summit with Kohl – the only one Thatcher held – to prepare the upcoming European Council in Milan, on 28-9 June 1985. The British government clearly felt that to show Kohl a copy of the PoCo paper first would help to convince the rest of the European Council. Kohl thus was deemed to be a key ally of the British government in the EC. In his briefing about Kohl, the British ambassador to Germany, Julian Bullard, explained to the Robin Renwick how important the term “European Union” was to Kohl.⁴⁵⁸ Bullard explained that the German Chancellor saw 1985 as a “year of destiny” and was committed to the notion of “European Union”.⁴⁵⁹ Ambassador Bullard argued that Kohl was very conscious of history in general and wanted to “earn his place in the history books”.⁴⁶⁰ Binding Germany into a stronger European Union was going to be the way for him to achieve this ambition. Bullard loosely quoted Kohl in arguing that in the German Chancellor’s view European integration was “irreversible” and “integration” of Germany into “the West” was the German “Staatsräson” – its “raison d’état”.⁴⁶¹ Bullard confessed that he had always believed such rhetoric to be “a sham, but I now believe it to be genuine, if often muddled”.⁴⁶² In Bullard’s view such sentiments explained why Kohl was in favour of European integration and why he believed that now was the time to reinforce the political element of the European Community.

Julian Bullard proposed that in order to respond to Kohl’s ambitions, the British government should come forward as soon as possible with a paper on PoCo and give it the title “European Union”.⁴⁶³ Kohl’s team would have to be made aware that Thatcher was going to present a major new initiative to him. However, Bullard suggested that this treaty should be kept outside the EEC treaty. Bullard argued that such a treaty was in keeping with the current policy objectives of the UK towards to EC, as outlined in the “Europe – the Future” paper and

⁴⁵⁸ TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 150, J. Bullard to R. Renwick, “European Union,” 15 April 1985.

⁴⁵⁹ According to Bullard, Kohl saw 1985 as a “year of destiny” because since no elections would have to be fought in Germany, France and the UK, he saw a window of time to bring the “European Union” about.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁶¹ TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 150, J. Bullard to R. Renwick, “European Union,” 15 April 1985.

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ Ibid.

reflected in the position Malcolm Rifkind took in the Dooge Committee. Bullard argued that since the Fontainebleau summit of June 1984, Germany had recognised that the UK was playing an influential role in the discussions on how to proceed with European integration. Bullard believed that in the aftermath of the Fontainebleau summit, and with EC enlargement on the horizon, the UK, France and Germany had to work together better than before to achieve results. Therefore, the UK had to “box her full European weight from now onwards”. To this end, the UK government should present a series of “bold” and “daring” proposals, which Bullard suggested should be called “European Political Union” and be centred on foreign policy coordination.⁴⁶⁴

Julian Bullard suggested that in practice such language meant implementing the recommendations of the Dooge Committee as far as possible, working on extending the Single Market and keeping majority voting as it was in the EEC treaty.⁴⁶⁵ The new treaty should take from the Dooge report the idea to develop PoCo with a secretariat, and a way to work together in security and defence. However, the Luxembourg Compromise should be kept intact. The new treaty should also take from the Adonnino Committee aspects on culture and learning languages. Most importantly, the UK government should be ready to agree to an “eye-catching preamble” that referred to what such a union stood for in terms of “freedom, democracy, peace and human rights” and that “European Union” was “irreversible”. Bullard argued that terms such as “union” or “irreversible” should not cause the British government to worry because it just meant “flying [the] flag of European Union”.⁴⁶⁶ In some ways, Bullard was thus continuing with the kind of advice that Lord Carrington had given to Thatcher before she signed the “Solemn Declaration of European Unity” of 1983 in Stuttgart, arguing that these broader declarations of intent were merely rhetorical devices with no specific legal meaning.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

Bullard warned that if the UK did not pursue such a policy then Mitterrand would have Kohl “in his pocket” and Kohl would arrive at Chequers with his mind already made up.⁴⁶⁷ Bullard believed that the German government was examining the formation of a “core Europe” to work together in areas that were not yet covered by the EEC treaty.⁴⁶⁸ Michael Butler, head of UKRep, countered this argument by saying that he believed there was “confusion in the minds of the Germans if they really think that they can build European Union in any real sense separate from the European Community”.⁴⁶⁹ Butler was convinced that if Germany wanted to build a “European Union” they had to build it on the existing EC. The head of UKRep believed that a separate treaty on PoCo was a realistic aim but that it could only exist together with the EC, which could eventually be called a “European Union” because the EC and its foreign policy were “two sides of the same coin”.⁴⁷⁰

Bullard’s letter was significant because it was a formal letter sent in preparation for the Chequers meeting to Renwick. What Renwick learned from the UK ambassador was just as important as his reaction, because what he recommended had an impact on British policy making. Robin Renwick replied to Julian Bullard that Margaret Thatcher was “not committed to the idea of a treaty”.⁴⁷¹ She was opposed to submitting a “declaratory treaty” to the House of Commons. Renwick acknowledged that the British PoCo paper was not what Germany wanted. Renwick argued that the FCO should try to find a way of taking on board Kohl’s aspirations but in a way that would be politically acceptable to the UK. The FCO was working on convincing ministers in other government departments to give them “flexibility” on the issue of PoCo. At the same time the challenge was to get the Prime Minister to accept the PoCo agreement. Renwick suggested that Thatcher should tell Kohl that the British PoCo paper could be the first stage in a process that eventually would lead to an agreement “in principle” at the European Council in Milan. Most importantly, Renwick argued that an IGC

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁹ TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 152, M. Butler to R. Renwick, “European Union”, 18 April 1985.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁷¹ Underline in the original. TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 151, R. Renwick to J. Bullard, “European Union,” n.d.

to revise the EEC treaty should be avoided and decisions should exclusively “be taken by the heads of government themselves”.⁴⁷² However, for tactical reasons an IGC should not be opposed openly, especially since the Italian government was holding the rotating European Council presidency and was very much in favour of convening an IGC.⁴⁷³ The plan was that once an agreement on the PoCo paper had been reached the paper could be turned into a formal agreement. However, Renwick added that the circle of officials who would see it should be kept to a small “drafting group”.⁴⁷⁴

Geoffrey Howe presented the PoCo paper to Thatcher as a commitment to do more in an area where the British government was already active and to do so within a NATO context. He argued this paper suggested that PoCo would be kept in an intergovernmental framework.⁴⁷⁵ Therefore, Howe said that the commitments entered into as part of this agreement would not prevent a country from acting in its own national interest. The paper largely described existing foreign policy consultations. The only new element was a commitment to support the foreign and security policies of other EC countries, but to do so in a non-binding way. Howe argued that the point of an agreement on foreign policy cooperation was to prevent “public rows” between EC member states on questions of foreign policy. Howe also said, however, that he believed the other EC countries wanted to see a mention of security cooperation within the EC in such an agreement.⁴⁷⁶

At the beginning of May, the Prime Minister approved the draft paper on PoCo.⁴⁷⁷ After reading the paper again a week later she reportedly described it to Geoffrey Howe as “a stroke of genius”.⁴⁷⁸ Why Thatcher was suddenly so elated about the paper is not recorded. A

⁴⁷² Underline in the original. Ibid.

⁴⁷³ TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 151, R. Renwick to J. Bullard, “European Union,” n.d.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ TNA FCO30/6168, G. Howe to M. Thatcher, “Political Cooperation”, 26 April 1985.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁷ TNA FCO98/2369, folio no. 39, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “Political Cooperation,” 6 May 1985; FCO30/6168, folio no. 165, R. Renwick to C. Powell, “Secretary of state’s meeting with the Prime Minister: Development of the European community,” 7 May 1985.

⁴⁷⁸ TNA FCO33/7974, folio no. 52, L. Appleyard to R. Renwick, “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl,” 13 May 1985.

possible explanation could be that it was in line with her original thinking in response to the report of the Dooge Committee, to which she had commented that she could not agree to majority voting on PoCo, nor indeed to extending the scope of the current informal practice. However, she had said that she was prepared to formalise the existing form of PoCo provided the ability to act independently was maintained. Very importantly, Thatcher did not accept the suggestion to call the PoCo paper a “treaty”.⁴⁷⁹ The most she was prepared to do was call it a “draft”.⁴⁸⁰ It is significant that Thatcher neither opted for Bullard’s “bold” idea of an “eye catching preamble” nor agreed to include the words “treaty” or “European Union” in the title. The fact that Thatcher toned down the proposal for PoCo and disagreed to calling the document a “treaty” is important because giving the paper the form of a treaty was precisely what the French and German governments wanted to do.

The question of whether or not to give the PoCo paper the force and status of a treaty gives us a small window into the differences in attitudes towards European integration between Thatcher and the FCO. Robin Renwick wrote to Charles Powell to explain that Bullard’s idea of calling this paper a “treaty” was good and that he was not prepared to abandon it just yet.⁴⁸¹ Nevertheless, he felt that it was still too early to raise the issue with Thatcher again.⁴⁸² Renwick said to the British ambassador to France that even though he “hope[d]” that eventually Thatcher was going to acquiesce to calling the paper a “treaty”, the strategy for the time being was to not tell anybody that the FCO was already prepared to do so.⁴⁸³ Malcolm Rifkind, who was Thatcher’s “personal representative” to the Dooge Committee also shared this view.⁴⁸⁴ However, Charles Powell told Colin Budd that “the Prime Minister was not convinced it would be right to describe the agreement as a treaty”.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁷⁹ TNA FCO98/2370, folio no. 68, C. Powell to C. Budd, “Prime Minister’s talks with Chancellor Kohl,” 19 May 1985.

⁴⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸¹ TNA FCO30/6168, folio no. 165, R. Renwick to C. Powell, “Secretary of state’s meeting with the Prime Minister: Development of the European community,” 7 May 1985.

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*

⁴⁸³ TNA FCO30/6168, folio no. 168, R. Renwick to J. Fretwell, “Development of the Community,” 9 May 1985.

⁴⁸⁴ TNA FCO98/2370, B. Donaldson to R. Renwick, “Political Cooperation: Agreement or Treaty?,” 16 May 1985.

⁴⁸⁵ TNA PREM19/1507, C. Powell to C. Budd, “Prime Minister’s talk with Chancellor Kohl,” 19 May 1985.

On the whole, the way in which the PoCo paper came about was not characterised by adversity between Thatcher and the FCO. On the contrary, the FCO worked within the policy framework that Thatcher had set out and Thatcher took the advice of the FCO and made the PoCo paper the central pillar of her policy towards the EC in spring 1985.

In summary, convincing Germany played an important role in Thatcher's strategy to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo. Thatcher displayed not only confidence in Kohl himself, but also a belief that through him she would be able to convince the rest of the European Council. The preparations for the bilateral meeting between Thatcher and Kohl brought into focus the attitudes of both leaders towards European integration. The British ambassador to Germany told the FCO that Kohl wanted to "earn his place in the history books" by advancing European integration, which Bullard was now beginning to take seriously, and that the UK government should prepare "bold" proposals that would go some way to meet Kohl's aspirations. Bullard argued that by proposing such a paper the UK would stand a chance to "box her full weight" in the European boxing ring, where France and Germany were the two major players. Such a paper would thus advance the UK's aspirations to leadership in the EC. The next section of this chapter analyses the German government's negotiating aims. In the final section British and German negotiating aims will be brought together to shed new light on how successful the first step of Britain's strategy to lead the EC into a codification of PoCo by convincing Helmut Kohl to back Thatcher's proposal actually was.

2. 2. German negotiating aims: "European Union"

How was the Chequers meeting prepared in Germany and how was the British negotiating position seen from Bonn? Horst Teltschik, one of the closest foreign policy advisors of Helmut Kohl,⁴⁸⁶ said to Julian Bullard that the Chequers meeting would constitute

⁴⁸⁶ Horst Teltschik was deputy secretary in the Federal Chancellery, head of the department of foreign relations, a close political advisor to Kohl and his speechwriter. Teltschik was sometimes dubbed to be "Kohl's Kissinger". This powerful post, coupled with his excellent personal relationship with the Chancellor, made him a

“the most important discussions on Europe this year”.⁴⁸⁷ In Bullard’s view this clearly illustrated that Germany attached the highest importance to this meeting.⁴⁸⁸ The briefing that the German foreign ministry prepared for Helmut Kohl began with the issue of European integration and emphasised the importance of the Dooge Committee.⁴⁸⁹ Many of Kohl’s briefings for other bilateral meetings began with broader international questions, mostly the Cold War or SDI, whereas this one put these discussions points after the issue of European integration. The fact that the German government wanted to speak about European integration first and everything else later says a lot about the importance Kohl attached to the ongoing discussions about how to further European integration. Kohl added handwritten comments to the paper, emphasising what he thought were important points or simply adding “ja” for paragraphs he agreed with. Unlike Margaret Thatcher, who did this routinely, such handwritten additions do not feature very often in the files on Europe at the Federal Chancellery. The German foreign ministry argued that the purpose of the bilateral Kohl-Thatcher meeting was to “persuade the UK to progress further in European politics than [had been achieved] in the Dooge Committee and aim towards developing the community into a political union”.⁴⁹⁰

Why was the German foreign ministry under the impression that such progress was necessary, or that Kohl could do that? In many ways the answer to this question rests in the closeness of the negotiating position between the two countries. Both wanted the Single

very powerful actor in German foreign policy circles, reportedly to the point of sidelining foreign minister and coalition partner Hans-Dietrich Genscher. TNA FCO33/7975, “Horst Teltschik,” n.d.; Jogi Bär, *Bonner Köpfe: Horst Teltschik (WDR 1989, BR Alpha, 2010)*, accessed 17 January 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVnuqh1xyK4>; Christoph Bertram, ‘Kohls außenpolitischer Berater: Ausstieg eines Seiteneinsteigers’, *Die Zeit*, 14 December 1990, accessed 28 November 2018, <https://www.zeit.de/1990/51/ausstieg-eines-seiteneinsteigers>; Jürgen Leinemann, ‘Ich Wirke Oft Farblos Und Nüchtern’, *Der Spiegel*, 18 November 1985, accessed 17 January 2019, <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-13515494.html>.

⁴⁸⁷ TNA FCO33/7974, J. Bullard to M. Llwellyn-Smith, “Chequers meeting, 18 May,” 11 March 1985.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁹ BArch, B136/30076, H. Teltschik to W. Schreckenberger, “Gespräch mit PM Thatcher am 18./19. Mai 1985 in Chequers,” fol. 165ff.

⁴⁹⁰ “GB zu substanziellen europapolitischen Fortschritten zu bewegen, die sich über den Dooge-Bericht hinaus auf die Weiterentwicklung der Gemeinschaft zur Politischen Union richten” (my translation) PAAA, B200, Bd. 130388, “Gespräche des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18./19. Mai 1985,” 15 May 1985.

Market extended and both were for foreign policy cooperation.⁴⁹¹ Scope for movement on the part of the UK government to further close the gap between the positions of Germany and the UK seemed possible because the German foreign ministry believed that Geoffrey Howe had made a “fundamental statement” when he argued that the UK was committed to European integration and that this was not a “static” but an evolving “process”.⁴⁹² This statement was based on the belief that Thatcher had committed the UK to playing a positive role in the EC when she presented the paper “Europe – the Future” at the European Council in Fontainebleau, in June 1984.⁴⁹³ In spite of this perceived commitment, the German embassy reported that Thatcher was critical of the idea to hold an IGC and that the British government was keeping its options open.⁴⁹⁴ An internal document at the German foreign ministry suggested that Kohl should not commit himself to an IGC either because this would create public expectations that perhaps could not be met.⁴⁹⁵ Afterwards, a handwritten note was scribbled on the briefing by someone in the German foreign ministry which argued that the German government was either for an additional treaty or for changing the EEC treaty.⁴⁹⁶ Even though an unattributed scrawl is weak evidence, this note shows that although an IGC was not yet confirmed policy it was discussed in the German foreign ministry.

At the Chequers meeting the German government wanted to explain their position on the issue of “European Union” and find out the British views on “this fundamental question”.⁴⁹⁷ Because of the historically different use of the term “Union” in the UK, Kohl was briefed that he should explain to Thatcher “our fundamental position on the question of a

⁴⁹¹ Ibid.; BArch, B136/30076, H. Teltschik to W. Schreckenberger, “Gespräch mit PM Thatcher am 18./19. Mai 1985 in Chequers,” fol. 165ff.

⁴⁹² “Grundaussage”; “ein Prozess, kein statischer Zustand” (my translation) PAAA, B200, Bd. 130388, “Vermerk, Brit. Haltung zur EG,” 14 May 1985.

⁴⁹³ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁵ PAAA, B200, Bd. 130388, “Gespräche des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18./19. Mai 1985,” 15 May 1985.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁷ “in dieser grundsätzlichen Frage” (my translation) BArch, B136/30076, H. Teltschik to W. Schreckenberger, “Gespräch mit PM Thatcher am 18./19. Mai 1985 in Chequers,” fol. 169.

[European] Union”:⁴⁹⁸ The German view was that the envisaged “Union” would show that “for those who join it, the process of political unification [would be] irreversible”.⁴⁹⁹ The evidence shows that the German government wanted the UK to be included because Kohl was briefed to tell Thatcher that he “expressly” wanted to see the UK play an “active role” because the “European pillar which we want to strengthen would be weakened from the outset” if the UK was not included.⁵⁰⁰ Horst Teltschik wrote in his briefing to Kohl that he saw “a certain contradiction” in the British position.⁵⁰¹ On the one hand, Geoffrey Howe argued for “formalising the currently informal institutions (of EPC)”.⁵⁰² On the other hand, Malcolm Rifkind, although interacting “quite constructively” in the Dooge Committee, said that “the UK saw no need for a new treaty”.⁵⁰³ Therefore, Teltschik was “doubtful” whether the UK would support a treaty on “European Union”.⁵⁰⁴ He emphasised that from the point of view of the German government the report of the Dooge Committee “could be characterised” as a “first step towards a Union”.⁵⁰⁵

In the German thinking on a “European Union”, foreign and security cooperation played an important role.⁵⁰⁶ To deepen such cooperation, “binding commitments” on foreign policy consultations should be entered into and a small secretariat should be established.⁵⁰⁷ Teltschik argued that the “current” way of coordinating foreign policy, which was largely “based on a series of declarations”, was “not enough if the EC wanted to take a serious step towards a common European foreign policy”.⁵⁰⁸ One option to strengthen security

⁴⁹⁸ "Es wäre daher wichtig, PM Thatcher noch einmal unsere grundsätzliche Haltung zur Frage einer 'Union', zu verdeutlichen" (my translation) Ibid., 169.

⁴⁹⁹ “Die Gründung einer ‘Union’ würde weiterhin sichtbar unterstreichen, dass für diejenigen die ihr beitreten der Prozess der politischen Einigung irreversibel ist” (my translation) Ibid., 169.

⁵⁰⁰ "ausdrücklich", "aktive Britische Rolle", "der europäische Pfeiler, den wir stärken wollen wäre von vornherein geschwächt" (my translation) Ibid., 169.

⁵⁰¹ “ein gewissen Widerspruch” (my translation) Ibid., fol. 169.

⁵⁰² Underline in the original. “die gegenwärtigen informellen Einrichtungen (der EPZ) zu formalisieren” (my translation) Geoffrey Howe quoted in Ibid., fol. 168.

⁵⁰³ “durchaus konstruktiv”, “GB halte einen neuen Unionsvertrag für nicht erforderlich” (my translation) Ibid.

⁵⁰⁴ “zweifelhaft” (my translation) Ibid.

⁵⁰⁵ “als ‘ersten Schritt auf dem Weg zur Union’ charakterisieren könnte” (my translation) Ibid., fol. 167.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁷ “bindende Verpflichtungen ... Konsultationen” (my translation) Ibid.

⁵⁰⁸ “Die bisherige EPZ ist durch eine Reihe von Absichtserklärungen politisch abgesichert. Dies ist aus unserer Sicht nicht ausreichend, wenn wir ernsthaft den Schritt auf eine gemeinsame europäische Aussenpolitik hintun wollen.” (my translation) Ibid., fol. 170.

cooperation could be to do so in the Western European Union (WEU).⁵⁰⁹ The WEU could be linked to the security objectives of a “future ‘European Union’”.⁵¹⁰ Teltschik’s briefing for Kohl argued further that the EP should be given “more than just symbolic co-decision making powers in the real legislative processes of the community” because the community would grow apart from its citizens if the democratic element of the EC were not strengthened.⁵¹¹ To this text Kohl added the comment, “yes, more responsibility”.⁵¹² One point where Kohl wrote in his own hand the word “important” twice, and further underlined much of the text was where the document mentioned extending the Single Market.⁵¹³ The briefing argued that Germany and the UK both agreed on the “urgent necessity” of extending the Single Market.⁵¹⁴ Germany was aware that the UK was “especially insistent” on reducing barriers to trade in services.⁵¹⁵ The German position was that these barriers, such as liberalising the insurance or travel markets, could only be reduced if this was accompanied by policies to harmonise laws in order to prevent market distortions and to protect consumers.⁵¹⁶ Germany hoped that the UK would not take an “all or nothing position” on this issue and would accept the liberalisation of insurances for large industrial risks as a first step, i.e. a concession.⁵¹⁷

Three observations can be made about Kohl’s briefing for the Chequers summit: firstly, it shows how unflinching German support for European integration was. The German government saw it to be in their national interest to base their foreign policies in a European context and Kohl was prepared to make commitments strengthening European institutions. These documents show that the British ambassador, Julian Bullard, had been entirely correct in his assumptions of Kohl’s intentions to take steps towards a European Union.⁵¹⁸ The case

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid., fol. 167-8.

⁵¹⁰ “zukünftige ‘Europäische Union’”(my translation) Ibid.

⁵¹¹ “mehr als nur symbolischer Einstieg in echte Mitentscheidungsrechte beim Legislativverfahren der Gemeinschaft” (my translation) Ibid., fol. 170.

⁵¹² “ja mehr Verantwortung” (my translation) Ibid.

⁵¹³ “wichtig” (my translation) Ibid., fol. 171, 76.

⁵¹⁴ “dringend notwendig” (my translation) Ibid., fol. 171, 76

⁵¹⁵ “besonderem Nachdruck” (my translation) Ibid.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid.

⁵¹⁷ “Alles-oder-Nichts Haltung” (my translation) Ibid., fol. 177

⁵¹⁸ TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 150, J. Bullard to R. Renwick, “European Union,” 15 April 1985.

of liberalising the insurance market also shows that the German commitment to European integration went hand in hand with defending German interests on points of detail. The larger point for the German government was that some kind of shared foreign policy mechanism was not going far enough in terms of new commitments to European integration. This relates to the second observation: although Germany insisted that the proposed “European Union” would not be as strong as it could be if the UK was not included, there was a veiled threat in this text of moving ahead anyway. The text spoke of “those who enter” the proposed “union” would affirm that European integration was “irreversible” for them.⁵¹⁹ To clarify this point further, the briefing has a section which pointed out that if not all member countries were prepared to join the proposed “union” then Germany would be thinking about moving ahead with a “core group” of countries.⁵²⁰ Kohl, however, underlined the part where an “active British role” was mentioned, which indicates that he absolutely wanted to include the UK, or at least believed this to be the preferable option.⁵²¹

Thirdly, it is on the question as to how this term – “European Union” – would be interpreted that would decide whether the difference in the negotiating positions between Germany and the UK was large or small. The German government was aware of the priorities of the UK government, which emphasised completing the Single Market and codifying foreign policy cooperation.⁵²² Germany and the UK agreed on the broader issues of extending the Single Market and formalising EPC/PoCo. Their differences consisted of more detailed questions on how the market for services should be liberalised, the extra powers that the European Parliament should be given and the much broader notion of “European Union”. If one interpreted the term “European Union” as a rhetorical device, possibly designed to rally the pro-European members of the *Bundestag* around a policy, the differences in reality would have been very slight indeed. Geoffrey Howe subscribed to this view when he told Thatcher

⁵¹⁹ "diejenigen die ihr beitreten"; "irreversibel" (my translation) BArch, B136/30076, H. Teltschik to W. Schreckenberger, "Gespräch mit PM Thatcher am 18./19. Mai 1985 in Chequers," fol. 169.

⁵²⁰ "Kerngruppe" (my translation) Ibid., fol. 172.

⁵²¹ "aktive Britische Rolle". Ibid, fol. 169.

⁵²² Ibid., fol. 168.

that the pragmatic ideas which the UK was advocating would eventually carry the day because the “doctrinal” arguments were over and the “far-fetched” ideas would eventually be abandoned in favour of policies to which the UK could agree.⁵²³ Howe did not spell out what the differences between these policies were. However, if this assumption was wrong and European Union meant a serious and irreversible pooling of aspects of sovereignty, then the term European Union could mean a great deal more. In the former case, both countries would have wanted to achieve the same policies, but by a different name. In the latter case, both positions would be diverging rapidly from each other to expose fundamental differences on substantive policy questions. This was eventually what happened. What these questions were and how the differences over them were laid bare, in this one crucial encounter between Helmut Kohl and Margaret Thatcher, will be examined in the following section of this chapter.

2. 3. Competing views on the European Community

The third part of this chapter aims to bring together the threads of the previous two sections by explaining how the meeting between Thatcher and Kohl on 18 May 1985 played out. This analysis is based on three first-hand accounts of the meeting. The first is a summary of the meeting prepared by Margaret Thatcher’s Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Charles Powell.⁵²⁴ The second and third are two accounts of the meeting by Walter Neuer.⁵²⁵ Neuer was a foreign policy advisor to Kohl as well as a department head at the German Federal Chancellery.⁵²⁶ One is a summary and the other is a very detailed, almost verbatim report of the meeting.⁵²⁷ With such detailed evidence of what was discussed, it is possible to compare

⁵²³ TNA PREM19/1491, G. Howe to M. Thatcher, “Milan European Council: Development of the Community,” 25 June 1985.

⁵²⁴ TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985; attachment: “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985.

⁵²⁵ BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985,” 19 May 1985, fol. 239 ff.

⁵²⁶ He was head of the department “European integration, bilateral relations to states of Western Europe and Turkey” (“Europäische Einigung, bilaterale Beziehungen zu westeuropäischen Staaten und der Türkei”, my translation) Pautsch et al., *Akten Zur Auswärtigen Politik Der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1985*, 2016, 2: 1942.

⁵²⁷ BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 259 ff.

and contrast the minutes from the German and the UK sources. The fact that both governments kept such detailed accounts of this meeting goes some way to show that it was judged to have been an important encounter. For the UK government this meeting was important because the entire diplomacy of the British government for the European Council in Milan hinged on it. As explained above, Thatcher did not meet any other heads of government before the Milan summit. Whether or not she could persuade the European Council to back her plans to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo depended therefore to a large extent on Thatcher's ability to convince Kohl of her ideas. Hence, the stakes were high for the British government. What was discussed at this high-level bilateral meeting turned out to be an important part in the history of the SEA.⁵²⁸

On 18 May 1985, Margaret Thatcher, Helmut Kohl and their advisors sat down to a four-hour meeting which was only interrupted by a short break to read the documents which Thatcher gave to Kohl. Thatcher was accompanied by David Williamson, head of the European Secretariat at the Cabinet Office, and Charles Powell, Thatcher's Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Helmut Kohl was flanked by Horst Teltschik and Walter Neuer, two close political advisors, as well as Jürgen Ruhfus, who was the former German ambassador to the UK, the German representative in the Dooge Committee and *Staatssekretär* (i.e. holding the rank of a permanent secretary) in the German foreign ministry. The meeting began with a short discussion of the American Strategic-Defence Initiative and then turned to European questions.⁵²⁹ According to Charles Powell's summary, Thatcher began by explaining that she did not think an IGC to change the EEC treaty "would help" in the "future development" of the EEC and that "rather to her surprise she had found that Mitterrand shared this view".⁵³⁰

⁵²⁸ How these issues played out at the European Council in Milan, on 28-9 June 1985 and how Thatcher's PoCo paper could be subsumed into a German-French draft agreement on "European Union" will be analysed in chapter three.

⁵²⁹ BArch, B136/30076, "Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985," 19 May 1985, fol. 239 ff.; "Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985," 22 May 1985, fol. 259 ff.

⁵³⁰ TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, "Prime Minister's meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community," 19 May 1985; attachment: "Prime Minister's meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community," 19 May 1985, 1.

She said she preferred deciding the future of the EC in the European Council.⁵³¹ Walter Neuer's account argued that Thatcher sounded "disinclined" to hold an IGC.⁵³² According to Neuer, Thatcher suggested that every European Council meeting was in essence an IGC.⁵³³ Thatcher told Kohl that she wanted to codify PoCo and extend the Single Market in an intergovernmental agreement, which she argued was preferable to holding an IGC. She believed this was achievable because "the Europeans have become more realistic".⁵³⁴ After all, "one had to take into account the national interests and what one's own parliament could agree to".⁵³⁵ In addition, Thatcher believed that Mitterrand was against holding an IGC too.⁵³⁶ Kohl replied noncommittally that the decision to convene an IGC could only be taken after the European Council in Milan, when it would become clear if an IGC would be successful.⁵³⁷

Thatcher proceeded to present her PoCo draft and according to Powell explained that "we had not yet shown this to anyone else" and that Thatcher "would prefer knowledge of it to be closely restricted".⁵³⁸ The German side was aware that Thatcher asked Kohl to "treat" her PoCo draft "very confidentially".⁵³⁹ They understood that Geoffrey Howe would show the paper on 21 May to the French government.⁵⁴⁰ They learned that the intention of the British government was to present the PoCo paper together with France and Germany, either before or at the upcoming European Council in Milan.⁵⁴¹ The German minutes of the meeting noted that Thatcher said she might be ready to present this document as a "treaty" to the House of

⁵³¹ Ibid.

⁵³² "ablehnend" (my translation) BArch, B136/30076, "Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985," 19 May 1985, fol. 240.

⁵³³ BArch, B136/30076, "Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985," 22 May 1985, fol. 261.

⁵³⁴ "Die Europäer seien jetzt realistischer geworden" (my translation) Ibid.

⁵³⁵ "Man müsse sich nationalen Interessen bewusst sein und abwägen, was im eigenen Parlament durchsetzbar sei" (my translation) Ibid.

⁵³⁶ Ibid., fol. 261.

⁵³⁷ BArch, B136/30076, "Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985," 19 May 1985, fol. 240; B136/30076, "Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985," 22 May 1985, fol. 261.

⁵³⁸ TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, "Prime Minister's meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community," 19 May 1985; attachment: "Prime Minister's meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community," 19 May 1985, 1.

⁵³⁹ "mit der Bitte um sehr Restriktive Behandlung" (my translation) BArch, B136/30076, "Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985," 19 May 1985, fol. 240.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁴¹ Ibid., fol. 239.

Commons.⁵⁴² Charles Powell's summary makes no mention of this eventuality. According to the German minutes, Kohl replied that he welcomed this paper, adding that both countries were in agreement on the majority of issues but that the German government wanted to "go further" in pursuing a shared foreign policy.⁵⁴³ In Powell's summary Kohl's reply looks very different. Powell noted that Kohl "very much agreed with the Prime Minister on the desirability of a formal agreement on political co-operation. We would not find Germany an obstacle to that".⁵⁴⁴ Neuer also remembered that Kohl argued that "he hoped very much that the United Kingdom, France and FRG could get together to work up ideas which all three of them could sponsor at the Milan European Council".⁵⁴⁵

Helmut Kohl and his advisors read the documents during a break. Kohl said that "the Federal Republic would be able to agree broadly with them" and that there should be "early discussions between senior officials".⁵⁴⁶ Moreover, he hoped that "France could also be drawn in".⁵⁴⁷ According to the Neuer's account, Kohl said that the German government would be in touch to suggest alterations or additions within the next few days.⁵⁴⁸ Kohl argued one could "go furthest" in the EC when the UK, France and Germany agreed on a "shared position".⁵⁴⁹ Kohl did not explain what this position should be, nor who should coordinate or lead it. It is highly significant that Powell and Neuer had very different views on this particular part of the discussion. Powell emphasised the general agreement to work collaboratively. Neuer on the other hand put a lot of emphasis on what to the UK sounded like a vague notion of "going further". Kohl would before the Milan summit mention "going

⁵⁴² Ibid., fol. 240-1.

⁵⁴³ Ibid., fol. 241.

⁵⁴⁴ TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, "Prime Minister's meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community," 19 May 1985; attachment: "Prime Minister's meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community," 19 May 1985, 2.

⁵⁴⁵ BArch, B136/30076, "Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985," 19 May 1985, fol. 241.

⁵⁴⁶ TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, "Prime Minister's meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community," 19 May 1985; attachment: "Prime Minister's meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community," 19 May 1985, 4.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁸ BArch, B136/30076, "Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985," 19 May 1985, fol. 241.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid.

further” again to Thatcher in a personal letter, which shows that he attached importance to it. From neither of the accounts is it clear whether any explanation was attempted of what “going further” would mean in practice. However, there is evidence in all three minutes that Kohl promised to set the wheels in motion to get senior officials to discuss the PoCo paper that Thatcher had given to him. However, as will be explained below, these consultations on developing the PoCo paper into a shared Anglo-German initiative never took place.

Towards the end of the afternoon, Kohl asked Thatcher what would happen if not all countries supported strengthening foreign and security policies?⁵⁵⁰ Powell’s account states that Thatcher only replied that “this would require careful thought”.⁵⁵¹ According to Neuer’s summary, Kohl professed to wanting to pursue the envisaged policies together with the seven or eight countries that were in favour of PoCo.⁵⁵² With this question Kohl arguably contradicted his earlier statement saying that he refused to accept “two groups of member countries”, one for “trade” and the other one for “defence”.⁵⁵³ Kohl said he did not believe that Europe could only work on an economic basis and be defended by the USA.⁵⁵⁴ According to Powell’s account, Thatcher agreed and argued that the British PoCo paper provided for a way to conduct more consultations on security issues.⁵⁵⁵ Kohl replied that he had thought about increasing security cooperation through the Western European Union (WEU).⁵⁵⁶ According to Neuer’s account, Thatcher replied that she saw possibilities to pursue these policies in the framework of WEU but that Spain and Portugal should also be

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid., fol. 268; TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985; attachment: “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985, 6.

⁵⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵⁵² Ibid.; BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985,” 19 May 1985, fol. 242.

⁵⁵³ “zwei Gruppen von Mitgliedstaaten...Handel...Verteidigung” (my translation) BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 263; TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985; attachment: “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985, 3.

⁵⁵⁴ BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 263.

⁵⁵⁵ TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985; attachment: “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985, 3.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid.

included.⁵⁵⁷ However, Thatcher said that “any anti-American accentuation should be avoided”, which she believed was one danger in pursuing these initiatives in the framework of WEU.⁵⁵⁸ She argued that “under no circumstances” should the EC “alienate” the USA and Canada.⁵⁵⁹ Thatcher asked if the USA and Canada could not be given observer status at the WEU?⁵⁶⁰ Jürgen Ruhfus interjected that he believed Atlantic relations were already very close.⁵⁶¹

Thatcher also presented Kohl with a timetable on implementing the Single Market. According to Powell, Kohl said that he was “fully in favour of a timetable for work on the Internal Market” and that the “Dooge Committee had done some useful work”.⁵⁶² Kohl explained that he thought transport and capital transfers should be liberalised but “had difficulties over insurance”.⁵⁶³ According to Neuer, Kohl replied that the problem he had with liberalising the insurance market was that the time horizon suggested by the British government was too short.⁵⁶⁴ Germany was committed to liberalising services even though this might prove challenging for some sectors of the Germany economy.⁵⁶⁵ Returning to the larger issues, Kohl argued that in the conversation on the Single Market one also had to talk about shared European norms, “otherwise the discussion was pointless”.⁵⁶⁶ Kohl hoped that

⁵⁵⁷ BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 268; “Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985,” 19 May 1985, fol. 242.

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid., “Allerdings müsse jeglicher Anti-Amerikanische Akzent vermieden werden” (my translation) BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 263-4.

⁵⁵⁹ “dürfte man sich die USA und Kanada unter keinen Umständen entfremden” sic. (my translation) Ibid., fol. 263.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., 264.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid.

⁵⁶² TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985; attachment: “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985, 2.

⁵⁶³ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁴ BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 262-3; B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985,” 19 May 1985, fol. 240-1.

⁵⁶⁵ An example that Kohl mentioned was the transport industry. Kohl argued that Germany had in this regard almost become “a province of the Netherlands” (“Was das Transportwesen anbelange seien wir inzwischen fast eine niederländische Provinz geworden” (my translation)). To find an agreement with the Netherlands on the transport sector would prove difficult. Kohl argued that rail transport should be incentivised more but that this was hampered by operational difficulties at the German Bundesbahn. BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 262.

⁵⁶⁶ “Sonst sei die Diskussion sinnlos” (my translation) Ibid.

the proposals of the Dooge Committee could be the basis on which to develop the question of the Single Market further.⁵⁶⁷ Kohl said that “open borders” were for Germany “no problem”.⁵⁶⁸ Thatcher replied that she was worried about a “drug problem”, to which Kohl replied that this was compounded in Germany by all the American soldiers who were stationed in Germany.⁵⁶⁹

The third paper that Thatcher gave to Kohl argued that the European Council should set certain frameworks and goals for a time of twelve months and could work as a mechanism for countries to agree not to use the Luxembourg Compromise.⁵⁷⁰ Thatcher reiterated that “she saw no need to alter the [EEC] Treaty: all that was necessary could be achieved by altering current practice within the treaty” to make use of existing provisions for majority voting in the EEC treaty, which were currently often taken unanimously.⁵⁷¹ According to Neuer, Thatcher said that she was prepared for more majority voting but that the UK wanted to keep the Luxembourg Compromise.⁵⁷² All minutes state that Thatcher argued for keeping a reference to “a very important national interest” or “vital interests”, which she believed was a “practical necessity” and in everyone’s interest.⁵⁷³ Kohl replied that he wanted to see the

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁸ “Offene Grenzen seien für D kein Problem” (my translation) Ibid.

⁵⁶⁹ “Drogenproblem” (my translation) Ibid.

⁵⁷⁰ TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985; attachment: “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985; BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985,” 19 May 1985, fol. 241; “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 266.

⁵⁷¹ TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985; attachment: “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985, 4.

⁵⁷² BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985,” 19 May 1985, fol. 241; “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 266.

⁵⁷³ “Vitale Interessen...praktisches Erfordernis” (my translation) Ibid; TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985; attachment: “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985, 4.

The reference to “a very important national interest, or “vital interests”, was another way of referring to the Luxembourg Compromise, because of the way this compromise was originally worded, which allowed for discussions in the Council of Ministers to continue until such time as the vital interest of the country that invoked the agreement had been taken into account.

Luxembourg Compromise abolished and refocus decision making on the EEC treaty.⁵⁷⁴

However, since Germany paid the most into the EC budget he wanted to keep a “veto” on financial issues.⁵⁷⁵ According to Powell’s minutes he spoke of a “financial veto”.⁵⁷⁶ All accounts of the meeting are broadly in line on the issue of votes and vetoes. The nuance between the two leaders’ views on how to develop the issue is however interesting. Thatcher wanted to develop the issue by extending majority voting within existing EEC treaty provisions and wanted to keep the status quo of the Luxembourg Compromise. Kohl wanted in the long term to return to the status quo ante, abolishing the Luxembourg compromise despite his government having just invoked it, but was not sure if on financial issues it might not be better to keep it.

All accounts are clear that the most obvious point of disagreement between Thatcher and Kohl was about how much additional power should be given to the EP and whether or not it was a parliament at all.⁵⁷⁷ According to Powell, Kohl said that he wanted to give the EP more power because it was directly elected.⁵⁷⁸ Thatcher replied that it already had a significant say in the budget making process but “showed no sign of using these powers responsibly”.⁵⁷⁹ According to Neuer, Thatcher was “categorically” against giving the EP more powers and described it as “petulant and petty”.⁵⁸⁰ She referred to the EP as “assembly” and argued that under no circumstances should it be given the right to levy taxes, a right which in

⁵⁷⁴ BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985,” 19 May 1985, fol. 241; “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 263.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁶ Helmut Kohl quoted in TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985; attachment: “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985, 3.

⁵⁷⁷ Neuer’s account noted that Kohl concluded the discussion on this topic by saying that there was “no agreement”. (“keine Übereinstimmung”, my translation) Ibid., fol. 268. TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985; attachment: “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985, 3, 5.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁰ “kategorisch” (my translation) BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985,” 19 May 1985, fol. 242.

the UK only the House of Commons had.⁵⁸¹ Kohl “interjected that constitutions could be changed” but said that the larger point he wanted to make was that because the EP was democratically elected he thought it should be given more competences.⁵⁸² Thatcher replied that the EP “was only an ‘assembly’, which did not have the character of a parliament – nor did it have the same coherence”.⁵⁸³ Thatcher also mentioned an incident when members of the EP walked out during an address by US president Ronald Reagan, which to Thatcher showed that “this body should have no additional powers”.⁵⁸⁴ All accounts match on Thatcher’s only suggestion for a compromise. She suggested that as long as the European Council kept the last word the EP could be involved more through the already existing conciliation procedure, by which differences in views between the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament were reconciled in a committee.⁵⁸⁵

According to Powell’s account, Kohl said that the issue of technology had not yet been covered today but that “the French clearly attached great importance to this and would probably provide proposals for discussion at Milan”.⁵⁸⁶ Thatcher suggested holding further consultations but argued that the “French ideas were imprecise” and that the principal problem was one of accessing the entire European market for companies that sold

⁵⁸¹ "die ‘Versammlung’ dürfe auf keinen Fall das Recht erhaben Steuern zu erheben" (my translation) BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 266.

⁵⁸² "warf hier ein, Verfassungen könne man ändern" (my translation) BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985,” 19 May 1985, fol. 242.

⁵⁸³ "es gebe nur eine ‘Versammlung’. Diese habe nicht den Charakter eines Parlaments. Sie habe auch nicht den gleichen Zusammenhalt" (my translation) BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 267.

⁵⁸⁴ Approximately 30 MEPs walked out on the US president when he addressed the EP. The walkout was led by Barbara Castle and most of the MEPs who walked out on Reagan were from the British Labour party. BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985,” 19 May 1985, fol. 242; "Dieses Gremium solle keine grösseren Befugnisse erhalten" (my translation) BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 267.

⁵⁸⁵ Since 1975 the conciliation procedure was a way in which the EP was involved in talks with the Council of Ministers on budgetary matters. BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985,” 19 May 1985, fol. 242; B136/30076, Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 267; TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985; attachment: “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985, 5.

⁵⁸⁶ TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985; attachment: “Prime Minister’s meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community,” 19 May 1985, 4.

technologically advanced products.⁵⁸⁷ The German impression was that Thatcher was “very reserved” on the issue of technological cooperation and said that such partnerships should be based on relations between companies and institutions.⁵⁸⁸ Thatcher argued that “the problem was that the Europeans were conducting research and the Japanese were implementing it”.⁵⁸⁹ Thatcher said that she was against new institutions coordinating research because Japanese companies were better at implementing research and at anticipating customers’ needs, which showed that the emphasis should lie on the implementation of research by private companies.⁵⁹⁰ A further problem was that the Japanese market was closed to exports from Europe.⁵⁹¹ To respond with import quotas, which the Italians had imposed, was not the answer.⁵⁹² Kohl agreed on the issue of Japan but argued that the UK and Germany should present a united response to the request for a collaborative response to SDI, the French EUREKA proposals and any proposal from the European Commission.⁵⁹³ Kohl was worried that the results of the research for SDI would stay in the USA and the benefits would not flow back to Europe.⁵⁹⁴ Yet the German Chancellor said he did not think the EC was the right forum to pursue these policies because it was too “ponderous”.⁵⁹⁵ Thatcher responded by warning that the USA should not be made to believe that the Europeans were “ganging up” against them when they were trying to exert influence together.⁵⁹⁶ Both heads of government agreed to coordinate their responses to SDI bilaterally with the USA.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁸ BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985,” 19 May 1985, fol. 242; B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 265.

⁵⁸⁹ “Das Problem sei, dass die Europäer forschten und die Japaner die Forschungsergebnisse anwendeten” (my translation) Ibid.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁹¹ Ibid.

⁵⁹² Ibid.

⁵⁹³ Ibid., BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985,” 19 May 1985, fol. 242.

⁵⁹⁴ BArch, B136/30076, “Vermerk, Treffen des Bundeskanzlers mit PM Thatcher in Chequers am 18. Mai 1985,” 22 May 1985, fol. 259-60.

⁵⁹⁵ “Schwerfällig” (my translation) Ibid., fol. 260.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid., fol. 261.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid., fol. 256, 259-61.

If one looks at the outcome of this meeting, then the subject of technological research is the only area where specific further action was agreed. It was agreed that the UK would send the chief scientific advisor, Robin Nicholson, to pursue further Anglo-German talks and Howe would talk to the French government.⁵⁹⁸ Kohl asked to be personally briefed on the outcome of these talks in preparation for his meeting with the French President.⁵⁹⁹ On the issue of technology one can see that there was a clear difference in focus between the two leaders. Kohl was in favour of a European response to SDI in terms of its technological developments and wanted to make sure he included Mitterrand's suggestions. Thatcher saw the problem not in technological terms but in terms of market access and therefore as a problem that companies had to resolve themselves. In her view, the role of the EC and its governments was to open markets and guarantee equal access to all European companies. Where the two leaders agreed, however, was that research coordination should not be included in the remit of the European Commission.

The most important issue on which both leaders agreed was that foreign policy should be coordinated more in the EC and that the Single Market should be extended. Where they disagreed was how this should be done. Powell said that Kohl agreed that PoCo should be codified and the Single Market be extended. According to Powell, on both issues Kohl said that Germany "would not be an obstacle".⁶⁰⁰ Powell said that he "was struck that [Kohl] never once, in the course of the day, referred either to European Union or to a new Treaty".⁶⁰¹ In Powell's account, Thatcher's refusal to change the EEC treaty features prominently. According to the German account, Thatcher said that in the right circumstances she was willing to present the PoCo paper as a treaty to be ratified by the House of Commons, rather

⁵⁹⁸ BArch, B136/30076, "Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985," 19 May 1985, fol. 242.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid., fol. 242-3.

⁶⁰⁰ TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, "Prime Minister's meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community," 19 May 1985; attachment: "Prime Minister's meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community," 19 May 1985, 4.

⁶⁰¹ TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, "Prime Minister's meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community," 19 May 1985.

than an intergovernmental agreement.⁶⁰² Kohl promised that once he had read the paper, he would initiate bilateral consultations on a diplomatic level. There is no reaction by Thatcher recorded to this remark.

Both Neuer's and Powell's accounts mention that German officials would be asked to discuss and consult on the PoCo paper. Very significantly, Kohl's remark that he wanted to "go further" in shared foreign policy is only in the German minutes, but is not in Powell's notes.⁶⁰³ This may have been because either Powell missed this particular remark, which would be extraordinary, or that he judged it not to be important enough to be included in his summary. This remark would later encapsulate a part of the explanation why Kohl would submit a new German-French paper that would propose creating a "Treaty of European Union". Interestingly, Kohl used exactly the same phrase to Thatcher in a letter one month later, which will be discussed in the next chapter. However ambiguous this phrase to "go further" was, for Kohl it had meaning. The fact that his offer to consult with UK officials was never taken up, nor repeated, could well have motivated him to work with Mitterrand to develop the notion of a "European Union", rather than support the intergovernmental PoCo agreement that Thatcher was proposing. Both Thatcher and Kohl's talks with Mitterrand, and how Thatcher's proposal for a PoCo agreement fared in the preparations for the Milan summit in June 1985, will be discussed in the next chapter.

In conclusion, the meeting between Thatcher and Kohl was an important turning point in the UK policy making towards the EC in 1985. It sheds light on the British approach to prepare for the upcoming Milan European Council. This meeting also sowed the seeds for Mitterrand and Kohl, taking their own secret initiative to amend Thatcher's paper and presenting it as their own, which is part of the events that will be analysed in the next chapter. This chapter argued that Thatcher made a mistake by presenting her PoCo paper as a personal

⁶⁰² BArch, B136/30076, "Vermerk, Treffen des BK mit PM Thatcher in Chequers 18.05.1985," 19 May 1985, fol. 240-1.

⁶⁰³ Ibid.

initiative and by discussing it only with Kohl. By only meeting the German Chancellor, and simply informing France on the sidelines, Thatcher risked missing out on how central the German-French partnership was on a European level. In addition, by neither informing the presidency of the European Council nor the European Commission, Thatcher circumvented many institutions of the EC. They could have helped her to turn the PoCo paper into a shared agreement. The FCO would have had structures and people in place to negotiate such an agreement, UKRep being a case in point. Thatcher presented Kohl with three papers: one on PoCo, one on the Single Market and one on taking decisions in the EC. Geoffrey Howe had suggested this approach to Thatcher and argued it would give her the ability to shape the discussion at an early point and force other countries to work on the basis of her proposals.

The three papers suggested an extension of the Single Market and a codification of PoCo. However, their aim was also to proactively suggest a way forward, not just for Britain in the EC but for the entire community. This is an important aspect because it shows that Thatcher's policy towards the SEA was not insular but relied on a strategy that placed Britain at the centre of decision making in the EC. Moreover, it was an attempt to lead in the European Council together with Kohl, but also by keeping France informed, in the expectation that Mitterrand would back Thatcher. As Thatcher saw it, her policy suggestions would work not only for Britain but would improve the way people lived and how politics worked, throughout the entire EC. This aspect of leadership and its wider European focus were important. The next chapter will argue that they became the cornerstone of Margaret Thatcher's strategy for the European Council in Milan, on 28-9 June 1985. Thatcher believed that these policies, with adaptations that allowed for national interests and Europe's diversity, could work for Europe. Most importantly, she advanced these proposals because she wanted to present a coherent alternative to what she saw as more introspective, protectionist and possibly even anti-American policies.

It is on the more contentious issues of foreign policy and defence that the different ways of negotiating in an EC context between Thatcher and Kohl become most apparent. Thatcher was fighting for principles, such as breaking down barriers (mostly to free trade), or western security, and saw detailed policy questions as aspects of these larger themes. She wanted to convince her interlocutors of the merit of these themes and the validity of the proposals that flowed from her thinking about them. In that way she presented both her views and also the manner in which she negotiated on points of detail as a coherent argument. Kohl's approach was different because he fought for the broader theme of "European Union" and wanted to base German foreign policy in the EC. Powell noted that he was "struck" that Kohl did not talk about this more at Chequers.⁶⁰⁴ This comment shows that Powell may not have fully realised what Kohl meant when he talked about the issue or how it served as an umbrella term for Kohl's other European Policies. "European Union" for him was not a policy that had to be achieved tomorrow, but was an overarching theme that brought together German foreign policy and set it in a European context. On points of detail Kohl firmly fought the corner of German national interests, policy by policy, whilst always affirming his commitment to the broader notion of "European Union". The fact that this notion was open ended and might entail future commitments did not worry him as much as it did Thatcher. Elements of broad thinking were in this way for Kohl somewhat removed from specific policy questions. For Thatcher, however, the specifics were always part of how she looked at broader political questions.

If the aim of the meeting was to clarify the views of Thatcher and Kohl to each other, then the summit was a success. Perhaps this was what Kohl expected. Bullard reported that the German Chancellor had been "in excellent spirits, rhapsodising about Chequers ... he obviously felt that he had had a good day and agreed with the Prime Minister about most of

⁶⁰⁴ TNA FCO30/6202, folio no. 25, C. D. Powell to L. Appleyard, "Prime Minister's meeting with Chancellor Kohl: Development of the European Community," 19 May 1985.

the points discussed, even though not about the powers of the European Parliament...”.⁶⁰⁵ Based on this evidence, Stephen Wall believed that Kohl was so happy on his way home because he had never wanted to convince Thatcher in the first place.⁶⁰⁶ Wall argued that since Kohl thought that Thatcher was not committed to the EC, he formed a “conclusion that an argument with the Prime Minister was best avoided”.⁶⁰⁷ However, comparing the British and German records of the meeting shows that there was much on which Kohl and Thatcher agreed in principle. Kohl and Thatcher were both in favour of extending the Single Market, both were for formalising foreign policy cooperation, both were against common taxes or financial regulations and both felt the need to take more decisions by majority voting. The points of agreement were thus all about policies for the EC that could work in the present. Where the two leaders disagreed was about how to develop the EC in the future. The two leaders differed on how much majority voting each found permissible and the question whether the Luxembourg Compromise should be institutionalised or abolished. In addition, Thatcher and Kohl disagreed on how much additional power the EP should be given. Finally, the greatest point of difference between both leaders was how comfortable they were with the term “European Union”.

In the points of disagreement one can see the fundamental misreading by Thatcher of Kohl. Thatcher’s PoCo paper was specific and detailed. This gave her control over the extent of European cooperation that she would or could commit to. Kohl’s notion of “going further” was vague, his aim of “European Union” broad and the road of how to get there not yet spelled out. Thatcher was sceptical about the term “European Union” but Kohl embraced it fully by arguing that it meant basing German foreign policy in a stronger, more institutionalised European context. Thatcher underestimated the extent to which Kohl was ready to collaboratively work out the details of the broad aims that he was pursuing. His offer

⁶⁰⁵ TNA FCO33/7974, folio no. 63, telegram no. 508, J. Bullard to FCO, “Chancellor Kohl’s visit to Chequers, 18 May,” 19 May 1985.

⁶⁰⁶ Wall, *The Official History of Britain and the European Community, Volume III*, 307.

⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

to collaborate in high-level diplomatic consultations to refine the paper was in all likelihood sincere. Yet why he did not repeat the offer, nor press it on an official level, is unclear. Perhaps he thought it would not be taken up by the UK. It is also not clear how far Thatcher's ambitions to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo together with Germany and France went. If Thatcher really wanted to break into the bilateral relationship between France and Germany and make it a trilateral triumvirate, then holding a high-level summit only with one side was a mistake. Kohl's regular meetings with Mitterrand could have been instructive here. The way in which both leaders spoke about Mitterrand and France is interesting. Thatcher expressed how "surprised" she was to find that Mitterrand did not want to hold an IGC either. This surprise suggests distance and unfamiliarity. Kohl told her confidently that he knew Mitterrand was attaching a lot of importance to technological cooperation, knowledge which suggests familiarity and closeness. These points could have just been turns of phrase. However, the way in which Mitterrand was informed of Thatcher's PoCo proposals whereas Kohl was invited to be "wooded" at Chequers suggests that Thatcher saw the German Chancellor to be her key ally in convincing the European Council to support her proposal to lead the EC into an intergovernmental agreement to codify PoCo.

This chapter showed how Thatcher accepted a plan that Geoffrey Howe had proposed, for an intergovernmental agreement to formalise PoCo and to work towards improving the EC within the remit of the existing EEC treaty, with a view to liberalise the Single Market further. Kohl's vision for a "European Union" was one of pursuing similar policies but to embed them in a political framework that would strengthen European integration and give the institutions of the EC more competences. Moreover, the two leaders had very different understandings of how diplomacy was conducted in the EC, which came to the fore in how they engaged in the European Council in June 1985. The next chapter will explain how Geoffrey Howe introduced the PoCo paper to other foreign ministers but ruled out consulting through official channels, which severely limited the ability of other countries to debate its content and sign up to the initiative. Moreover, the next chapter will analyse the

UK's preparations for the Milan European Council and examine how a German-French proposal, which was based on the British PoCo paper, came to overtake Thatcher's initiative to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo.

Chapter 3. Milan European Council: the end of Thatcher's leadership ambitions in the EC

At the European Council in Milan, on 28-9 June 1985, for the second time in the history of the European Community (EC), a major Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) was convened. The first IGC resulted in the founding treaty of the EEC, signed as the Treaty of Rome in 1957. The second IGC, in 1985, was a watershed in the history of the EC because it was a substantial renegotiation of the EEC treaty – for the first time since the EEC was created in 1957.⁶⁰⁸ The EEC treaty defined an IGC as the only way to negotiate changes to the articles of the treaty.⁶⁰⁹ The Milan European Council convened an IGC by majority vote and not as a unanimous decision, which had never been done before in the history of the EC. Therefore, this summit was an important turning point in the history of the Single European Act (SEA) as well as the entire EC. From a British standpoint, the key difference between the IGC in 1957 and the one in 1985 was that since 1973 the UK had been a member of the EC, which gave it the full rights of a member state to engage in the ongoing negotiations.

In the run-up to the European Council meeting in Milan, the policy making of the British government was focused on strengthening Anglo-German relations, which was seen to be of vital importance in persuading the European Council to adopt the policies that Thatcher was advocating. The previous two chapters argued that at the heart of the British policy making towards the EC was a paper that advocated codifying PoCo as intergovernmental agreement outside the EEC treaty. This chapter argues that the PoCo paper was an attempt by Thatcher to lead the EC, in cooperation with France and Germany, into the formalisation of European Political Cooperation (PoCo). Thatcher accepted the recommendation from Geoffrey Howe and the FCO to present the PoCo proposal personally as a high-level initiative

⁶⁰⁸ The Merger Treaty of 1965 had brought the institutions of the EEC, ECSC and Euratom together but did not change the articles of the treaties in any other way.

⁶⁰⁹ See article 236 of Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community (EEC treaty), accessed 22 December 2015, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV%3Axy0023>.

to the upcoming European Council in Milan.⁶¹⁰ It was personal because she would present it herself to her fellow heads of government in the upcoming European Council and high-level because she was going to do so without prior consultations by officials. As part of this strategy, Thatcher had handed Kohl in confidence an advance copy of her proposal. The Chequers meeting between Kohl and Thatcher, on 18 May 1985, showed that the difference between the positions of both governments was small on aspects of the Single Market and PoCo but much larger on questions of institutions and the broader scope of European integration. The differences between Thatcher and Kohl on these issues revealed fundamentally diverging attitudes on European integration and towards the role of EC institutions.

This chapter analyses the UK government's preparations for the Milan European Council. Geoffrey Howe suggested that Margaret Thatcher should present the British PoCo paper personally to the European Council, without the prior involvement of officials from any country. However, this presentation never came about because the British PoCo paper was wholly subsumed in a German-French proposal, which emerged just before the European Council.⁶¹¹ This German-French counter-proposal took the British paper as starting point but enhanced its institutional dimension and gave it the title "Treaty of European Union". This chapter sheds light on the question why and how the British policy towards the Milan European Council could be overtaken by a German-French initiative. This chapter first looks at a short meeting between Thatcher and Mitterrand, where both expressed themselves against holding an IGC. This section explains how the French government was shown a copy of the British PoCo paper under the condition that it was confidential. The UK government asked

⁶¹⁰ The term Political Cooperation (PoCo) was used in British primary sources, whereas European Political Cooperation (EPC) was used in French and German sources. They are otherwise synonymous. They both mean EC countries collaborating in aspects of foreign policy, such as in sharing information on their respective policies, coordinating statements or taking a common position at international organisations. My usage of these terms has followed the primary sources. For a study of EPC from 1970 to 1974 see Möckli, *European Foreign Policy during the Cold War: Heath, Brandt, Pompidou and the Dream of Political Unity*.

⁶¹¹ The paper is called German-French because the German government had taken the initiative to start these consultations and was leading them.

that officials should neither be allowed to discuss nor alter it. Secondly, this chapter looks at a meeting of foreign ministers to prepare the Milan European Council. Geoffrey Howe showed his counterparts the PoCo draft but explained that it was not supposed to be discussed by anyone until Thatcher herself had presented it to the European Council. I argue that this meeting was a missed opportunity to secure support for Thatcher's initiative, in a multilateral setting. Thirdly, this chapter analyses primary sources from the German *Bundesarchiv* and the *Politische Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes* to explain how Germany and France secretly wrote a paper that took the British proposals as starting point, but attempted to develop them further.⁶¹² The way in which Germany and France wrote their own EPC paper is important to contextualise British policy making and to gauge if there was any foul play involved in writing a conflicting paper, based on the British version, but without consulting the UK government. The final section of this chapter analyses how Thatcher and Howe negotiated in the Milan European Council.

This chapter argues that the European Council in Milan represented for Margaret Thatcher a moment when she showed an ambition to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo, in cooperation with Germany and France. This initiative had been Geoffrey Howe's suggestion, which he presented to Thatcher as a way to head off what he called "far-fetched ideas". Thatcher accepted this suggestion and was prepared to present the PoCo to the European Council in Milan. Since her personal representations had worked to settle the BBQ, perhaps she thought that she could build on this success in European diplomacy. Armed with this paper, Thatcher went to Milan with a plan to personally present her PoCo proposals. With these proposals, Thatcher wanted to lead the debate about how the EC should be reformed. The paper was designed to put forward a positive idea on collaborating more in foreign policy making but to do so without changing the EEC treaty. However, Thatcher's ambition to lead the EC into the formalisation of PoCo was shattered when it emerged that France and

⁶¹² The German National Archive and Political Archive of the Foreign Ministry.

Germany had been working on their own paper to reform the EC, which was based on an advance copy of Thatcher's draft. Germany and France took Thatcher's paper and turned it into an institutionally more ambitious "Treaty of European Union".

During the Milan summit it turned out that Mitterrand and Kohl were much more ready to hold an IGC than Thatcher and the FCO had assumed. Their previous conditional denials about wanting to hold an IGC was put to a test in a vote, where they were faced with a choice of either backing an IGC, or exposing their rhetoric of wanting to unite Europe as hollow. They voted to hold an IGC. Thatcher voted against an IGC but was outvoted seven to three. When thus outvoted, the policy of refusing to discuss changing the EEC treaty in an IGC became an untenable position for Thatcher. This was the moment when the UK government turned its focus away from attempting to lead the EC, with a proposal to formalise the hitherto informal practice of PoCo in an intergovernmental agreement, to one of cautiously engaging in the IGC. This vote exposed the crucial difference between the BBQ negotiations and the Milan European Council. In the former, Thatcher was in a position to prevent the EC from receiving more funds, because an increase in the VAT threshold needed all member states' support. However, to win support for her PoCo proposals in Milan, she needed to convince the other heads of government that her proposals were the best way of reviving the process of European integration.

The question of Political Cooperation and Britain's relations with France and Germany had been an important issue since the beginnings of European integration. The story of how the UK government stayed outside the ECSC, withdrew from the Messina talks in 1955, did not become a founding member of the EEC in 1957, and then negotiated three times for entry has been well-told. The "Pleven plan" for a European Defence Community and a supranational army came to naught when the French *Assemblée Nationale* refused to ratify it on 30 August 1954. Two months later, the Western European Union (WEU) was created in an amendment of the Brussels treaty that founded the Brussels Treaty Organisation, which both

were early forms of defence cooperation.⁶¹³ In 1961, Charles de Gaulle proposed the “Fouchet plan” as an intergovernmental “union of states” to coordinate foreign policy and defence of the six EEC countries, which held the prospect of including the UK.⁶¹⁴ However, De Gaulle’s alternative grouping of states around the notion of Political Cooperation never materialised. Instead, the EEC members established the Common Market, the Common Agricultural Policy and began accession negotiations for Denmark, the UK and Ireland, which were however brought to an abrupt halt by de Gaulle in 1963.

During what came to be known as the “Soames affair”, Charles de Gaulle attempted to bring the EC and EFTA together into a looser grouping of nation states. The plan fell apart when the UK informed Germany and the other EC countries of the idea. Furby and Ludlow argued that the Soames affair has been much researched because it sheds light on the question of whether or not a close relationship between Gaullist France and the UK under Prime Minister Wilson was ever possible.⁶¹⁵ More broadly, the Soames affair illuminated the tension between Soames’ attempt to negotiate bilaterally with de Gaulle and the FCO advising Harold Wilson not to risk the Franco-German relationship over such uncertain negotiations.⁶¹⁶ Wilson decided to inform Germany and the other EC countries of the talks with de Gaulle, which brought the plot into the open and at the same time shut down these talks before they

⁶¹³ Sally Rohan, *The Western European Union: International Politics Between Alliance and Integration* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014); Angela Romano, *From Détente in Europe to European Détente: How the West Shaped the Helsinki CSCE* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2009); Mary Kaldor, Gerard Holden, and Richard A. Falk, eds., *The New Detente: Rethinking East-West Relations* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1989); Jussi M. Hanhimäki, *The Rise and Fall of Détente: American Foreign Policy and the Transformation of the Cold War* (Washington: Potomac Books, 2013).

⁶¹⁴ Georges-Henri Soutou, ‘Le Général de Gaulle et le Plan Fouchet d’Union Politique Européenne: Un Projet Stratégique’, in *Widening, Deepening and Acceleration: The European Economic Community, 1957-63*, ed. Anne Deighton and Alan S. Milward (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1999), 55-88; Anthony Teasdale ‘The Fouchet Plan: De Gaulle’s Intergovernmental Design for Europe,’ *LSE Europe in Question Discussion Paper Series Paper 117* (2016): 1-55, accessed 9 March 2020, <http://www.lse.ac.uk/europeanInstitute/LEQS%20Discussion%20Paper%20Series/LEQSPaper117.pdf>; Ludlow, ‘Problematic Partners: De Gaulle, Thatcher and Their Impact’.

⁶¹⁵ Daniel Furby and N. Piers Ludlow, ‘Christopher Soames, 1968–72’, in *The Paris Embassy: British Ambassadors and Anglo-French Relations 1944–79*, ed. Rogelia Pastor-Castro and John W. Young (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2013), 138–61, https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137318299_7.

⁶¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 143 ff.

even had begun. The Soames affair usefully illustrates the tension between bilateral and multilateral diplomacy in the EC.

Between 1970 and 1974, during the time when the UK successfully negotiated to join the EEC, Heath, Brandt and Pompidou collaborated successfully in forging a European Political Cooperation (EPC), whereby they defined common foreign policy and defence positions, which culminated in the passing of a “declaration on European identity”.⁶¹⁷ Daniel Möckli argued that for a brief moment an “Anglo-French-German triangle” emerged, which however folded in 1974 under the pressure of the USA and internal disagreements within the EC.⁶¹⁸ N. Piers Ludlow explained how transatlantic fences were mended and Political Cooperation re-established under US president Gerald Ford, once Henry Kissinger had stepped down as National Security Advisor.⁶¹⁹ Ludlow argued that the second half of the 1970s saw improved bilateral relations between the USA and the UK, France as well as Germany, which resulted in a resumption of EPC and strong representation of European countries in the emerging international high-level summits, such as the G7.⁶²⁰ These summits have been studied elsewhere as phenomenon in their own right, especially in the context of the economic tensions that followed in the wake of the energy crisis of 1974.⁶²¹

By 1985 the new international summits had become firm fixtures on decision makers’ calendars. Until the ratification of the SEA, PoCo policies had been informally coordinated through statements on international events and voting at international organisations, which happened outside the formal remit of the EC. Thatcher wanted not to alter but simply to formalise this process in a non-binding way, in an intergovernmental agreement that was outside the existing EEC treaty. The previous chapter explained how

⁶¹⁷ Möckli, *European Foreign Policy during the Cold War: Heath, Brandt, Pompidou and the Dream of Political Unity*.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid.

⁶¹⁹ Ludlow, ‘The Real Years of Europe?’.

⁶²⁰ Ibid.

⁶²¹ See Mourlon-Druol and Romero, *International Summitry and Global Governance*; Warlouzet, *Governing Europe in a Globalizing World*.

Thatcher agreed to present this proposal to codify PoCo to Helmut Kohl. This chapter explains how with this paper she attempted to lead the EC into the codification of these hitherto informal practices. However, her attempt to lead the EC into formalising PoCo was short lived. The initiative was overtaken by a German-French initiative, entitled “Treaty of European Union”, which was based on the British PoCo paper but was broader in its institutional ambition than the British initiative. Then her proposal was overtaken by a vote in the European Council to hold an IGC to amend the EEC treaty.

3. 1. Bilateral Thatcher-Mitterrand meeting: “unenthusiastic” about an IGC

The differences between Thatcher’s bilateral meeting with Kohl and the one with Mitterrand illustrated the relative importance of both leaders in Thatcher’s European policy making. Kohl was invited for an entire day to Chequers. Mitterrand was given 45 minutes in the margins of an economic summit in Bonn on 3 May 1985. The two meetings showed how Thatcher’s bid to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo relied on winning over Kohl first. She only intended to inform Mitterrand after her meeting with Kohl. However, the meeting with Mitterrand on 3 May 1985 was important because it gave Thatcher the impression that they agreed on the issue of not wanting to call an IGC. This section analyses a brief meeting between Thatcher and Mitterrand in which they both expressed themselves against holding an IGC to change the EEC treaty. Firstly, this section sheds light on a short but significant meeting between Thatcher and Mitterrand. In this meeting both leaders said that they did not want to hold an IGC. The British ambassador to France believed Mitterrand was against holding an IGC because of the upcoming French elections. Shortly thereafter, Geoffrey Howe shared the British PoCo paper with the French foreign minister, Roland Dumas, under the condition of secrecy and insisted that diplomats should not discuss or alter the paper in any way until Margaret Thatcher had presented it to the European Council.

During a ceremony to award the Légion d’honneur to former foreign minister Claude Cheysson, François Mitterrand remarked in passing to the assembled French dignitaries that

he wanted to launch a “surprise initiative”, with which he wanted to “transform the European institutions”.⁶²² This announcement left the French media speculating as to what exactly the French president was planning to do next. The ideas aired by the media ranged from a French plebiscite on a yet unknown European issue to a conference of foreign ministers along the lines of the Messina conference in 1955.⁶²³ Mitterrand thus deliberately kept everyone in suspense over his intentions. When Mitterrand announced his “surprise initiative”, the German foreign ministry concluded that “paternity” of European policies was at stake and worried that Germany risked being “left out” of the discussions.⁶²⁴ In the German Federal Chancellery it was suggested that Germany should work with Italy and France towards developing a “mandate” for an IGC, which already contained the “structural elements of a treaty on [a European] ‘Union’”.⁶²⁵

In contrast to Thatcher, Helmut Kohl met both Thatcher and Mitterrand for bilateral summits. He was also mindful to involve Italy in every step of the discussions between France and Germany. As shown in the previous chapter, Kohl wanted to launch a “European Union”. Helmut Kohl’s briefing for his bilateral meeting with Mitterrand, on 25 March 1985, said that he should expect an explanation from Mitterrand as to what this “surprise initiative” was going to be.⁶²⁶ During their bilateral meeting, Mitterrand and Kohl said they both wanted to pursue the “political integration of Europe” and they believed the Dooge Committee showed that there was scope for such an agreement.⁶²⁷ They agreed that to keep the momentum going there should be bilateral talks on the subject which had to be kept at the

⁶²² “qui surprendra ... a transformer les institutions Européennes” (my translation) François Mitterrand quoted in BArch, B136/30069, telegram no. 645, F. Schoeller to Auswärtiges Amt, “Aeusserungen des Franz. Praesidenten Mitterrand zu einer neuen Europainitiative,” 27 February 1985, fol. 4-6.

⁶²³ Ibid.

⁶²⁴ “Rom und Paris gegenseitig ‘die Vaterschaft’ der Initiative streitig machen und wir selber ‘aussen vor’ bleiben.” BArch, B136/30069, “Weiteres Vorgehen in der Frage Europäische Union,” 14 March 1985, fol. 14.

⁶²⁵ “tragenden Elemente eines Vertrages über die ‘Union’ enthält” (my translation) BArch, B136/30069, “Weiteres Vorgehen in der Frage Europäische Union,” 14 March 1985, fol. 15.

⁶²⁶ BArch, B136/30069, I. Stabreit to H. Kohl, “Ihr Treffen mit dem französischen Staatspräsidenten am Montag, dem 25. März 1985, in Paris,” 22 März 1985, fol. 67-71.

⁶²⁷ “politische Einigung Europas” (my translation) BArch, B136/30069, “Konsultationen des Bundeskanzlers mit Präsident Mitterrand in Paris am 25. März 1985, Schlussbericht des Ad hoc-Ausschusses für Institutionelle Fragen der EG,” 19 März 1985, fol. 21.

highest level and should not be delegated.⁶²⁸ Kohl said he agreed with holding an IGC to keep the proposals in play but that he was worried about a lack of unity within the EC.⁶²⁹ Kohl argued to Mitterrand that the UK should be “pushed to go further on institutional questions, which was why we should work towards an IGC”.⁶³⁰ Kohl added that the “Franco-German understanding” was crucial in this process but that they should “seriously consider” involving Bettino Craxi to work out new proposals for reforming the EC.⁶³¹ The Kohl-Mitterrand meeting showed that in principle they both wanted to work with Italy and the UK and were willing to engage in early multilateral consultations on the future of the EC.

While Mitterrand was keeping everyone guessing about the content of his “surprise initiative”, he was pursuing the idea of an agency that would coordinate technological innovations in the EC. On 17 April 1985 Mitterrand suggested creating an agency, named EUREKA, which would coordinate the research and development of European companies as well as finance research into new technologies, such as industrial lasers and microchips.⁶³² The French government wanted to take EUREKA out of the EC to allow Austria, Sweden and Switzerland to participate.⁶³³ Hubert Curien, the French minister for research and technology, argued that SDI was the “detonator” or “catalyst” of the EUREKA programme, which gives it an interesting Cold War dimension.⁶³⁴ EUREKA was not the only such programme but it became prominent because Mitterrand backed it personally.⁶³⁵ Thatcher countered Mitterrand’s idea by suggesting a “Euro-type warrant” which proposed giving companies a

⁶²⁸ Ibid.

⁶²⁹ Ibid.

⁶³⁰ “Die Briten müssen in den institutionellen Fragen noch weiter gedrängt werden. Auch dies verlangt, dass wir auf eine Regierungskonferenz hinwirken.” (my translation) BArch, B136/30069, “Konsultationen des Bundeskanzlers mit Präsident Mitterrand in Paris am 25. März 1985, Schlussbericht des Ad hoc-Ausschusses für Institutionelle Fragen der EG,” 19 März 1985, fol. 22.

⁶³¹ “Deutsch-Französische Einvernehmen”; “ernsthaft erwägen” (my translation) BArch, B136/30069, “Konsultationen des Bundeskanzlers mit Präsident Mitterrand in Paris am 25. März 1985, Schlussbericht des Ad hoc-Ausschusses für Institutionelle Fragen der EG,” 19 März 1985, fol. 23.

⁶³² See Georges Saunier, ‘Eurêka: un projet industriel pour l’Europe, une réponse à un défi stratégique’, *JEIH Journal of European Integration History* 12, no. 2 (2006): 57–74, <https://doi.org/10.5771/0947-9511-2006-2-57>; Butler, *Europe*, 42 ff.; EUREKA Secretariat, ‘Making History: The EUREKA 30th Anniversary Report’ (Brussels, 2015), <http://www.eurekanetwork.org/content/making-history-eureka-30th-anniversary-report>.

⁶³³ PAAA, B200, Bd. 130387, H.-H. Haunschild, “Vermerk: Dumas-Initiative ‘Europa der Technologie’/SDI als Besprechungspunkt am Rande des informellen EG-Forschungsminister-Rats in Bonn,” 23 April 1985.

⁶³⁴ Ibid.

⁶³⁵ Michael Butler lists 20 such initiatives. See Butler, *Europe*, 56 ff.

kind of EC-wide patent for their innovations. EUREKA forms part of the broader setting in which the policy making of the UK government took place. Since EUREKA and the other research programmes were run independently and were not included in the SEA, they lie outside the scope of this research.

Margaret Thatcher's bilateral meeting with François Mitterrand, on the sidelines of the economic summit in Bonn on 3 May 1985, lasted exactly 45 minutes. The two heads of government discussed SDI, the channel tunnel, a European fighter aircraft, GATT, and briefly touched upon the EC.⁶³⁶ In this meeting, Thatcher was accompanied by Robin Butler, her Principal Private Secretary, and Mitterrand was flanked by Jacques Attali, who was a close confidant and "special advisor" to Mitterrand on foreign policy matters. Their discussion on the subject of the Milan European Council is summarised in one paragraph and consists of only two statements by each head of government. Thatcher told Mitterrand that she was "unenthusiastic" about holding an IGC.⁶³⁷ Mitterrand replied by saying that "he was also not very keen" on holding one but said that he wanted to "make progress on the political formation of Europe".⁶³⁸ Mitterrand also said that he was worried about "disappointing public opinion if [the] results [of the IGC] failed to match expectations".⁶³⁹ This reference to public expectations can be explained by the fact that on 16 March 1986 France was going to hold elections. Therefore, the reasons why Mitterrand told Thatcher that he did not want an IGC were very different from Thatcher's thinking. Mitterrand was worried about disappointing public opinion just before an election if an IGC turned out to be inconclusive. As shown above, Thatcher wanted to avoid such a conference because she wanted to develop the EC outside the EEC treaty, with an intergovernmental agreement to codify PoCo, and within the EEC treaty by further liberalising the Single Market.

⁶³⁶ TNA FCO30/6198, folio no. 19, R. Butler to L. Appleyard, "Prime Minister's bilateral meeting with president Mitterrand," 4 May 1985, attachment: "record of a meeting between the Prime Minister and president Mitterrand at the Palais Schaumburg at 1810 on Friday 3 May 1985", n.d.

⁶³⁷ Ibid.

⁶³⁸ Ibid.

⁶³⁹ Ibid.

Three days after the Thatcher-Kohl meeting, on 21 May 1985, Geoffrey Howe had a meeting with the French foreign minister and close friend of Mitterrand, Roland Dumas. Howe was tasked with explaining to Dumas the British PoCo paper on a confidential basis, and to hand over a copy “privately” and “after” the meeting had finished.⁶⁴⁰ By doing so, Howe was asked to:

“...emphasise that this was a **personal communication** for M. Dumas and the President from the Prime Minister, which [Thatcher] would want to discuss at the Milan European Council. **We must insist that it should not be put in the hands of foreign ministry officials or start becoming the subject of negotiations meanwhile.**”⁶⁴¹

Robin Renwick, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the FCO (responsible for European integration), said in his analysis in preparation for Howe’s meeting with Dumas that “we still have no precise indication of the proposals on institutional matters President Mitterrand is likely to make or support at or before the European Council”.⁶⁴² Renwick speculated that “Mitterrand will seek to win a propaganda advantage and to depict himself as being much more positive about ‘progress’ in Europe than we are – the more so as he knows that he can rely on the Prime Minister to defend a number of points of importance to the French”.⁶⁴³

The manner in which Germany and France were shown the PoCo paper reveals that Thatcher and Howe believed the key to convincing the European Council was to work bilaterally with Kohl and to involve Mitterrand only on the sidelines. It is striking that Kohl was invited to Chequers for an entire day, whereas Mitterrand was only briefly asked, in the course of a short meeting, if he was supporting an IGC. Moreover, Thatcher personally gave Kohl a copy of the PoCo paper, whereas Mitterrand received one through his foreign minister

⁶⁴⁰ Underline in the original. TNA FCO30/6198, folio no. 21, R. Renwick to L. Appleyard, “Secretary of State’s Talks with M. Dumas: European Community,” 17 May 1985.

⁶⁴¹ Emphasis added. Ibid.

⁶⁴² Ibid.

⁶⁴³ Ibid.

as a courtesy. Judging by the length of these meetings and the depth at which these issues were discussed, Mitterrand simply did not receive the same level of Thatcher's attention, compared to Kohl. The shortness of the meeting with Mitterrand could also be explained by the fact that both leaders were at the same place for a different occasion. Nevertheless, the difference between the two high-level meetings is still striking. With Kohl, every issue of the upcoming European Council in Milan was discussed in great detail. Kohl was given privileged access to a major policy initiative that Thatcher wanted to present personally in Milan. Mitterrand by contrast was given a copy of this paper, but was only asked if he was in favour of holding an IGC or not – and told by Thatcher that she was against holding such a conference. The one aspect that Thatcher's bilateral approach to both France and Germany had in common was that she insisted on presenting the PoCo paper as high-level initiative and did not want to let diplomats discuss it before she had presented it herself at the Milan European Council on 28 June 1985.

In summary, François Mitterrand announced a “surprise initiative” to change the institutions of the EC and expressed his support for the European Parliament's “Draft Treaty on European Union”. In his conversation with Kohl, Mitterrand said that he was in favour of working towards increasing the “political integration of Europe”. However, when Mitterrand met Thatcher, he largely confirmed to her what she wanted to hear, saying that he too was against holding an IGC. The British ambassador to France, John Fretwell, believed that Mitterrand was only ready to back policies that he could defend in the upcoming French elections. Lastly, Geoffrey Howe presented Thatcher's PoCo initiative to the French foreign minister but told him that it was confidential and that diplomats were not allowed to discuss it until Thatcher had presented it in the upcoming European Council in Milan.

3. 2. Stresa foreign minister meeting: “a personal initiative by the Prime Minister”

On 8-9 June 1985, the foreign ministers of the EC countries met for an “informal” meeting in Stresa, on the shores of the Lago Maggiore, to prepare for the upcoming European

Council. Geoffrey Howe told the assembled foreign ministers that the PoCo paper was “a personal initiative by the Prime Minister. She will want to get reactions of other heads of government at Milan. [Howe added that the paper was] Not for discussion by officials meanwhile”.⁶⁴⁴ Howe said he was “authorised to hand over [the] draft agreement [on PoCo]”, explain its contents but that he expected nobody would discuss the PoCo paper, or propose any amendments, until Thatcher had presented it herself to the other heads of government.⁶⁴⁵ The tactic of keeping the paper on the highest political level and not to seek input from officials meant it could not become an initiative with broad support in a multilateral setting. At the same time, the fact that the paper was out in the open robbed it of the element of surprise. Stresa could have been the setting for a broadening of the initiative in order to lobby other member states, garner their support and present the paper as a collective effort at the upcoming European Council meeting in Milan. Such a strategy would have meant compromising on some aspects of the paper, in all likelihood giving it the status of a treaty, but the outcome would have been a collective effort with broad support from other members.

As explained in the previous chapter, Geoffrey Howe had suggested that Thatcher should present the PoCo paper personally, i.e. herself, as high-level initiative to the European Council. Howe had also advised that she should first win over Kohl bilaterally, before sharing the paper more broadly. Thatcher agreed with these suggestions and reportedly described the paper as a “stroke of genius”, but was against giving it the status of a formal treaty. The previous chapter showed that Thatcher accepted the PoCo paper and followed Howe’s advice on its presentation. A further element of Howe’s strategy was to keep diplomatic consultations with other countries on the PoCo paper to a minimum, until Thatcher had

⁶⁴⁴ Underline in the original. TNA FCO30/6169, folio no. 208, S. Wall to P. Fairweather, “Informal Meeting of Foreign Ministers: Stresa: Brief on Future of the Community,” 4 June 1985, appendix “EC Foreign Ministers’ Informal Weekend Meeting: Stresa: 8/9 June 1985, Future of the Community,” 3-4; folio no. 226, S. Wall to R. Renwick, “Informal meeting of foreign ministers: Stresa: Development of the European Community,” 4 June 1985, 3-4; FCO30/6170, folio no. 232: R. Renwick to L. Appleyard, “Stresa: Discussion on the development of the community,” 10 June 1985, attachment: “informal meeting of the foreign ministers of the European community at Stresa on 8/9 June 1985, record of discussion on 8 June about the development of the Community”, n.d.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid.

introduced it at the Milan European Council. Robin Renwick, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the FCO (responsible for European integration), was instrumental in devising this strategy. He warned that “we do not want the draft to be widely disseminated before [the Milan European Council], as some of the smaller member states in particular would try to ‘improve’ the text before we ever got to Milan”.⁶⁴⁶ Robin Renwick told Antony Acland, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the most senior advisor on foreign policy to Howe, the PoCo paper was intended “for heads of government and not for discussion at official level before Milan”.⁶⁴⁷ Acland commented in handwriting that he thought the paper was “most ingenious”.⁶⁴⁸ Why Acland thought the paper was so “ingenious” is not in the records. Was the paper a resourceful way of leading the EC in an area that utilised the UK’s strong position in international affairs, such as NATO and as permanent member of the UN Security Council? Or was the clever part prompting Thatcher to clarify her thinking on European integration? Even though the PoCo paper itself may have furthered the UK’s broader foreign policy aims, if the attempt was to surprise everyone then it was executed inconsistently because other countries were aware of the proposals but could not interact with them.

Despite the PoCo paper being a closely-guarded secret, the FCO took steps to inform other countries of it in order to prepare the ground for Thatcher’s introduction of the paper. However, by doing so, they departed to some degree from Howe’s strategy of presenting this paper as Thatcher’s “personal initiative”. Renato Ruggiero, Secretary General at the Italian foreign ministry, was given the PoCo paper by David Williamson on 28 May 1985.⁶⁴⁹ The Irish government received a copy on 5 June and was told that Ireland would not have to sign up to the article that dealt with security cooperation in a NATO framework.⁶⁵⁰ Ireland was a

⁶⁴⁶ TNA FCO30/6168, folio no. 168, R. Renwick to J. Fretwell, “Development of the Community,” 9 May 1985.

⁶⁴⁷ TNA FCO98/2361, R. Renwick to A. Acland, “Milan European Council,” 6 June 1985.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁹ TNA FCO30/6168, folio no. 205A, telegram no. 526, T. Bridges to FCO, “My telno 518: European Council, Milan,” 29 May 1985.

⁶⁵⁰ TNA FCO30/6169, folio no. 220, telegram no. 126, G. Howe to A. Goodison, “Following personal for Ambassador, Milan European Council: Draft Agreement on Political Cooperation,” 5 June 1985.

neutral country and not a member of NATO. Renwick argued “we cannot be diverted from pursuing our initiative by Irish objections. They will be more than content to depict themselves as being in a more advanced position than us on other issues”.⁶⁵¹ By sharing the paper so widely, even though Germany, France, Italy and Ireland were all asked to keep it a secret, the FCO gave up the element of surprise. In a seemingly sombre mood Renwick told Geoffrey Howe’s Assistant Private Secretary, Colin Budd, that the Italian political director “has managed to reveal to other member states that there is a British text”.⁶⁵² Two days before the Stresa meeting of foreign ministers the paper was thus turning from a secret high-level initiative to a mystery paper that everyone knew about but nobody could interact with. The element of surprise was gone. Italy, Germany, France and Ireland all had seen the text. Yet they were asked not to share their thoughts about it until Thatcher had presented it on 28 June 1985.

In Stresa, the Italian government distributed a “draft mandate” which called for an Intergovernmental Conference to create a “true political entity, the European Union” as well as a “homogenous internal economic area”.⁶⁵³ The Italian “draft mandate” drew heavily on the Dooge Committee, the “Stuttgart Solemn Declaration of European Unity” and the “Draft Treaty adopted by the European Parliament”.⁶⁵⁴ Colin Budd, the Assistant Private Secretary to Geoffrey Howe, believed that the Italian “draft mandate” was not supported by everyone and that Italy would work out proposals for the Milan summit that included the ideas the UK had presented.⁶⁵⁵ Moreover, Jacques Delors announced that the European Commission would soon present a “White Paper” on the Single Market.⁶⁵⁶ Delors, Dumas and Genscher all

⁶⁵¹ TNA FCO30/6169, folio no. 221, R. Renwick to C. Budd, “Stresa,” 6 June 1985.

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*

⁶⁵³ TNA FCO30/6168, folio no. 188, “Summary of Italian proposal for a draft mandate for the Intergovernmental Conference,” n.d.

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵⁵ TNA FCO30/6170, folio no. 231, C. Budd to C. Powell, “Development of the Community: Prime Minister’s Questions,” 11 June 1985, attachment: “brief for Prime Minister’s question time: Future development of the community,” n.d.

⁶⁵⁶ TNA FCO30/6169, folio no. 226, S. Wall to R. Renwick, “Informal meeting of foreign ministers: Stresa: Development of the European Community,” 4 June 1985. Annex C: “paper circulated by M. Delors At Stresa, Completing the Internal Market,” n. d., 1.

emphasised that it would be in Milan where heads of governments would have to show how committed they were to future European integration.⁶⁵⁷ Both Giulio Andreotti and Hans-Dietrich Genscher, made passionate pleas for a “European Union”, arguing this had been discussed since 1972 and that the public expected a positive outcome from Milan.⁶⁵⁸ At the Stresa meeting of foreign ministers, it became clear that Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Ireland and Germany had pronounced themselves in favour of holding an IGC. Arguing against a conference were the UK, Denmark and Greece. The position of France was as yet undecided. Howe argued against an IGC, saying that the European Council was the most effective IGC. Furthermore, Howe said that he was in favour of more majority voting, extending the Single Market, a “formal, binding commitment” on PoCo, the formalisation of the Luxembourg Compromise.⁶⁵⁹

After Stresa, even though six foreign ministers had pronounced themselves in favour of holding an IGC, Britain’s strategy of ruling out an IGC and introducing the PoCo paper as a personal initiative by Thatcher was not changed. When Colin Budd, Assistant Private Secretary to Geoffrey Howe, sent Thatcher a briefing on the Stresa meeting of foreign ministers for Prime Minister’s Questions, he told Charles Powell that “the Foreign Secretary found that no other member state had as clearly worked out a position as we do on the future development of the Community”.⁶⁶⁰ The briefing explained that the British ideas had been “more precise” than those of any other EC country.⁶⁶¹ However, whether these ideas would be pursued or not was going to be decided by the heads of government at the European Council in Milan on 28-9 June 1985.⁶⁶² The principal shortcoming of the strategy to introduce the PoCo paper as a high-level initiative, which Thatcher was supposed to present personally to

⁶⁵⁷ TNA FCO30/6170, folio no. 232, R. Renwick to C. Budd, “Stresa: Discussion on the development of the community,” 10 June 1985, attachment: “informal meeting of the foreign ministers of the European community at Stresa on 8/9 June 1985, record of discussion on 8 June about the development of the Community”, n.d.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁰ TNA FCO30/6170, folio no. 231, C. Budd to C. Powell, “Development of the Community: Prime Minister’s Questions,” 11 June 1985.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid. Attachment: “brief for Prime Minister’s question time: Future development of the community” n.d.

⁶⁶² Ibid.

the European Council, was that the British views were already known to the other EC countries but could not be interacted with. Because the FCO officials were not permitted to consult with other diplomats on the PoCo paper, the process of sharing drafts and re-drafting could not happen. This meant that the PoCo paper could not be developed further, nor altered in any way. The foreign ministers and diplomats were thus prevented from attempting to prepare a compromise agreement to build alliances and win other countries' support. Therefore, the PoCo paper ended up being neither a surprise initiative nor a shared multilateral proposal. However, at Stresa Howe could have secured the support of other member states for the PoCo paper. This would have necessitated altering certain aspects of the paper, perhaps broadening its scope and giving it the status of a treaty. Keeping the paper as a personal high-level initiative and the involvement of officials to a minimum proved to be a missed opportunity in multilateral diplomacy.

In summary, the Stresa meeting of foreign ministers of EC foreign ministers could have been the setting where the UK government turned the PoCo paper into a truly multilateral initiative. Instead, Geoffrey Howe presented the paper but did not allow officials to do what they did best – find areas of compromise. Howe ruled out official consultations to discuss the PoCo paper until Thatcher had presented the paper to the Milan European Council. Howe had recommended to Thatcher before her meeting with Kohl that she should present the PoCo paper as a countermeasure to what he called “far-fetched” ideas of a “European Union”. The next section will trace how this plan began to fall apart when the FCO learned that Germany and France had been secretly consulting and had been busy rewriting the PoCo paper that Thatcher had given to Kohl.

3. 3. Secret German-French talks on “European Union”

The German-French “Draft Treaty on European Union” was written in a combination of a long process and a last-minute dash.⁶⁶³ The paper was a response to the lack of an institutional dimension in Thatcher’s PoCo paper. Especially Germany wanted a treaty that would give the institutions of the EC more power, especially the EP, and called for a “European Union” to give the paper a more political dimension. The German-French paper emerged out of consultations that both countries held regularly. In parts it was therefore a testament of the close working relationship between the two countries. The UK and Germany also held regular bilateral meetings but the PoCo paper was never discussed in these bilateral consultations. This section aims to reconstruct how Germany and France wrote a paper that was largely based on the one they had received in confidence from Thatcher. Examining the French and German intentions is important because it puts British policy making towards the SEA into context and goes some way to explain more fully the outcome of the Milan European Council. For the history of British policy making, examining how the counterproposal to the British PoCo paper came about is relevant because it answers the question of whether there was any foul play involved in the way that the German-French paper was prepared for the Milan European Council. Since Thatcher had intended to present this paper as a personal high-level initiative, it is important to examine how she suddenly saw her own ideas being presented to her by Kohl and Mitterrand but with a title that she thoroughly disliked.⁶⁶⁴

The German-French working group that was tasked with preparing for the upcoming European Council was led by Jacques Attali and Horst Teltschik and only included a small group of senior officials.⁶⁶⁵ Attali worked in an office just next to the French president as his

⁶⁶³ This paper is referred to as German-French, instead of Franco-German, because the archival sources reveal that the consultations were initiated by Germany. When reference is made to the more general Franco-German consultations I have kept the conventional use of the term.

⁶⁶⁴ This is how both Howe and Thatcher present it in their memoirs. See Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, 549; Howe, *Conflict of Loyalty*, 409.

⁶⁶⁵ For the first two meetings there is no list of participants on file. On 4 June the French delegation included Attali, Morel, Guigou, Védrine, Bernard and Vidal. The German delegation consisted of Teltschik, Trumpf,

“special advisor” on foreign policy.⁶⁶⁶ Teltschik was a foreign policy advisor and close confidant to Helmut Kohl – sometimes dubbed “Kohl’s Kissinger”.⁶⁶⁷ Annotated comments in Helmut Kohl’s handwriting on the summary of the meeting for 24 May 1985 attest to the high level on which these meetings were held and show the close interest that Kohl took.⁶⁶⁸ Particularly, Helmut Kohl thought it was “important” that the French delegation was reluctant to commit to changing the EEC treaty.⁶⁶⁹ Interestingly, the French side said they had not heard of a British draft treaty.⁶⁷⁰ As shown above, this was not true because Geoffrey Howe had given the French foreign minister Roland Dumas a copy of the PoCo paper and briefed him on the subject on 21 May 1985. France was adamant that EPC should first be agreed bilaterally with Germany and that they did not want to hold an IGC because they saw an agreement with all ten member states as unrealistic.⁶⁷¹ Attali and Teltschik agreed in these talks that majority voting should be extended but France wanted to reduce the “veto” to be used only in the Foreign Affairs Council.⁶⁷² Germany, however, did not want a “‘legalisation’ of the veto” and pronounced themselves ready to completely abolish the Luxembourg Compromise.⁶⁷³

To prepare for the consultations with France, the German foreign ministry wrote a policy brief that explained the position of the German government towards the British PoCo proposals.⁶⁷⁴ The initial aim of the German-French consultations was to prepare a common

Stabreit, Thiele and Hartmann. BArch, B136/30681, H. Teltschik to W. Schäuble, 31 May 1985; “Deutsch-französische Gespräche am Dienstag, 4. Juni 1985,” n.d.; PAAA, B200, Bd. 130388, J. Trumpf to G. Massion, “Deutsch-französische Gespräche zur Vorbereitung des Europäischen Rats von Mailand, hier: 3. Treffen der Gruppe Teltschik/Attali im Bundeskanzleramt am 04.06.1985,” 4 June 1985.

⁶⁶⁶ “Sonderberater” (my translation) Pautsch et al., *Akten Zur Auswärtigen Politik Der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1985*, 2016, 2: 1898; Jacques Attali, *Verbatim, tome 1: chronique des années 1981-1986* (Paris: Fayard, 1993).

⁶⁶⁷ Bertram, ‘Kohls außenpolitischer Berater’.

⁶⁶⁸ The fact that these meetings are much better documented in the files of the Bundesarchiv than the Auswärtige Amt serves as further proof that the Chancellery was in charge of these meetings.

⁶⁶⁹ “wichtig” (my translation) BArch, B136/30681, “Deutsch-französisches Arbeitsgespräch am Freitag den 24.5.1985 in Paris,” n.d.

⁶⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁷¹ Ibid., 3.

⁶⁷² Ibid. 1.

⁶⁷³ “‘Legalisierung des Vetos” (my translation) Ibid.

⁶⁷⁴ BArch, B136/30873, W.-D. Schilling to A. Meyer-Landrut, “Britisches Papier zur EPZ,” 28 May 1985.

position with France, with which the UK government could be approached.⁶⁷⁵ The aim was not yet to write a competing paper. This declaration of intent to consult with the UK is important because it matches with the account of the Thatcher-Kohl meeting on 18 May 1985. Therefore, Germany planned to engage in multilateral talks with the UK government on the British PoCo/EPC paper. The German policy brief noted from the outset that the German government supported the codification of EPC because it would make EPC more “efficient” and would give it more “continuity”.⁶⁷⁶ However, Germany wanted to lessen some of the Atlantic security focus of the British paper and replace it with the recommendations of the Dooge Committee.⁶⁷⁷ To this end, Germany wanted to write a document with treaty force, for which the British paper could serve as a basis if it could be “enriched”.⁶⁷⁸ Asking for consultations to act as “coherent force in international relations”,⁶⁷⁹ as the British paper suggested, was “too weak”; instead, similar to what the Dooge report suggested, Germany wanted the treaty to say that “every effort should be made to arrive at a common position and to act in common accord”.⁶⁸⁰ To Germany, such a close foreign policy coordination that was anchored in a treaty was part of their broader aim of “creating a European Union, i.e. a united Europe”.⁶⁸¹

By the end of May 1985, the German government had written a “draft treaty” that was “based on the British EPC paper and was enriched according to our position”.⁶⁸²

Germany suggested to turn this into a German-French compromise paper, which with a few

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁶ “Effizienz ... Kontinuität” (underline in the original, my translation) Ibid.; “Anlage 2, Stellungnahme zum britischen EPZ-Papier,” 2, 4.

⁶⁷⁷ “ausgewogener” (my translation). Ibid., 2-4.

⁶⁷⁸ “bedarf nach unserer Auffassung jedoch der Anreicherung” (my translation) Ibid., 2.

⁶⁷⁹ TNA FCO30/6168, “Draft Agreement on Political Cooperation”, n.d., art. 2

⁶⁸⁰ “zu schwach”, “alle Anstrengungen zu unternehmen, um zu einer gemeinsamen Position und zu gemeinsamem Handeln zu gelangen” (underline in the original, my translation) BArch, B136/30873, W.-D. Schilling to A. Meyer-Landrut, “Britisches Papier zur EPZ, Anlage 2, Stellungnahme zum britischen EPZ-Papier,” 28 May 1985, 2.

⁶⁸¹ “die Schaffung einer Europäischen Union bzw. eines vereinten Europeas” (underline in the original, my translation). Moreover, the London report on Political Cooperation of 13 October 1981 and the “solemn declaration of European Unity” of 19 June 1983 should be “anchored” (verankert, my translation) in this treaty. Ibid.

⁶⁸² “Vertragsentwurf”, “lehnt sich an das britische EPZ-Papier an und ist im Sinne unserer Position angereichert” (my translation) BArch, B136/30873, W.-D. Schilling to A. Meyer-Landrut, “Vorlage eines EPZ-Papiers für den Europäischen Rat in Mailand,” 31 May 1985.

changes all EC countries could agree to. Various parts of the text had been taken from the “Solemn Declaration of European Unity” and the final report of the Dooge Committee.⁶⁸³ The initiative was intended to be truly multilateral and in tune with other discussions on the future of the EC. On 4 June 1985, Horst Teltschik gave Jacques Attali in “strict confidence” the “draft treaty” that Germany had prepared.⁶⁸⁴ He explained that for Germany this issue was important and that it was not enough to simply affirm EPC in the way that it already existed. Teltschik said that he was proposing to codify EPC with a formal treaty to show its political importance.⁶⁸⁵ Attali thought the draft was “excellent” but enquired who would present the draft at the Milan European Council.⁶⁸⁶ Teltschik replied that for now the draft should not be shared with anybody, adding that only after Germany and France had agreed on a text, then Italy could be asked to present the proposal to the European Council.⁶⁸⁷ The way in which Kohl and Mitterrand’s aides agreed to their draft treaty showed that the German government was in the driving seat and wrote the document in close consultation with the French officials. However, time was running out. By the time Attali and Teltschik had agreed to a draft, but not yet on who would present it, they only had just over three weeks left until the European Council in Milan, on 28-9 June 1985.

As shown above, Germany had intended to consult with the UK after talking to France about how to “enrich” the British PoCo paper. Germany wanted to first make sure that France could support their suggestions. However, these consultations never happened. Instead, Kohl wrote a letter to Thatcher to tell her that he was grateful for the confidence that she had shown by sharing with him her EPC paper.⁶⁸⁸ Crucially, Kohl added that “in my view we should go a step further to secure EPC with a treaty” and that with this treaty he also

⁶⁸³ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁴ Emphasis in the original. "streng vertraulich" (my translation) BArch, B136/30681, “Zweites deutsch-französisches Arbeitsgespräch am Dienstag den 4. Juni 1985 in Bonn,” n.d., 4.

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁶ "ausgezeichnet" (my translation) Ibid.

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid., 4.

⁶⁸⁸ TNA PREM19/1491, H. Kohl to M. Thatcher, 19 June 1985.

wanted to “formalise the creation of a European Union”.⁶⁸⁹ Kohl’s letter should not have left Thatcher in any doubt that he supported EPC and the Single Market but that he wanted to embed such endeavours in a formal treaty that contained a political framework and included the EP, which was in line with what he had told Thatcher when they had met on 18 May 1985. Kohl wrote this letter directly to Thatcher and it was sent as personal letter from the German ambassador to No. 10 Downing street. These remarks leave little doubt as to his ambitions but were also not the consultations that Kohl had promised. Maybe Kohl knew that Howe had ruled out such consultations at the summit of foreign ministers in Stresa. So, Kohl was left no other option than re-stating his opinions in a personal letter to Thatcher and in this way keeping the issue in the bilateral high-level setting of their earlier meeting at Chequers.

We do not know if Julian Bullard, the British ambassador to Germany, knew of this letter. It is not mentioned in any of the telegrams he sent about his many conversations with German officials. Bullard’s telegrams convey the impression of an outspoken and self-assured diplomat. As the previous chapter has shown, all of Bullard’s assessments emphasised the closeness of the British and the German positions. Bullard believed that the German government was still “undecided” on how to approach the upcoming European Council.⁶⁹⁰ Bullard pointed out that there were disagreements between Genscher, who wanted to put as much of the Dooge Committee into practice as possible, and Kohl who was in Bullard’s words “more pragmatic”.⁶⁹¹ Bullard did not spell out what he meant by pragmatism but from the context it could be that he believed Kohl was not convinced that changing the EEC treaty was necessary. On 25 June 1985, a day before the story of the secret German-French draft treaty broke, Bullard said to Horst Teltschik, one of Helmut Kohl’s closest political advisors,

⁶⁸⁹ “Aus meiner Sicht sollten wir aber noch einen Schritt weitergehen um eine vertragliche Absicherung der EPZ anzustreben. In einem solchen Vertrag sollte auch das Ziel der Schaffung einer Europäischen Union festgeschrieben werden” (my translation) Ibid.

⁶⁹⁰ TNA FCO30/6203, folio no. 38: telegram no. 620, J. Bullard to FCO, “Run up to Milan,” 20 June 1985.

⁶⁹¹ Ibid.

“all that lies between us are the words treaty and union”.⁶⁹² In the same meeting, Horst Teltschik tried to warn Bullard by telling him that Kohl wanted to “hoist the flag of treaty amendment and give others the opportunity to do likewise so as to expose where the opposition to this lay”.⁶⁹³ This admission by Teltschik that Kohl wanted to amend the EEC treaty was important because in his conversations with Thatcher, Kohl had always been cagey on the question of whether or not he wanted an IGC. However, to Bullard the conversation with Teltschik confirmed that the differences between both countries were in effect very slight, which could have meant that the PoCo proposals which the UK government was putting forward were standing a good chance of being received favourably at the upcoming European Council. The personal letter from Kohl to Thatcher showed that Bullard was wrong in his assessment on the closeness of the British and German positions. This was unfortunate because on 15 April 1985 Bullard had recommended to put a series of “bold” or even “daring” ideas to Kohl, call them “European Union” and be ready to give them the status of a treaty. Therefore, instinctively the ambassador had been right in April. However, in June he was wrong in advising that because Kohl’s government was internally divided, treaty change was a question of mere formality to Kohl and that therefore these internal divisions would inhibit Kohl from going down the path of treaty change.

The plan for a German-French multilateral negotiation effort fell apart in two stages. Firstly, in the afternoon on 26 June 1985 the German press spokesman mentioned off the record that a German-French draft treaty for a “European Union” existed.⁶⁹⁴ The following day, on 27 June 1985, Kohl suddenly revealed the existence of the German-French draft treaty in the *Bundestag*.⁶⁹⁵ The exposure of the secret German-French talks baffled and angered

⁶⁹²TNA FCO30/6203, Folio no. 42, Telegram no. 640, J. Bullard to FCO, “European Council: FRG position,” 25 June 1985. This meeting would be re-examined when Bullard asked Teltschik later why he did not tell him about the German-French talks, which is recounted towards the end of this chapter.

⁶⁹³ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁴ TNA FCO30/6199, Memorandum by A. Leslie, “Milan: What happened?,” 11 July 1985.

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid.; TNA PREM19/1491, telegram no. 667, J. Bullard to FCO, “My telno 662, Milan Summit: Franco-German draft treaty,” 27 June 1985; Helmut Kohl in Deutscher Bundestag, “Plenarprotokoll,” 10/149, 27 June 1985, accessed 18 January 2019, <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btp/10/10149.pdf>, 11097.

Kohl's French partners.⁶⁹⁶ How did this come about? Attali said in his published diary that on 22 June "Teltschik was panicking" because Helmut Kohl had told Bettino Craxi that he would table a "treaty on European Union" in Milan, even without agreement from Italy or France.⁶⁹⁷ When Attali met Teltschik and Ruggiero, on 26 June 1985, there was still no clarity whether or not Italy was going to present the proposals, in which case Teltschik proposed to present the draft treaty the following day together with France. The French president agreed with this idea. Then on the next day, even before hearing from the Italians, Kohl announced the existence of the German-French draft agreement to the *Bundestag*.⁶⁹⁸ The Italians were "furious" and the French president "took the news very badly of this muddled announcement that risked compromising everything".⁶⁹⁹ With one stroke, the German attempt of a German-French-Italian diplomatic initiative turned into a unilateral statement of intent in the German *Bundestag*. Germany's quest to "enrich" the British PoCo paper multilaterally had failed.

There is an element of domestic politics in this story. Before the diplomatic talks with France were fully finalised, Kohl used the existence of his initiative on a "European Union" to raise his profile on European issues in domestic politics. In the German *Bundestag*, the exposure of the secret talks between Germany and France happened amid a heated debate on Europe. Hans-Jochen Vogel, the leader of the opposition, egged on by loud cheering from all parties, accused Kohl of not following through on his own pro-European commitments and thereby neglecting the German-French relations.⁷⁰⁰ Vogel argued that by not doing enough for European integration, Kohl was harming the German national interest.⁷⁰¹ Kohl, when thus pressured, countered that he was working hard for European integration and disclosed that he was going to present a "Treaty of European Union" as well as convene an IGC that would

⁶⁹⁶ TNA FCO30/6199, Memorandum by A. Leslie, "Milan: What happened?," 11 July 1985, 3; folio no. 57, J. Fretwell to D. Thomas, "France and the Community: Before and after Milan," 2 August 1985.

⁶⁹⁷ "Teltschik en est paniqué" (my translation) Attali, *Verbatim, tome 1*, 826–27.

⁶⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁹ "furieux", "... prend très mal cette annonce désordonnée qui risqué de tout compromettre" (my translation) *Ibid.*, 828.

⁷⁰⁰ Hans-Jochen Vogel, leader of Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), in *Deutscher Bundestag*, "Plenarprotokoll," 10/149, 27 June 1985, accessed 18 January 2019, <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btp/10/10149.pdf>, 11088-11100.

⁷⁰¹ *Ibid.*

make changes to the EEC treaty at the upcoming Milan European Council.⁷⁰² Therefore, it seems that Kohl disclosed the existence of his diplomatic talks with France, the UK, Italy and the Benelux countries essentially for reasons of domestic politics. Kohl's revelation in the *Bundestag* let diplomats set in motion the wheels to smooth over any relations that could have been ruptured. On 27 June the German ambassador to the UK received a telegram asking him to go "without delay" to the Foreign Secretary and let him know of the German-French proposal.⁷⁰³ A copy went to all other European capitals, except the German embassy in Denmark, which by that time was already closed.⁷⁰⁴

Until a day before the European Council, the preparations for the British delegation to Milan were still progressing along the lines of the high-level intervention with which Thatcher wanted to present her PoCo proposals.⁷⁰⁵ Howe, having argued in April that a PoCo paper would make a "considerable impression" on the German Chancellor, now told Thatcher that Kohl was "indicating" that he could accept the British paper, as opposed to "his idea of a separate treaty on European Union" – but on the condition that it would be a treaty.⁷⁰⁶ Therefore, Howe had come round to believing that any agreement that would come out of the Milan European Council had to be given the status of a treaty. However, this letter shows that Howe believed his fundamental approach of a high-level initiative to be sound. Two days after sending this letter, events overtook Howe's assessment. On the day before the European Council and on the day when Kohl revealed his "treaty of European Union" to the German *Bundestag*, Charles Powell received a telephone call from Horst Teltschik to inform him of

⁷⁰² Ibid.

⁷⁰³ "unverzüglich" (my translation) PAAA, B21, Bd. 134808, H.-D. Genscher and R. Dumas to German Embassy London, "Deutsch-Französischer Entwurf für einen Vertrag über die Europäische Union," 27 June 1985; TNA FCO98/2361, R. von Wechmar to G. Howe, 27 June 1985; folio no. 173, "Drahterlass des Ministerialdirektors Edler von Braunmühl," 27 June 1985 16:45 in Pautsch et al., *Akten Zur Auswärtigen Politik Der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1985*, 2016, 1: 911–16.

⁷⁰⁴ Handwritten note in PAAA, B21, Bd. 134808, H.-D. Genscher and R. Dumas to German Embassy London, draft telegram, "Deutsch-Französischer Entwurf für einen Vertrag über die Europäische Union," 27 June 1985.

⁷⁰⁵ TNA PREM19/1491, C. Powell to D. Williamson, "European Council: Milan," 26 June 1985; FCO30/6306, folio no. 26, S. Wall to D. Williamson, "Milan European Council: Steering Brief," 13 June 1985; folio no. 35, R. Renwick to C. Budd, "Milan European Council," 21 June 1985.

⁷⁰⁶ TNA PREM19/1491, G. Howe to M. Thatcher, "Milan European Council: Development of the European Community," 25 June 1985

the existence of a German-French proposal that was essentially based on the PoCo paper which Thatcher had given to Kohl. Powell was furious and in his own words said the following to Teltschik:

“The Prime Minister had taken the Chancellor in her confidence ... Now we were suddenly informed, less than 24 hours before the beginning of the European Council, that the Germans and the French had agreed a text which we had not even seen or been consulted about. It seems to me that we were being very shabbily treated. I thought that the Prime Minister would justifiably feel that the Chancellor had failed to reciprocate the confidence which she had placed in him. [...] I said I was not talking about the substance of the German proposals, indeed could not do so since we had not yet seen them. For all I knew they might in large part be acceptable to us. My strong feelings were based on the procedure which had been followed of producing a text behind our backs and agreeing it with the French without making any attempt to consult us. Speaking personally, I thought it a black day for our co-operation”.⁷⁰⁷

The distinction between form and substance is significant in this quote. Powell was angry about the way in which diplomacy had been conducted and not about what France and Germany had talked about. In a nutshell, Powell felt that Thatcher had been left out. This was the moment when Thatcher’s aim to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo was overtaken by a German-French bilateral effort. Franco-German leadership of the EC was reasserting itself. The substantive changes to the British PoCo paper were actually fairly minor. When David Williamson, the head of the European secretariat at the Cabinet Office, saw the content of the German-French paper he noted that it was largely based on the British paper.⁷⁰⁸ More importantly, it did not include much that was new, except the title “European Union”. Williamson could not detect any additional competences being transferred, except the European Council possibly being called the “Council of the European Union”, and that it would be given a secretariat.⁷⁰⁹ He dismissed the reference to the Dooge Committee as “a nod” towards what the committee was advocating.⁷¹⁰ Only hours before the Milan European

⁷⁰⁷ Emphasis added. TNA PREM19/1491, C. Powell to C. Budd, 27 June 1985.

⁷⁰⁸ TNA PREM19/1491, D. Williamson to C. Powell, “French Memorandum for the European Council, 28-9 June,” 27 June 1985.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁷¹⁰ Ibid.

Council, the British PoCo paper was in this way overtaken by a German-French initiative, an act that Julian Bullard described as having “thrown an apple of discord into the Milan meeting”.⁷¹¹ The term is symbolically important because in Greek mythology it described a small act, which by creating a fight of vanity, sparked the Trojan War.⁷¹² The war never came but the Milan summit turned into a watershed that forced a chaotic meeting between heads of government into holding an IGC that would pave the way for the SEA.

Kohl’s unexpected disclosure of the secret German-French talks caused consternation in France and fury in the UK, which set the scene for the European Council in Milan on 28-9 June 1985. By tracing in this section how the German-French paper came about, it is possible to show that Kohl did not initially intend to deceive Thatcher. He merely had different goals and wanted to work with the UK, France, Italy to implement them. This process proved so cumbersome that he simply ran out of time. The process also shows that in a sense the UK had a workable policy. However, the British strategy of a personal high-level intervention by Thatcher was not carried out consistently. The PoCo initiative was neither a surprise document that Thatcher could pull out of her handbag, nor was it a truly multilateral initiative that could count on the support of other heads of government. Therefore, whenever the UK government presented the PoCo paper (to Kohl, Dumas, the foreign ministers at Stresa and at the European Council in Milan), the process of garnering support was severely hampered by the condition of inalterability that the UK government had imposed. Had Thatcher presented the same ideas but been willing to give them the status of a treaty, and allowed diplomatic consultations, she might have gone further in convincing her partners to accept her PoCo paper. However, she would have had to explain in the House of Commons why a new treaty was necessary. Moreover, the “ingenuity” of the British proposals, as Anthony Acland described them, of garnering the power of the EC in multilateral

⁷¹¹ TNA PREM19/1491, telegram no. 667, J. Bullard to FCO, “My telno 662, Milan Summit: Franco-German draft treaty,” 27 June 1985.

⁷¹² Robert Eagles, trans., *Homer, The Iliad* (New York: Penguin, 1990), 633; Robin Hard, *Apollodorus, The Library of Greek Mythology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 243.

organisations but to do so without restricting any room for manoeuvre of national governments, may in part have been lost.

In summary, the German-French paper was a counterproposal to Thatcher's PoCo proposal that took on board its content but was meant as a formal treaty. This meant that the German-French paper criticised the intergovernmental focus of Thatcher's proposals and suggested with the title of a "Treaty of European Union" a political dimension that aimed to strengthen the institutions of the EC. The substantive part of the paper had been taken from the draft which Thatcher had prepared. Germany had found the focus of the British PoCo paper too narrow and wanted to rework the proposals. Their approach to writing such a paper was radically different from Thatcher's in that they consulted intensively, but secretly, with the Italian and French governments. The German government afterwards said that they had intended to consult with the UK, but this never happened. An analysis of these meetings shows that Teltschik and the German delegation argued consistently for a new treaty on EPC to advance their aim of a "European Union". Attali initially opposed changing the EEC treaty, because the French government was more focused on creating the technology research agency EUREKA, but came to support the German idea of an EPC paper as the talks progressed. The result was a secret draft treaty that was supposed to be presented at the European Council in Milan by the Italian presidency. The German tactic failed because Attali and Teltschik ran out of time. Eventually, when Kohl was confronted by the opposition leader in the *Bundestag* over his European credentials, he revealed that he had indeed been working on a new "Treaty of European Union". Therefore, Kohl revealed the existence of these talks because of domestic politics. This announcement threw all preparations for the Milan European Council into disarray. The consequence was an end to Kohl's effort to present this paper as a multilateral initiative. Instead, he had to present it as a German-French paper. The next part of this chapter looks at how Margaret Thatcher fared at the Milan European Council and how the Italian presidency turned a summit that was broadly against an IGC to change the EEC treaty, into one that by a majority of seven to three endorsed holding exactly such a conference.

3. 4. Unfolding of the Milan European Council: “isolating the UK”

The European Council meeting in Milan, on 28-9 June 1985, was an important turning point in the history of the SEA. For the British government it was a watershed in the sense that their attempts to table new initiatives ceased and the UK government began to engage in the IGC, without yet committing fully to the outcome of the conference. Therefore, the approach of the UK government changed from proactively proposing new policies to reactively examining them and preparing a response. A defining feature in the chapters above was that the UK government formulated a plan to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo and how to make the Single Market work more effectively. After Milan, the UK government was content to follow the discussions in the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) on the basis of proposals that other countries put forward. To analyse this shift in policy making on the part of the UK government, this section examines the unfolding of the Milan European Council. This summit was important because Thatcher was outvoted on the question of holding an IGC. The European Council voting on a decision came as a surprise to most participants because decisions were usually made by consensus. The Italian government tabled this vote because they were convinced that reforming the EC needed treaty change and on the second day of the European Council, they found that it was in their power to table a vote on the issue. Thatcher, who had until then firmly ruled out treaty change, faced the question whether she wanted to disrupt the entire European Council by not accepting the result of the vote, or concede to holding an IGC. Whilst the FCO had at least entertained the notion that an IGC might have to be agreed to, for Thatcher this represented a major policy concession.

A meeting of the European Council in the 1980s lasted normally two days.⁷¹³ It was organised by the country which at the time held the rotating European Council presidency for

⁷¹³ On the founding of the European Council see Murlon-Druol, ‘Filling the EEC Leadership Vacuum?’; Murlon-Druol, “Managing from the Top”; Murlon-Druol, ‘The Victory of the Intergovernmental Method? The Emergence of the European Council in the Community’s Institutional Set-up (1974-77)’.

six months. The European Commission president participated at the level of heads of government. The circle of those who were present was usually highly restricted.⁷¹⁴ A president or Prime Minister was often only joined by one or two officials – usually the foreign or finance minister – and exceptionally a few other officials who got red badges to enter for a short period of time.⁷¹⁵ The heads of government’s level of preparedness and their ability to broker compromises was therefore of crucial importance.⁷¹⁶ There were typically three levels on which negotiations took place. One was between the heads of government at formal sessions or when they had working breakfasts, lunches or dinners. Usually, the foreign ministers also held sessions in the Foreign Affairs Council that dealt with the same or related issues. Finally, in the corridors and rooms of the delegations, informal bilateral or multilateral brokering could take place, the results of which were then fed back into the plenary negotiations. These side negotiations were important to break deadlocks or reach compromise agreements. These conversations would probably be some of the most interesting ones to listen to, but rarely have they been recorded in much detail. They mostly feature in memoirs and are therefore based on one individual’s recollection.⁷¹⁷

There was no formal mechanism for keeping minutes because each meeting had been intended as an intimate high-level summit.⁷¹⁸ Officially, the conclusions were prepared beforehand by the government holding the rotating European Council presidency.⁷¹⁹ In practice, they were usually written in advance by the Secretariat of the European Council, particularly its influential Secretary General, Niels Erbsøll.⁷²⁰ Other notes that would point to

⁷¹⁴ Stephen Wall compares it to a boxing match, where officials could hold a proverbial towel and cheer, but the leaders had to “slug it out”. Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 56.

⁷¹⁵ Ibid. Howe, *Conflict of Loyalty*, 305.

⁷¹⁶ Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 55–56.

⁷¹⁷ For example, Jacques Attali, a close advisor to François Mitterrand, claimed that Thatcher was “on the verge of tears” when a compromise on the BBQ was brokered in one such meeting (“au bord des larmes” (my translation) Attali, *Verbatim, tome 1*, 660). Whether or not there had really been any tears and whether they were of rage or sadness, is of course very difficult for the historian to verify.

⁷¹⁸ Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 55–56.

⁷¹⁹ The conclusions of the European Council were summarised in the Bulletin of the European Communities. After most European Council meetings, the heads of government held a series of press conferences and interviews.

⁷²⁰ Thank you to N. Piers Ludlow for pointing this out to me.

a process of how compromises were reached and disagreements settled mostly exist only insofar as they were retold afterwards or written up informally by a head of government or foreign minister. For the Milan European Council, a British “informal record” survived. It was informal because it was based on a number of handwritten notes, mainly taken by Geoffrey Howe.⁷²¹ The cover note from UKRep to Stephen Wall, the head of the European Community Department (internal) in the FCO, argued that “most of our record – and about half of that of other governments – will be based on [Howe’s] comments”.⁷²² Wall argued that because Geoffrey Howe was a lawyer he was very good at taking detailed notes, while at the same time also taking part in the discussions.⁷²³

Bettino Craxi, the Italian Prime Minister, chaired the European Council because he was the head of government of the country that held the rotating presidency.⁷²⁴ When he opened the summit, Craxi said that holding an IGC was an “option” which however could also take place within the European Council itself.⁷²⁵ This view of taking decisions directly at the European Council and not calling a formal IGC was close to what Margaret Thatcher was advocating.⁷²⁶ Thatcher argued that the decisions to extend the Single Market and formalise PoCo should be taken here and now at the Milan conference, and not be referred to an IGC.⁷²⁷ Mitterrand and the Prime Ministers of Greece and Denmark said they agreed with Thatcher.⁷²⁸ Kohl left the question about an IGC open, saying that provided a “mandate” for such a conference was clear, he was prepared to hold one.⁷²⁹ The Prime Ministers of Ireland, the Netherlands and Luxembourg echoed this sentiment.⁷³⁰ Mitterrand kept his options open by

⁷²¹ TNA FCO30/6307, folio no. 80, P. Goulden to S. Wall, “European Council: Milan: 28-29 June 1985,” appendix “European Council: Milan: 28-29 June 1985,” n.d.; “Informal Record of Milan European Council, 28/29 June,” 5 July 1985, <https://www.margareththatcher.org/document/204623>.

⁷²² TNA FCO30/6307, folio no. 80, P. Goulden to S. Wall, “European Council: Milan: 28/29 June,” 5 July 1985.

⁷²³ Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 56.

⁷²⁴ “Informal Record of Milan European Council, 28/29 June,” 5 July 1985, <https://www.margareththatcher.org/document/204623>.

⁷²⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁷²⁶ *Ibid.*, 6-8.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*; PREM19/1491, “European Council: Milan, Development of the Community, Opening Statement,” n.d.

⁷²⁸ “Informal Record of Milan European Council, 28/29 June,” 5 July 1985, <https://www.margareththatcher.org/document/204623>, 4, 6-9.

⁷²⁹ Kohl said that for such a mandate, a “timetable and a checklist” were required. *Ibid.*, 3.

⁷³⁰ *Ibid.*, 2-5, 8-9.

arguing that the EEC treaty should be fully applied first but also said that the European Council was the framework to decide on new issues. However, Mitterrand said if an IGC was called by the presidency it should be “a success”.⁷³¹ Only Jacques Delors, the president of the European Commission, was unequivocally in favour of an IGC.⁷³²

The level of support for proceeding without an IGC was further underlined in a bilateral conversation on the sidelines between Geoffrey Howe and Helmut Kohl.⁷³³ They both agreed that a decision on PoCo, possibly based on all existing drafts, should be taken in Milan and a list of issues should be defined, focusing on how decision making in the EC could be improved and which could be implemented without treaty change.⁷³⁴ The disagreement between Kohl and Mitterrand was further underlined when the French press office ran rumours saying that their president was not supporting the German-French proposal, which annoyed Kohl greatly.⁷³⁵ The account of the first day showed that when the European Council opened, not only the UK’s but also Denmark, Greece and to some extent France expressed themselves against holding an IGC. Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and Luxembourg said they only supported holding an IGC if there was a reasonable chance of it concluding with an agreement.

After dinner, the foreign ministers met to hammer out a potential compromise on the thorny issue of whether or not to hold an IGC. Howe described it as “one of the worst [Foreign Affairs] Councils he had attended”.⁷³⁶ The secretary of the European Council, Niels Ersbøll, and the Italian foreign minister, Giulio Andreotti, were rooting around for ideas how they could “force an agreement” on holding an IGC, for instance by delaying progress on the

⁷³¹ Ibid., 9-10.

⁷³² Ibid., 4-5, 10-11.

⁷³³ TNA PREM19/1492, C. Powell, “note for the record,” 28 June 1985, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/204714>.

⁷³⁴ Ibid.

⁷³⁵ Folio no. 175 “Gespräch des Bundeskanzlers Kohl mit Staatspräsident Mitterrand in Mailand,” 29 June 1985 in Pautsch et al., *Akten Zur Auswärtigen Politik Der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1985*, 2016, 1: 924 ff.

⁷³⁶ “Informal Record of Milan European Council, 28/29 June,” 5 July 1985, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/204623>, 17.

Single Market.⁷³⁷ In retrospect, Robin Renwick believed that the German foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher “gave Andreotti a new lease of life and reinforced his determination and ability to work not for agreement, but clear disagreement between those who favoured a conference and (unspecified) treaty amendment, and those who did not”.⁷³⁸ In essence, Renwick believed that Italy wanted to convene an IGC and Germany supported them from the first day of the Milan European Council.

When the foreign ministers met again the following morning, they had before them a text that proposed convening an IGC through article 236 of the EEC treaty.⁷³⁹ Giulio Andreotti suggested that an IGC to discuss modifying the EEC treaty could be held if a majority agreed.⁷⁴⁰ Kohl took this as a cue to promote his government’s paper by arguing that Milan was “the moment of truth” and that an IGC with a “clear mandate” should be arranged.⁷⁴¹ The idea for an IGC received support from Martens, Lubbers, Santer and Mitterrand – all arguing for an IGC and suggesting that the German-French paper could serve as the “clear guidelines” that were needed to convene an IGC.⁷⁴² By receiving these four immediate endorsements, Kohl not only strengthened the case for an IGC but also his own position. The German-French paper was by that time the most widely accepted basis on which to call an IGC to negotiate changes to the EEC treaty. However, this was not a universally accepted idea. By lunchtime the general mood had become “very strained”.⁷⁴³ Thatcher had a “furious row” with Kohl over who was more interested in advancing the case of the European

⁷³⁷ Ibid.

⁷³⁸ TNA FCO30/6307, folio no. 77, R. Renwick to J. Bullard, “Milan,” 5 July 1985.

⁷³⁹ According to article 236 of the EEC treaty, “the government of any Member State or the Commission may submit to the Council proposals for the revision of this Treaty. If the Council, after consulting the Assembly and, where appropriate, the Commission, expresses an opinion in favour of the calling of a conference of representatives of the Governments of Member States, such conference shall be convened by the President of the Council for the purpose of determining in common agreement the amendments to be made to this Treaty.” See Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community (EEC treaty), accessed 22 December 2015, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV%3Axy0023>.

⁷⁴⁰ “Informal Record of Milan European Council, 28/29 June,” 5 July 1985, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/204623>, 18–19.

⁷⁴¹ Ibid., 19.

⁷⁴² Ibid.

⁷⁴³ Ibid., 20.

Community.⁷⁴⁴ He reproached her for not being interested in the question at all and she hit back by saying that Germany had not applied all the treaties and reminded him that his government had just recently invoked the Luxembourg Compromise over farm prices.⁷⁴⁵ After lunch, Craxi said that the German text would form the basis for “a conference”, either of the European Council or foreign ministers. Thatcher argued that the process of invoking article 236 had not been followed because the views of the European Parliament were also required. Craxi responded by saying that their opinions were “well known” but suggested that if there was a procedural requirement for consultations then the Foreign Affairs Council could convene the IGC at a later date.⁷⁴⁶ At this point Delors stated that he believed it was within the rights of Craxi to convene an IGC by majority vote because he was holding the presidency of the European Council.⁷⁴⁷ Craxi then went further to suggest that Political Cooperation could even be included in an IGC as well. This statement elicited a vigorous response from Thatcher in defence of unanimous decision making.⁷⁴⁸

After this exchange, Craxi proceeded to call a vote in the first time of the history of the European Council which resulted in seven votes for an IGC, with the UK, Denmark and Greece voting against such a conference.⁷⁴⁹ The vote for an IGC under article 236 did not, however, establish the IGC as a fact straight away. Michael Butler, the British permanent representative to the EC, and Roland Dumas, the French foreign minister, were still working on a consensus agreement.⁷⁵⁰ When the Prime Minister and her advisors reconvened it was agreed that a further push for finding policies to be agreed here and now should be made.⁷⁵¹ In effect, this was a last-ditch attempt to prevent an IGC. This proposal was written up but got delayed in the process of being translated into French and German.⁷⁵² The initial English

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid., 20-1.

⁷⁴⁶ Ibid., 20-2.

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid., 22.

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁰ “Informal Record of Milan European Council, 28/29 June,” 5 July 1985, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/204623>, 23.

⁷⁵¹ Ibid.

⁷⁵² Ibid., 23, 27.

version received positive feedback from Belgium.⁷⁵³ However, an hour earlier the presidency had tabled their own draft that called for holding an IGC, which would deal with amendments to the EEC treaty and PoCo. Thatcher did present her proposal for reaching an intergovernmental agreement here in Milan without convening an IGC. However, by that time the proposal to hold an IGC was overwhelmingly supported by the other heads of government and the discussion turned to what should be included in such a conference.⁷⁵⁴

The British records of the Milan European Council quoted the recollections of Niels Ersbøll, the Secretary General of the European Council. His role was to provide administrative support and to facilitate the organisation of the summit. His views should therefore be seen as a neutral assessment of what happened:

“Ersbøll commented that in retrospect, the vote on an IGC had been the turning point. This had given the Italian presidency the only institutional decision which they wanted to get out of Milan. Andreotti had realised quite late in the day (certainly no earlier than the evening of 28 June) that Article 236 provided a means of isolating the UK, Denmark and Greece. The Benelux had been happy to collaborate because of their anger at the success of the British press campaign in which they were labelled as hopeless idealists. The French and Germans had remained fatally ambivalent, actively discussing a package of decisions while at the same time concerned to ensure that they were not sold as a British triumph.”⁷⁵⁵

It is striking to see how Ersbøll pinpointed Italian activism as the most important factor that resulted in the vote to hold IGC. It is also interesting to see that he believed it was important to the French and the Germans that the outcome of the Milan European Council should not be seen as British victory. In the same way as Italian lobbying for an IGC was important, and their discovery sometime late at night on 28 June 1985 that they could force the issue under article 236 of the EEC treaty, so too was French and German apparent indecisiveness.⁷⁵⁶ When by holding a vote, Kohl and Mitterrand were asked whether they

⁷⁵³ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁴ Ibid., 24.

⁷⁵⁵ Emphasis added. These recollections were edited out in later versions of the record. Ibid., 28.

⁷⁵⁶ Ibid.; TNA FCO30/6306, folio no. 56, telegram no. 4, UKRep to FCO, “European Council: Milan: 28-9 June, Summary,” 29 June 1985; FCO30/6307, folio no. 77, R. Renwick to J. Bullard, “Milan,” 5 July 1985.

supported European integration through an IGC or not, they nevertheless had to stand by their words of intending to advance the cause of a “European Union”. After all, that was the most significant difference between the paper which Thatcher had wanted to present, and the version Germany and France had brought forward. Moreover, the decision to agree to an IGC was aided by the fact that such a conference could be sold to the wider public as a success and would provide a forum to further develop the policies that each country wanted to pursue.

The one agreement that somehow got drowned out by the entire uproar over an IGC and how to implement PoCo was that the European Council endorsed the White Paper on the European Market, which Lord Arthur Cockfield had presented on 15 June.⁷⁵⁷ This White Paper drew up a list of 298 non-tariff barriers (NTB) for which the European Commission suggested a time table of how and when they should be reduced.⁷⁵⁸ To reduce physical barriers to trade, the White Paper suggested abolishing border checks on individuals, getting rid of lorry quotas, sharing statistical data of border crossings, harmonising plant and animal health standards and a common management of import quotas from outside the EC.⁷⁵⁹ The paper argued that technical barriers to trade should be abolished in line with the principle that “if a product is lawfully manufactured and marketed in one member state, there is no reason why it should not be sold freely throughout the Community”.⁷⁶⁰ Finally, the White Paper argued that “harmonization of indirect taxation has always been regarded as an essential and integral part of achieving a true Common Market”.⁷⁶¹ The reasoning behind this argument was that since border posts in trade were mainly there to collect VAT and excise duties, then abolishing such checks also meant that indirect taxes had to be harmonised.⁷⁶² The contents of this White Paper were agreed upon at the Milan European Council without much controversy. The White Paper and its lead author, Lord Arthur Cockfield, would come to prominence in

⁷⁵⁷ One day earlier the Benelux countries, France and Germany had signed the Schengen agreement that aimed to abolish border checks.

⁷⁵⁸ Cockfield, ‘Completing the Internal Market’.

⁷⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 10 ff. Appendix 1., 5-13.

⁷⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁷⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁷⁶² *Ibid.*, 41–43.

the second half of the 1980s, when the measures suggested in the paper were implemented under the Single Market Programme of the European Commission, with 1992 as the symbolic date when the Single Market would finally truly come into existence.⁷⁶³

In the press conference after the Milan European Council, Thatcher said that “I have taken the view that if we, as Heads of Government cannot decide, why should another conference, which consists of people far less than Heads of Government elsewhere, how should they be able to decide? Nevertheless, the other view prevailed and we must go to that Intergovernmental Conference”.⁷⁶⁴ Thatcher’s own notes for the press conference called holding an IGC a “distraction”.⁷⁶⁵ Her notes argue that at Milan “we have made some progress, though we unhappily got bogged down in what I think was an irrelevance and perhaps a recipe for Community paralysis”. Thatcher argued that it was wrong for the Milan European Council to focus on “questions of procedure” about whether or not to hold an IGC. She believed it would have been far better to focus on specific points of policy. However, Thatcher lauded the progress made with the Single Market and on technological cooperation. Her briefing asked whether this summit made Europe “a more credible political economic force in the world?”. Thatcher crossed this text out and commented in her handwriting that an IGC was “sadly the only decision taken”.⁷⁶⁶ Before taking questions she departed entirely from her brief and argued:

“We British have occasion to be very, very European. We have been part of Europe over the centuries. We believe that Europe could play a far larger, more significant, more influential part in the affairs of the world than she is playing now. It was our objective to achieve that. It has been put off to another conference. We wanted to achieve it now, but we shall steadily continue with our objectives: to make Europe more influential, to make

⁷⁶³ Cecchini et al. *The European Challenge: 1992 The Benefits of the Single Market*; Calingaert, *The 1992 Challenge from Europe*; Cockfield et al., *Is the Single Market Working?*.

⁷⁶⁴ TNA PREM19/1492, “Press conference given by the Prime Minister Mrs. Thatcher, in Milan, on Saturday June 29, 1985,” transcribed by James Lee, 29 June 1985. See also: interviews with Paul Reynolds (BBC), John Simson (BBC TV), Michael Brunson (ITN), Antonia Higgs (ITN), all given on 29 June 1985.

⁷⁶⁵ Thatcher’s annotated notes for Milan European Council Press Conference, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/142329>.

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid.

Europe more prosperous, to make Europe more important technologically, to make Europe have a higher standard of living and create more jobs”.⁷⁶⁷

This quote shows that she could agree to the substance of what was debated in Milan but not the legal form in which it would be implemented. The fact that Thatcher crossed out the words arguing the Milan European Council made the EC a “credible political economic force in the world” can be seen as symbolic of the failure of her efforts to lead the EC into a formalisation of PoCo. Her ambitions for PoCo were overtaken by the decision to hold an IGC. Thatcher did not immediately refuse to participate in the IGC but merely said she believed it was not necessary. Robin Renwick remembered how during an informal meeting before the press conference, he “urged her not tell the journalists that we would not agree to any treaty change”.⁷⁶⁸ He argued “it was just possible that we could negotiate changes that would be acceptable to us”.⁷⁶⁹ After the Milan summit, Geoffrey Howe told Thatcher that the position of UK was “fully protected” by a provision in the EEC treaty stipulating that any amendment had to be agreed on unanimously.⁷⁷⁰

The outcome of the Milan European Council prompted a fair amount of soul searching in the FCO about how the British PoCo paper could be overtaken by the German-French initiative for a “Treaty of European Union” and why an IGC was convened. Michael Butler believed that the IGC was a “pyrrhic victory” for Italy.⁷⁷¹ Robin Renwick argued that the “Italians went bald-headed for a vote [on an IGC], with no time for a proper reflection”.⁷⁷² Robin Renwick wrote in his account of his time in the FCO that he believed the decision to call a vote was an “ambush”.⁷⁷³ Lord Bridges, the British ambassador to Italy, reported

⁷⁶⁷ Emphasis added. TNA PREM19/1492, “Press conference given by the Prime Minister Mrs. Thatcher, in Milan, on Saturday June 29, 1985,” transcribed by James Lee, 29 June 1985, 2-3.

⁷⁶⁸ Robin Renwick, *A Journey with Margaret Thatcher*, 103.

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁰ TNA FCO30/6171, folio no. 272, G. Howe to M. Thatcher, “Milan European Council,” 1 July 1985, 2.

⁷⁷¹ TNA FCO30/6306, folio no. 56, telegram no. 4, UKRep to FCO, “European Council: Milan: 28-9 June, Summary,” 29 June 1985.

⁷⁷² TNA FCO30/6307, folio no. 77, R. Renwick to J. Bullard, “Milan,” 5 July 1985.

⁷⁷³ Renwick, *A Journey with Margaret Thatcher*.

directly after the summit that the “the Italians are unrepentant, indeed gung-ho about the result of the Milan European Council”.⁷⁷⁴ Renato Ruggiero had told him that the UK government had been “over-confident” in the run-up to Milan and mistakenly “tended to push aside as empty words phrases in earlier declarations committing member states to European Union, words which had a real meaning for some members”.⁷⁷⁵ In addition, Ruggiero had said that the British Budget Question had left unresolved issues.⁷⁷⁶ The British ambassador to France, John Fretwell, believed that Mitterrand had faced a “dilemma” between either having to accept “a practical set of ideas, which were capable of producing results but which had the disadvantage of being labelled British” or an IGC to change the EEC treaty, which the Italian and German governments wanted.⁷⁷⁷ Mitterrand chose the latter, which for him had the advantage of partnering with Kohl and to show that France and Germany were still the “motor of Europe”.⁷⁷⁸

Julian Bullard invited Horst Teltschik to the ambassador’s residence and “put him in the chair where he had sat at breakfast on Tuesday 25 June” – where he was sitting when the two had identified a large amount of agreement between both countries’ positions and Bullard had been under the impression that “all that lies between us are the words treaty and union”⁷⁷⁹ – and asked him to explain the German actions in the run-up to the Milan European Council.⁷⁸⁰ Horst Teltschik argued that Germany had wanted to discuss the PoCo draft, which Thatcher had given to Kohl at Chequers, with the UK, France, Italy and the Benelux countries and had intended to distribute a revised version afterwards. However, Teltschik claimed that the UK had refused to enter into talks and France had imposed a condition of secrecy on the talks that were going on bilaterally between Paris and Bonn. Moreover, Teltschik told Bullard

⁷⁷⁴ TNA FCO98/2361, telegram, T. Bridges to FCO, “European Council,” 4 July 1985.

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁷ TNA FCO30/6199, folio no. 57, J. Fretwell to D. Thomas, “France and the Community: Before and after Milan,” 2 August 1985.

⁷⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁹ TNA FCO30/6203, Folio no. 42, telegram no. 640, J. Bullard to FCO, “European Council: FRG position,” 25 June 1985.

⁷⁸⁰ TNA FCO30/6199, J. Bullard, “Milan: What happened?,” 20 August 1985.

that until the morning on 25 June 1985, it had still not been clear whether the talks with the French government were going to yield any results.⁷⁸¹ Teltschik's account showed that even though he blamed France for a lack of transparency, the German government were willing to put their consultations with France ahead of those with the UK.

The picture that emerged of the preparations for the Milan European Council, was one of failed attempts at multilateral diplomacy – especially on the part of the UK and Germany. When the German negotiators finally had French support, they then wanted to get Italy to present the treaty, without mentioning German or French authorship. However, Italy refused to do so on 26 June 1985. Teltschik said that by then they had run out of time and the UK was informed a little bit ahead of the other countries, because the German paper was largely based on the original British version.⁷⁸² Bullard concluded from his talk with Horst Teltschik that the paper “was not intended as a last-minute surprise” but had become one because too much time was lost attempting to involve the Italian and French governments.⁷⁸³ Bullard's own account of the events showed that he believed Teltschik, when he said that Germany had wanted to consult with the UK but had simply run out of time. Yet despite all the talk of last-minute surprises, the simple fact that the Thatcher did not attempt to make the same charm offensive to Mitterrand as she did to Kohl goes some way to explain why the Franco-German talks came as such a surprise to her. They should not have. As chapter two has explained, Thatcher's meeting with Kohl showed that they both saw European integration in a very different way. Therefore, the focus on Kohl and the seeming inability of Mitterrand and Thatcher to work together on the subject of European integration contributed to the failure of the British PoCo initiative. Seen from this angle, Thatcher's PoCo paper was not a true effort at trilateral leadership but rather an attempt at breaking into the Franco-German relationship, which if it was intended as such failed singularly.

⁷⁸¹ Ibid.

⁷⁸² Ibid.

⁷⁸³ TNA FCO30/6199, Folio no. 63, J. Bullard to D. Thomas, “Before and After Milan,” 23 August 1985.

In conclusion, this chapter analysed how the UK government planned to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo by presenting a paper that proposed formalising this hitherto informal practice. Thatcher accepted to present this paper herself and it was seen by officials but was not supposed to be discussed by them until she had presented it herself to the European Council. I have argued that presenting the paper as a high-level intervention, without the involvement of officials, robbed the FCO of the chance to broker compromises and by doing so made building alliances that would secure a commitment to these proposals impossible. After receiving the British PoCo paper, the German government began to secretly work on their own paper in consultation with France. The resulting German-French paper was based on the British proposals but went beyond them in expressing an institutional ambition with the title “Treaty of European Union” as well as by wanting to give the EC institutions more powers. Moreover, whereas the British paper was proposed as an intergovernmental agreement, the German-French proposals were supposed to be given the status of a formal treaty. These two conflicting papers were important because tabling such a paper was a way of displaying leadership in the European Council. The ownership of ideas, or “paternity” as the Germans called it, was significant because it lent credibility and was a powerful tool in shaping the negotiation agenda.

The primary sources in the different archives consulted for this research show that when the Germans initiated talks on presenting their own paper to the Milan European Council, they found the French a very difficult partner, because neither commitment nor precise policy proposals were forthcoming. At the same time, these consultations showed that there was a measure of trust between the governments of Germany and France that facilitated these secret meetings, which was lacking between Britain and either country – partly because of the British budget dispute, differing political views or personality clashes between the different leaders. Eventually, the German government simply ran out of time in their attempt to turn the British paper into a multilateral “Treaty of European Union”. The plan to let the Italian presidency table the paper failed, and Germany was left holding the baby. Kohl

unexpectedly revealed the existence of the paper to the *Bundestag*, which had been until then a secret. A flurry of diplomatic activity followed to smooth things over with the other EC countries. The fact that there was no time for consultations with the UK government and since Italy refused to present the proposals turned the PoCo paper from a multilateral initiative into a German-French draft paper. During the Milan European Council, the clash of the two papers came to a head. On the first day a majority of heads of government supported finding an agreement without the need for treaty change. Italian activism, with Italy in the role as chair, played a role in making sure an IGC was not abandoned, despite initial lack of support. The Italian government tabled a vote on holding an IGC, which presented all heads of government with a choice: would they follow through on their statements that they wanted more European integration and commit to an IGC to negotiate changes to the EEC treaty? When presented with such a choice, seven heads of government voted in favour of holding an IGC – but the UK, Greece and Denmark voted against such a conference. On 29 June 1985, for the first time in the history of the EC, the European Council agreed by majority vote that an IGC would be convened to change the EEC treaty.

The moment when an IGC was agreed was a significant milestone on the path to the Single European Act. For the UK, the Milan European Council was the moment when Thatcher's ambition to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo was overtaken by a German-French proposal. Thatcher had accepted to present the PoCo paper as her own initiative to the European Council. The reason why the British PoCo paper – and with it Thatcher's ambition to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo – could be overtaken by a German-French paper lay partly in the strategy that the UK government pursued in presenting the PoCo paper and partly in the role that the German-French relationship played in the European Community. Germany and France did not consult the UK because the British government had shared the PoCo paper on the condition of secrecy and had expressly forbidden diplomatic consultations. Thatcher, Howe and the officials in the UK government were taken aback by the suddenness with which Germany revealed the counterproposals to the British PoCo paper. It was the form

in which the German-French paper was presented, not its substance – with which they happened largely to agree – which irked British officials most. However, the way that the German-French paper was made public happened by accident and not by design. Germany had wanted to make this a multilateral initiative but when Kohl came under political pressure, because of domestic politics, he unilaterally revealed the existence of the proposal for a “Treaty of European Union”. The consultations with the UK thereby ended up as collateral damage. Subsequently, Germany tried hard to mend the broken diplomatic fences and restore the good bilateral relationship between both countries.

The Milan European Council caused an important shift in the UK’s policy making towards the EC. To lead the EC into the formalisation of PoCo but at the same time refuse an IGC and to change the EEC treaty, was no longer an option. The strategy to propose the formalisation of PoCo and thereby deflect calls to change the EEC treaty had failed. Even though Thatcher’s ambition to lead the EC into a formalisation of PoCo had not succeeded, she was committed to keep the UK government as a full negotiation partner in the IGC. Therefore, although the strategy that the UK had pursued did not succeed, the actual content of the British PoCo paper lived to fight another day. The ambition to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo, and the refusal to hold an IGC, were both abandoned in favour of a cautious engagement in the IGC. In practice, this meant that the UK government was involved in the negotiations of the IGC but without tabling its own proposals, which will be the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 4. Intergovernmental Conference: “we enter this exercise without commitment”

After Margaret Thatcher was outvoted in the European Council in Milan, on the subject of holding an Intergovernmental Conference (IGC), it was not clear what she would do next. Would the UK government participate in an IGC? Thatcher had been consistent in refusing to negotiate a change to the EEC treaty. This chapter argues that Thatcher agreed to exploratory negotiations in the IGC but withheld her commitment until the final outcome of the talks in the form of the Single European Act (SEA) had become clear. As such, it took three months for the IGC to negotiate the clauses of the SEA, lasting from 9 September to 1 December 1985.⁷⁸⁴ The IGC took place on a foreign minister level.⁷⁸⁵ Consequently, Geoffrey Howe, not Thatcher, represented the UK government in the IGC. Thatcher’s reluctance to commit to the IGC meant for Howe and the FCO officials that they had to negotiate without knowing whether Thatcher was eventually going to back their efforts or not. The heads of government of the nine EC countries agreed to change the EEC treaty with the SEA at the European Council in Luxembourg on 2-3 December 1985.

This chapter traces chronologically how the British policy towards the IGC evolved. Firstly, the UK began negotiating under the formula of engaging without commitment. Secondly, the negotiations were informed by consultations with other Whitehall departments by the Cabinet Office. Thirdly, as the IGC evolved Howe’s “questioning approach” was broadened to involve preventing the possible emergence of a Franco-German understanding on the outcome of the IGC. Fourthly, Nigel Lawson departed from Howe’s “questioning approach” by arguing much more directly that all discussion of monetary integration should be dropped, for which he believed he had Germany’s backing. Fifthly, in the final phase of the IGC, all unresolved points were handed over to the heads of government at the European

⁷⁸⁴ Although a direct comparison cannot be made, the IGC to negotiate the EEC treaty met for the first time on 26 June 1956 and the treaty was signed almost nine months later on 25 March 1957.

⁷⁸⁵ The IGC was modelled after the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC), where all the EC foreign ministers met, because the delegates were all foreign ministers. TNA FCO98/2382, telegram no. 2741, M. Butler to FCO, “Foreign Affairs Council 22 July 1985, follow-up to European Council: Institutions,” 22 July 1985.

Council on 2-3 December 1985. Only then did Thatcher commit the UK government to the outcome of the IGC. Once the SEA was agreed, it was presented to the media and the House of Commons with the emphasis on the part that extended the Single Market. Thatcher argued that the extension of the Single Market justified treaty change and majority voting.

The literature on the relationship between the UK and the EC saw the way in which the UK government approached the IGC in the light of the prominence of the Single Market and argued that the UK was to a degree successful in advocating for market liberalisation.⁷⁸⁶ There is a consensus in the literature that a successful conclusion of the IGC was made possible by Thatcher's decision not to boycott the IGC and because the UK government negotiated constructively in the IGC.⁷⁸⁷ Ludlow argued that this cooperative way to negotiate in the IGC should be seen as more important than the clash of opinions on the question of holding such a conference in Milan.⁷⁸⁸ Moravcsik, Parsons and Stephen Wall argued that during the IGC the UK government accepted majority voting to implement the Single Market.⁷⁸⁹ Buller, George, Gifford and Moravcsik emphasised that the outcome of the IGC was very close to what the UK government had originally intended, largely because it extended the Single Market.⁷⁹⁰ Stephen George even thought that a "Franco-German-British axis" was emerging, with the issues of the Single Market, technology and EPC as the key drivers.⁷⁹¹ However, Buller believed that the new "reactive" approach of the UK government

⁷⁸⁶ Buller, *National Statecraft and European Integration*, 103; George, *An Awkward Partner*, 183–85; Gifford, *The Making of Eurosceptic Britain*, 93–94; Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 48, 66; Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 334; Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, 364 ff.; Moravcsik, 'Negotiating the Single European Act', 41–44; Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 334.

⁷⁸⁷ Buller, *National Statecraft and European Integration*, 103; George, *An Awkward Partner*, 183; N. Piers Ludlow, 'La Politique Européenne de Thatcher (1979-1990). L'itinéraire d'un Libéralisateur Frustré?', in *Milieux Économiques et Intégration Européenne Au XXe Siècle : La Relance Des Années Quatre-Vingt*, ed. Michel Dumoulin, Sylvain Schirmann, and Eric Bussière (Paris: Institut de la gestion publique et du développement économique, 2007), <http://books.openedition.org/igpde/4728>; Moore, *Margaret Thatcher*, 2015, 402; Young, *This Blessed Plot*, 332–34; Young, *Britain and European Unity, 1945-1999*, 140; Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 48, 57, 65–67; Wall, *The Official History of Britain and the European Community, Volume III*, 308–32.

⁷⁸⁸ Ludlow, 'La Politique Européenne de Thatcher (1979-1990). L'itinéraire d'un Libéralisateur Frustré?', 15.

⁷⁸⁹ Parsons, 'Revisiting the Single European Act (and the Common Wisdom on Globalization)', 721–22; Moravcsik, 'Negotiating the Single European Act', 41; Wall, *A Stranger in Europe*, 51–52, 65–67.

⁷⁹⁰ Buller, *National Statecraft and European Integration*, 103; George, *An Awkward Partner*, 183–85; Gifford, *The Making of Eurosceptic Britain*, 93–94; Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, 319–26, 364–68; Moravcsik, 'Negotiating the Single European Act', 41–44.

⁷⁹¹ George, *An Awkward Partner*, 183–85.

only succeeded because France and Germany did not join forces to advance any alternative plans, other than extending the Single Market and formalising EPC.⁷⁹²

This chapter argues that the existing literature has not sufficiently appreciated the importance of the conditionality of Thatcher's agreement to allow the FCO to negotiate in the IGC. Robin Renwick and Stephen Wall, who both were officials in the FCO with responsibility for European integration, remember a private meeting in which they were given leave for exploratory negotiations but were told by Thatcher to "please bear in mind that when you come back, I may disavow you".⁷⁹³ This tension between not having Prime Ministerial guidance on the IGC negotiations presented Geoffrey Howe and the FCO officials with challenges for the conference. Howe had to find a way of negotiating an agreement, without binding himself fully to the outcome of the conference. Therefore, this chapter argues that Thatcher's conditional commitment was the reason behind Howe's "questioning approach". In the IGC, the UK government did not table any new proposals but confined their efforts to discussing those that were already on the table, or what others brought forward. Therefore, the conditionality of the UK government's commitment explains why Howe negotiated in the IGC in such a cautious manner. Howe wanted to keep the UK engaged in the IGC, prevent a separate Franco-German agreement and nudge the negotiations in a direction that Thatcher could accept.

A difficult issue for the UK government was the issue of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). Jacques Delors, the president of the European Commission, was advocating writing a commitment to EMU into any revisions of the EEC treaty. Howe wanted to split the discussion of EMU from the rest of the topics in the IGC and remit it to the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN), where all the finance ministers sat. This approach backfired when Lawson took a much more confrontational line in ECOFIN than Howe was

⁷⁹² Buller, *National Statecraft and European Integration*, 103–4, 117.

⁷⁹³ See Appendix one and four. Renwick, *A Journey with Margaret Thatcher*, 103; Wall, *The Official History of Britain and the European Community, Volume III*, 311.

taking in the IGC. Lawson's outright refusal to include EMU into the amended EEC treaty contributed to achieving the opposite outcome of what Howe had intended. Instead of relegating the debate about EMU to technical discussions in ECOFIN, the issue was kept alive and ended up being discussed by the heads of government in the European Council. Essentially, Howe and Lawson agreed with each other that they did not want to see a reference to EMU in the revised EEC treaty. It was their difference in negotiating style rather than substance, which anyway happened in two separate settings (Howe in the IGC and Lawson in ECOFIN), coupled with Delors' activism that succeeded in keeping the issue on the agenda.

In the Luxembourg European Council, Thatcher was forced to come off the fence on the subject of treaty change, which she did when all her conditions were met. Thatcher was presented with a choice of either accepting the package that Howe had negotiated or rejecting her entire European policy since the resolution of the British Budget Question (BBQ) in June 1984. Doing so could have meant jeopardising her entire policy programme outlined in "Europe – the Future", the plan to codify Political Cooperation (PoCo), liberalising the Single Market and thus making the EC more market-oriented as well as more outward looking. When the issue of EMU was discussed by the heads of governments, Kohl eventually said he was not against a nominal mention of EMU, which isolated Thatcher. Eventually, a symbolic reference in the preamble was also agreed to by Thatcher. Thatcher's acceptance of the outcome of the Luxembourg European Council gives us a window into the aspects of European integration that Thatcher agreed with, which is necessary to complement the broader picture of how her views towards European integration changed over time.

4. 1. Negotiating in the IGC: Geoffrey Howe's "questioning approach"

The IGC was prepared by a diplomatic working group chaired by Jean Dondelinger who was then the foreign minister of Luxembourg. The delegates to the "Dondelinger group" were nominated by national governments but were mostly permanent representatives, i.e.

ambassadors to the EC of member countries. Dondelinger emphasised that these preparatory meetings were different from the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER).⁷⁹⁴ The European Commission participated fully in the debates, prepared proposals and suggested compromises. The other ministerial councils discussed the IGC only when a minister raised a point of interest to their area, such as the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN). The European Parliament had no legal basis for being directly involved in the negotiations but was briefed regularly. Before 21 October 1985, the ideas put forward in the preparatory group of the IGC were very broad, were based on the issues that had been discussed in the Dooge Committee and had not yet been worked out in detail. Dondelinger had set a deadline of 15 October for the submission of proposals. Emile Noël, the Secretary General of the European Commission, proposed that the result of the IGC should be framed as a “single act” because it was the first substantial amendment of the EEC treaty and thus should re-state the original aims of the treaties in a way that was visible to the wider public. The suggestion drew critical comments from the British and French representatives, Michael Butler and Luc de La Barre de Nanteuil, who both argued that it was too early to discuss the form of the final agreement.⁷⁹⁵

The list of topics at the first IGC meeting on 9 September bears a striking resemblance to the topics discussed in the Dooge Committee.⁷⁹⁶ The report of this conversation reads a little bit as if every minister had chosen an item that they liked most from the Dooge Committee report. Jacques Delors, the president of the European Commission, suggested a “single act”, which in his view meant implementing the Single Market, collaborating in research and technology, committing to more financial integration and providing “cohesion” funds, for poorer member countries. The Irish and the Greek representatives supported the call for more resources to be given to economically less

⁷⁹⁴ TNA FCO98/2382, folio no. 8: telegram no. 2851, P. Goulden to FCO, “Preparatory group for the Inter-governmental conference, Brussels 2/3 September,” 3 September 1985.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁶ TNA FCO30/6174, folio no. 384, telegram no. 303, T. Bridges to FCO, “Inter-governmental conference, Luxembourg 9 September 1985,” 9 September 1985.

prosperous countries. The Italian representative argued for giving the EP more power to make the EC more democratic, limiting the Luxembourg Compromise, improving the way decisions were made in general as well as extending the competences of the community to education, culture, health and social security. Catherine Lalumière, the French representative, was more cautious and argued that the EP should receive “something extra”. She also agreed with the suggestion that the Single Market should be extended, technologies developed, and the question of cohesion be examined in the context of the effects of the Single Market. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the German delegate, argued that PoCo should include security policies, a “European legal area” should be established and cooperation should happen in areas of the environment, technology, Single Market, public procurement, culture and education.⁷⁹⁷

Since the IGC was a ministerial conference, Geoffrey Howe would be negotiating for the UK government. Before the start of the IGC, Robin Renwick, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the FCO (responsible for European integration), suggested to Howe that he should adopt a “questioning attitude” in this conference.⁷⁹⁸ To some extent this tactic originated from reflections of what went wrong in the preparations for the Milan European Council.⁷⁹⁹ Robin Renwick argued that by showing an early copy of the PoCo paper to Helmut Kohl at Thatcher’s bilateral meeting with the German Chancellor, on 18 May 1985, the UK government had lost “an element of surprise and mobility” at the Milan European Council. Renwick recommended that in the IGC Howe should “stand back a bit from the debate and wait to see what real areas of agreement” emerged. At the same time, Howe should “steer the discussions in directions we could accept”, which would mean a “moderation of maximalist ideas”. Renwick was in effect saying that Thatcher’s personal

⁷⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁸ TNA FCO30/6174, folio no. 378, R. Renwick to L. Appleyard, “European Community: Intergovernmental conference,” 3 September 1985.

⁷⁹⁹ FCO30/6171, folio no. 300, R. Renwick to L. Appleyard, “European Community,” 5 July 1985.

high-level initiative in Milan had failed and that a more reactive approach had become necessary in the IGC.⁸⁰⁰

To some extent, Howe's policy was shaped by his perception of what Thatcher might or might not be able to accept. Howe suggested to Thatcher that he wanted to "wait and see" what proposals were being tabled in the IGC and what concessions other countries were prepared to make.⁸⁰¹ By doing so, Howe wanted to bring other countries to propose feasible policies of their own and avoid other governments being able to "shelter behind us" in the IGC. Geoffrey Howe's impression was that the suggestions for treaty amendments were all "extremely vague" and he believed that there would be "considerable confusion" until specific proposals were on the table. Howe suggested that the UK government should be "empirical", proposals should be judged by whether or not they furthered the objective of the Single Market, which was what he called a "questioning approach". However, he did not believe PoCo should be brought within the EC treaty framework. Charles Powell replied by saying that Thatcher had read Howe's suggestion and had "noted this without comment".⁸⁰² This exchange of letters shows that Thatcher was willing to let these negotiations go ahead on an exploratory basis but had by September 1985 not yet signed up to them, nor to changing the EEC treaty.

The first chapter of this dissertation introduced the institutions through which foreign policy was devised and explained how important Michael Butler was to the diplomacy of the UK in the EC. When Michael Butler prepared for retirement he wrote his valedictory despatch and a report on the IGC.⁸⁰³ Valedictory despatches have traditionally been a space

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁰¹ TNA PREM19/1480, G. Howe to M. Thatcher, "European Community: Inter-Governmental Conference," 13 September 1985; FCO30/6175, folio no. 397, G. Howe to M. Thatcher, "European Community: Inter-governmental Conference, 13 September 1985.

⁸⁰² TNA FCO30/6175, folio no. 398, C. Powell to C. Budd, "European Community: Inter-governmental Conference," 15 September 1985.

⁸⁰³ TNA PREM19/1480, M. Butler to G. Howe, 10 October 1985, "Inter-governmental conference, report by Sir Michael Butler," 17 October 1985. When Sir Michael's valedictory despatch was circulated in the FCO it had attached to it the "timetable for completing the internal market by 1992", which Arthur Cockfield at the European Commission had drawn up. TNA FCO30/6177, handwritten note: "enclosure to Sir M Butler's valedictory despatch", n.d.

where retiring ambassadors who had spent a career committed to the civil service traditions of what Peter Hennessy called “secrecy, neutrality and probity” could offer candid assessment on personalities, politics and the FCO at large.⁸⁰⁴ When Michael Butler retired, he reflected on how important the EC was to stand united against the Soviet Union, bind Germany to the West and compete economically with Japan and the USA.⁸⁰⁵ However, he argued that the need to work together stood in stark contrast with the perception of “the man in the street”, who believed that the “European ideal had lost impetus”.⁸⁰⁶ Butler argued that for the UK government the challenge ahead was to find a way of negotiating in the IGC that would make the outcome of this conference acceptable to the House of Commons.⁸⁰⁷

The report Michael Butler prepared for his “farewell call” on the Prime Minister said that the “questioning approach we have adopted has served us well” in the IGC.⁸⁰⁸ Butler reported that in the IGC “we have been able to stimulate the French and Germans into firm opposition to the maximalist proposals from the Commission and others. We can continue this line in the Conference”.⁸⁰⁹ Butler argued that France and Germany wanted much the same from the IGC as the UK government, except that France was open to amending the treaties and that Germany wanted to give the EP more power. Moreover, there was broad support for a “limited extension of majority voting related to specific Internal Market objectives”.⁸¹⁰ Butler warned that even though such ideas could mean changing the EEC treaty, Thatcher should not oppose this outright:

“it is in our interests to **maintain uncertainty** about our intentions. But we need to work with French and German officials and the presidency in the coming weeks in order to continue to **‘shrink’ the package** which is likely to be on the table and **get it as close as possible to something we might be able to accept**. Otherwise the French and Germans will probably reconcile their

⁸⁰⁴ Hennessy, *Whitehall*, 344 ff.

⁸⁰⁵ TNA FCO30/6177, M. Butler to G. Howe, 10 October 1985, 2, 9.

⁸⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁸⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁸⁰⁸ TNA PREM19/1480, “Inter-governmental conference, report by Sir Michael Butler,” 17 October 1985.

⁸⁰⁹ *Ibid.* With these proposals Butler meant majority voting, giving the EP more power and transferring more money to poorer member state through a “cohesion” mechanism.

⁸¹⁰ *Ibid.*

differences in a way which is unattractive to us and sell the result to the presidency before the European Council”.⁸¹¹

Butler’s comments show that the negotiators were using the argument that Thatcher had withheld her commitment to treaty change as a bargaining chip to extract concessions in the IGC. This quote is also interesting because it shows a latent worry that France and Germany could decide matters of EC-wide importance bilaterally. Butler suggested that the UK delegation in the IGC should continue to argue that the Prime Minister would judge the “package of proposals” that emerged from the IGC.⁸¹² When Margaret Thatcher met Michael Butler, they talked about what majority voting would mean, which treaty articles should be changed and what the UK approach to the IGC should be.⁸¹³ Charles Powell’s summary of the meeting recounted:

“The Prime Minister’s conclusion from the meeting was that for the time being we should continue to **keep our cards close to our chest** and go on **grinding down the unrealistic aims** of other member states and of the Commission. She recognises that, nearer the time of the European Council, officials may need to become more closely involved in drafting elements of a package which might be acceptable at the European Council. But it must be **made clear that we enter this exercise without commitment** and that the **main purpose is to prevent others from drafting conclusion which would be unacceptable** from our point of view. Officials should therefore continue to **make clear that they do not know what the Prime Minister would or would not be able to accept ...**”⁸¹⁴

The part of this quote which says that Thatcher “entered the exercise without commitment” is significant because it indicates that the detached approach Thatcher took to the IGC suited her personally. She had not wanted the IGC when it was debated during the Milan European Council. As recounted in the previous chapter, Thatcher was outvoted in the Milan European Council on the question of whether or not an IGC should be held. Now that it

⁸¹¹ Emphasis added. Ibid.

⁸¹² Ibid.

⁸¹³ TNA FCO30/6177, folio no. 492, C. Powell to C. Budd, “European Community Intergovernmental Conference,” 29 October 1985.

⁸¹⁴ Emphasis added. Ibid.

was launched, her level of support was lukewarm at best. The outcome of the meeting between Thatcher and Butler confirmed the policy of exploratory negotiations and allowed the FCO to continue negotiating in the IGC. Therefore, the diplomats should continue to direct the talks in the IGC towards policies that Thatcher could accept if she wanted to. However, Thatcher still withheld her commitment in principle until the exact articles of the potential changes to the EEC treaty had become clear.

A few days after Thatcher met Michael Butler, Charles Powell saw a list of potential amendments to the EEC treaty that the FCO was proposing to accept. Powell told David Williamson, the head of the European Secretariat at the Cabinet Office, he was “alarmed” by how many articles were being earmarked for amendment, adding that Thatcher was unaware that the FCO was prepared to accept changes to so much of the EEC treaty.⁸¹⁵ Powell warned that “I should be careful about getting too far down this road, at least without a further discussion”.⁸¹⁶ Powell asked Williamson if he should show this paper to Thatcher. Williamson replied that it would be better not to do so because it would be discussed in the Cabinet sub-committee on European questions of the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee (OD(E)) and that Geoffrey Howe would then report the conclusions to Thatcher.⁸¹⁷ Williamson reiterated to Powell that the IGC discussions were happening under the formula of no commitment on the part of the UK government to amending the EEC treaty.⁸¹⁸ Howe therefore was hemmed in by Thatcher’s conditional commitment to negotiating in the IGC and an expectation that not many treaty articles would be changed

⁸¹⁵ TNA PREM19/1480, C. Powell to D. Williamson, “Inter-governmental conference,” 4 November 1985.

⁸¹⁶ Ibid.

⁸¹⁷ TNA PREM19/1480, D. Williamson to C. Powell, “European Community: Intergovernmental Conference,” 8 November 1985; CAB148/248, “OD(E)(85)(10) Defence and Overseas Policy Committee Sub-Committee on European Questions, Intergovernmental Conference,” 15 November 1985; CAB134/4898, “EQS(85) 14th Meeting, Cabinet Steering Committee on European Questions, Minutes of a Meeting held in Conference Room A, Cabinet Office on Thursday 14 November 1985 at 3.00 pm,” 14 November 1985; CAB134/4900, “EQS(85)51 Cabinet Steering Committee on European Questions, Intergovernmental Conference,” 8 November 1985.

⁸¹⁸ Ibid.

because the scope of proposals in the IGC would be reduced gradually as the conference went on.

4. 1. 1. Whitehall consultations: cautious assessments “ad referendum to ministers”

The role of the Cabinet, its committees and the Cabinet Office have been introduced in the first chapter. The European Secretariat at the Cabinet Office was the central coordinating office for European policies in Whitehall. It was the office where all the threads converged, where interdepartmental issues were negotiated and where Whitehall recommendations to ministers and the Prime Minister were agreed upon. It was also the office that worked closest with UKRep and with the FCO, a collaboration that Butler termed the “triumvirate” of European policy making. The FCO was in the lead on the negotiations at the IGC and was the face of the UK government in the diplomatic negotiations. To inform and prepare the diplomatic negotiations in the IGC, the Cabinet Office conducted a series of Consultations with Whitehall departments. The different Whitehall departments submitted their responses to a call for consultations by the Cabinet Office and sent high-ranking officials to discuss them in the European Questions Steering Group (EQS), which has also been introduced in the first chapter.

The consultations between 16 October 1985 and the end of November were significant because the Whitehall departments were beginning to work on policy proposals, based on the ideas that were emerging from the IGC.⁸¹⁹ David Williamson told a group of representatives from different Whitehall departments that “the outlines of a possible package” were materialising and that the UK government had to be ready to “influence the shape of the package”.⁸²⁰ Williamson invited all departments to consider “sticking points” with regards to the present proposals, find points where concessions could be made and suggest what would

⁸¹⁹ The government of Luxembourg, which was holding the rotating European Council presidency, had set a deadline of 15 October 1985 for new proposals to be tabled at the IGC. TNA FCO30/6176, “Note of an ad hoc Meeting held at 3.45 pm on Wednesday 16 October in the Cabinet Office chaired by Mr D Williamson, Intergovernmental Conference,” n.d.; TNA CAB/193/458, “Ad hoc meeting on the Inter-governmental conference: 3:45 pm, Wednesday 16 October, Conference room D, Chairman’s brief, 15 October 1985.

⁸²⁰ Ibid.

be in the UK's interest in terms of taking decisions more effectively in the EC institutions.⁸²¹

These suggestions then flowed into the negotiation briefs, which the Cabinet Office and the FCO prepared for the third IGC meeting on 11 November 1985.⁸²²

As the responses from Whitehall trickled in, it became clear that the tenor of the Whitehall assessments was very cautious. Except for one, all departments gave negative assessments of the proposals that were being discussed in the IGC. The only positive assessment came from the Department of Transport, which responded by broadly welcoming majority voting in the Council of Ministers.⁸²³ The other responses to William's call for views all focused on risks and dangers. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) argued that majority voting would not bring major gains and unanimity should be retained in areas that were "most sensitive", such as insurance, health and safety, consumer protection and intellectual property.⁸²⁴ The DTI argued that especially on liberalising the insurance market Britain found itself quite often in a minority together with the Netherlands, in fighting illiberal regulations. Therefore, the DTI was worried that majority voting might result in increased burdens on companies operating both inside and outside the EC.

The Treasury argued that unanimity should be retained for anything related to direct and indirect taxes, public purchasing and banking supervision.⁸²⁵ The Treasury worried about "illiberal directives" but argued that if there was a safeguard against such directives then the Treasury could accept majority voting on article 57 (on self-employed traders). An issue that would become important later on in the IGC was human, plant and animal health. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) wrote to David Williamson, arguing that plant and animal health safeguards were of paramount importance and that therefore no such

⁸²¹ Ibid.

⁸²² Present at this meeting were representatives from DTI, MAFF, FCO, UkRep, Employment, Energy, DOE, Trade and Pensions and the Cabinet Office.

⁸²³ TNA FCO30/6177, folio no. 490, S. Lambert to M. Jay, "Intergovernmental Conference," 28 October 1985.

⁸²⁴ TNA FCO30/6177, folio no. 487, P. Brecknell to M. Jay, "IGC," 24 October 1985.

⁸²⁵ TNA FCO30/6177, folio no. 486, J. Mortimer to M. Jay, "IGC: Follow-up to the Williamson meeting on 16 October," 23 October 1985.

provisions as were suggested in the European Commission's White Paper could be decided by majority voting.⁸²⁶ The letter suggested that the UK government had at great expense eradicated diseases, which still existed on the continent, and which if they came back could harm the export of livestock to countries outside the EC.⁸²⁷ Along similar lines, the Department of Employment argued that when it came to health and safety regulations for employees then majority voting was "highly undesirable".⁸²⁸

A second significant worry was the issue of the free movement of people. The Home Office wrote to Williamson to say that any form of "Europe without frontiers" was "unacceptable".⁸²⁹ The Home Office asked Williamson to resist any treaty change that would affect the UK government's ability to make policies on immigration, control borders and keep terrorists out. The Home Office suspected that the European Commission might use article 100 of the EEC treaty (on approximation of laws for the Single Market) to "introduce by the back door" unacceptable directives on workers from third countries or visa policies.⁸³⁰ Finally, the minister for arts argued that culture should not be regarded as an inexpensive concession to treaty change and that incorporating culture in the changed treaty should be resisted.⁸³¹

Very importantly, the DTI added one caveat to their assessment, arguing that their view was "ad referendum to our ministers", which meant it could be changed by ministers.⁸³² More than anything else this phrase of "ad referendum to ministers" explains the cautious, if not negative tone of the early Whitehall assessments. Therefore, the manner in which these views developed further was going to be informed by the political discourse. The initial sceptical responses from the Whitehall departments were so discouraging that they prompted

⁸²⁶ TNA CAB193/461, D. Hadley to D. Williamson, "IGC," 6 November 1985.

⁸²⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸²⁸ TNA FCO30/6228, folio no. 10, J. Lambert to A. Barnet, "IGC: Social policy," 10 November 1985.

⁸²⁹ TNA CAB193/458, H. Phillips to D. Williamson, "European Community," 16 October 1985.

⁸³⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸³¹ TNA FCO30/6178, folio no. 546, R. Luce to G. Howe, "OD(E)(85)10: Intergovernmental conference," 19 November 1985.

⁸³² TNA FCO30/6177, folio no. 487, P. Brecknell to M. Jay, "IGC," 24 October 1985.

Geoffrey Howe to ask for a study to examine if it was possible to “disguise” or “cloak treaty amendments” and present them as a “protocol”.⁸³³ The result of this study showed that even if a protocol was used to amend the treaty it would have to spell out that it was in fact amending the EEC treaty.⁸³⁴

These departmental suggestions were worked into the negotiating position of the UK government in the IGC. The European Secretariat at the Cabinet Office wrote a draft paper that outlined a detailed negotiating position, on which departments could again comment before it was discussed in the Cabinet sub-committee on European questions of the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee (OD(E)), on 20 November 1985.⁸³⁵ The paper argued that it was in the interest of the UK government to conclude the IGC before the UK assumed the rotating European Council presidency in 1986.⁸³⁶ It would of course be for ministers to decide whether they wanted to accept or reject the “final package”.⁸³⁷ On the basis of this paper, the European Community Department (Internal), in collaboration with the European Secretariat at the Cabinet Office, prepared the steering briefs for the negotiations in the IGC.⁸³⁸ This steering brief would guide Howe and the FCO officials in their negotiations in the IGC.

4. 1. 2. Negotiating dynamics in the IGC: “flushing out the French and the Germans”

In October 1985, David Hannay took over the job as head of UKRep from Michael Butler. He was very experienced in European integration diplomacy. As a young official he became First Secretary at the observer mission of the UK to the EEC, after the failed first entry negotiations from 1961 to 1963.⁸³⁹ He subsequently stayed in that position during the entry negotiations from 1970 to 1973. When he replaced Michael Butler as head of UKRep,

⁸³³ TNA FCO30/6177, folio no. 489, C. Budd to S. Wall, “IGC: Treaty amendment/protocol,” 28 October 1985; folio no. 489a, S. Wall to C. Budd, “IGC: Treaty amendment/protocol,” 1 November 1985.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸³⁵ TNA FCO30/6177, folio no. 493, M. Jay to S. Wall, “Intergovernmental conference,” 31 October 1985.

⁸³⁶ TNA FCO30/6177, “draft, inter-governmental conference,” n.d.

⁸³⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁸³⁸ TNA FCO30/6178, folio no. 507, S. Wall to D. Williamson, “Inter-governmental conference: (11 November): Steering brief,” 7 November 1985.

⁸³⁹ BDOHP interview with Sir David Hannay, conducted by Malcolm McBain, 22 July 1999, p. 5 ff., <https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/bdohp>.

Hannay remembered how in October 1985 he was “pitchforked” into the IGC and went from the plane straight into the negotiation room.⁸⁴⁰ From there, Hannay reported that even though the UK had not put forward a single proposal, “our questioning approach coupled with French scepticism and German caution is increasingly setting the tone”.⁸⁴¹ Hannay concluded that “reality is slowly seeping into this exercise”.⁸⁴² John Fretwell, the British ambassador to France, was shown Butler’s valedictory despatch and was instructed by Robin Renwick that the British government was pursuing a “questioning approach...without commitment” in the IGC.⁸⁴³ Crucially, Fretwell was told that “our instructions are to continue to make clear that we do not know what the Prime Minister would or would not be able to accept”.⁸⁴⁴ Renwick warned Fretwell that Thatcher would “be likely to react very negatively” to “some Franco-German fait accompli”.⁸⁴⁵

An important question to settle was the definition of the Single Market. This issue was of consequence for the debate on the scope of legislation to extend the Single Market. On 5 November 1985, Geoffrey Howe sent a personal telegram to David Hannay to inform him that Jürgen Trumpf, a high-ranking official in the German foreign ministry, told him in confidence that Germany and France had agreed on a definition of the Single Market as “a united market without frontiers”.⁸⁴⁶ This definition was based on a French proposal. Its centrepiece was the provision for majority voting on implementing the Single Market, specifically on articles 100 and 57(2), which would mean that the “approximation” of laws for the Single Market (article 100 of the EEC treaty) and the “activities as self-employed persons” (article 57(2) of the EEC treaty) would be decided by majority voting.⁸⁴⁷ Germany

⁸⁴⁰ BDOHP interview with Sir David Hannay, p. 15.

⁸⁴¹ TNA FCO30/6177, folio no. 495, telegram no. 3616, D. Hannay to FCO, “preparatory group for Intergovernmental conference Brussels, 30/31 October,” 31 October 1985.

⁸⁴² Ibid.

⁸⁴³ Underlining in the original. TNA FCO30/6177, folio no. 498, R. Renwick to J. Fretwell, “European Community: Intergovernmental Conference,” 4 November 1985.

⁸⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁵ Underline in the original. Ibid.

⁸⁴⁶ TNA FCO30/6178, folio no. 505, telegram no. 366, G. Howe to UKRep, “following personal for Hannay from Renwick, Inter-governmental conference,” 5 November 1985.

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid.

and France disagreed on whether any form of taxation should be covered by the new rules on majority voting to achieve the Single Market. Germany insisted on unanimity on tax matters, but France wanted to include “indirect taxation” (article 99 of the EEC treaty). Such a holistic definition of the Single Market was broader than the UK government would have liked because it was not clear what this would mean for issues such as the free movement of people and human, plant or animal health.

At the IGC on 11 November, Lord Bridges the British ambassador to Italy, argued that the existing divisions between “maximalists” and “minimalists” had become “more muted”.⁸⁴⁸ Bridges argued that “Italy, Ireland, Benelux and the Commission” fitted the description of “maximalists” because they supported strengthening the powers of the European Parliament and the European Commission and wanted to expand the scope of the EEC treaty.⁸⁴⁹ David Hannay reflected that the “maximalists”, in his view Italy and the Benelux countries, were “mercifully ill-coordinated” because they failed to agree on a common proposal about the EP.⁸⁵⁰ Hannay believed that the negotiation strategy of the UK government was effective because it coincided with the French and German tactics. Hannay’s assessment of the IGC so far argued:

“The French (consistently and elegantly) and the Germans (clumsily and erratically) have been working to scale down any possible outcome. Their views and our own are increasingly in the same target area ... Our **tactic of constructive cooperation, while fully reserving our position on treaty amendment, has worked so far pretty well. We have had to forego the option of tabling texts ourselves, and thus directly shaping the outcome,** and we have had to take some hard words from the press for dragging our feet. **But we have flushed the French and the Germans out from their traditional posture of sheltering behind our objections to Commission proposals. Banquo’s ghost, in the form of the need to get our eventual consent to any treaty change, has been ever present and has helped us to achieve considerable indirect influence** on the texts as they evolved”.⁸⁵¹

⁸⁴⁸ TNA FCO30/6178, folio no. 521, telegram no. 446, T. Bridges to FCO, “Inter-governmental conference, Luxembourg 11 November 1985,” 11 November 1985.

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁰ TNA FCO30/6178, folio no. 530, telegram no. 3845, D. Hannay to FCO, “The Inter-governmental conference (IGC), 14 November 1985.

⁸⁵¹ Emphasis added. Ibid.

On a diplomatic level, Germany, France and the UK increasingly found that they were pulling in the same direction. Proposals in the areas of technological cooperation, “cohesion” and the environment were converging on a “codification” of the current informal community practices.⁸⁵² Moreover, there was a consensus beginning to emerge in the IGC around the notion that the European Parliament would be given more powers through a “cooperation” process that was yet to be defined. Moreover, the European Commission would be given more executive capabilities but the “last word” would remain with the Council.⁸⁵³ According to Hannay, Delors’ suggestions for monetary integration went “down like a lead balloon in Bonn” and because of that did not yet have to be opposed by the UK.⁸⁵⁴ Hannay argued that no agreement was yet in sight on the definition of the Single Market. However, France and Germany were supporting a position close to the one of the UK by resisting the inclusion of taxation, the free movement of people or health and safety into any new Single Market regulations.⁸⁵⁵

In summary, Geoffrey Howe was instrumental in the UK’s policy making towards the IGC. He devised an approach of how to negotiate in an uncertain environment, where Margaret Thatcher’s views were not yet known. This was a deliberate tactic, as Thatcher explained to Michael Butler when he retired as head of UKRep. Moreover, it reflected her ambivalence towards the process of an IGC. What guidance there was came from Charles Powell, without much evidence of his clearing this with Thatcher. There is even evidence that Powell and Williamson deliberately shielded Thatcher from seeing earlier negotiation positions, at least until she had received the considered opinion of OD(E). Most probably this was in keeping with the overall strategy of maintaining that Thatcher’s views were not yet known and did not mean that they were going behind her back. According to Hannay, the new

⁸⁵² Ibid.; TNA FCO30/6178, folio no. 539, R. Renwick to S. Wall, “Intergovernmental Conference,” 11 November 1985.

⁸⁵³ Ibid.; TNA FCO30/6178, folio no. 530, telegram no. 3845, D. Hannay to FCO, “The Inter-governmental conference (IGC), 14 November 1985.

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁵ Ibid.

head of UKRep, the tactic of the UK in the IGC was to “flush out the French and the Germans”, expose their true positions and subtly steer the negotiations in a direction the UK government could accept.⁸⁵⁶ Hannay believed that because of the UK government’s negotiating approach, France and Germany would not be able to “shelter” behind British opposition to any of the proposals in the IGC. Moreover, looming French elections and an early conclusion to the talks would mean that fewer divisive proposals could be introduced. However, Hannay also warned that not keeping up with the IGC negotiations could damage the standing of the UK as a “core member” of the EC.⁸⁵⁷ Therefore, in the IGC France, Germany and the UK argued together for an agreement that could realistically be finalised at the Luxembourg European Council, on 2-3 December 1985. The one issue where the UK was at risk of becoming isolated was monetary integration, an issue to which the next section shall now turn.

4. 2. Economic and Monetary Union: “technically unnecessary and risky”

The question of whether or not to include the aspiration of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in the revised EEC treaty was related to the debate on whether or not to join the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM). The ERM was a mechanism to stabilise floating exchange rates in a currency band, nicknamed “the snake in a tunnel”. The UK was a member of the European Monetary System (EMS) and the Pound Sterling was in the European Currency Unit (ECU).⁸⁵⁸ The question when or under what circumstances the UK would join the ERM remained open. Thatcher’s established position was that her government

⁸⁵⁶ TNA FCO30/6178, folio no. 530, telegram no. 3845, D. Hannay to FCO, “The Inter-governmental conference (IGC), 14 November 1985.

⁸⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁸ There is literature on how the aspiration of EMU goes back to the Werner plan of 1970, which outlined a plan for EMU but was never implemented, largely because the USA introduced instability into the global system of exchange rates by ending the convertibility of gold to the USD in 1971. See Ludlow, *The Making of the European Monetary System*; Murlon-Druol, *A Europe Made of Money*, 196 ff., 242 ff.; M. Smith, *Policy-Making in the Treasury: Explaining Britain’s Chosen Path on European Economic and Monetary Union*. (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 2014), 41 ff., 55 ff.; Kenneth Dyson and Kevin Featherstone, *The Road To Maastricht: Negotiating Economic and Monetary Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 534 ff.; Wall, *The Official History of Britain and the European Community, Volume III*, 95 ff.; Ludlow, *Roy Jenkins and the European Commission Presidency, 1976-1980*, 113 ff.; Haussler, *Helmut Schmidt and British-German Relations*, 123 ff.

would join when the “time is right”.⁸⁵⁹ According to their memoirs, Geoffrey Howe and Nigel Lawson both felt that 1985 was the year that linked the end of Thatcher’s tenure as Prime Minister with the government’s European policy and the question of when to join the ERM.⁸⁶⁰ Both Lawson and Howe recounted in their autobiographies how on 13 November 1985 they both attempted and failed to persuade Thatcher to accept joining the ERM.⁸⁶¹ Lawson argued that had Thatcher accepted to join the ERM, then the subject would have primarily been economic and would not have acquired the political dimension that split the Conservative party during the second half of the 1980s and the early 1990s.⁸⁶² Even though Howe and Lawson agreed on joining the ERM, their views on whether the SEA endorsed a treaty commitment to EMU differed. Howe argued that keeping the EMU reference “vague” in the SEA was a negotiation success.⁸⁶³ Lawson however, believed that the earlier commitment to EMU from 1972 had lost its political significance, which was why he disagreed with Delors’ suggestion to write a commitment to EMU into the SEA.⁸⁶⁴ Therefore, Lawson counselled Thatcher strongly against accepting any mention of EMU in the SEA.⁸⁶⁵

This section argues that the discussion on EMU, in connection with the British policy making towards the SEA, showed an important difference between how the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Nigel Lawson, approached the question of European monetary integration and the way that Geoffrey Howe and the FCO negotiated in the IGC. The Treasury did not want to include a reference to EMU. Already during the last phase of the settlement of the BBQ, the Treasury expressed an ambition to Thatcher that they wished to be in charge of all discussions on EMU and taxes in an EC context.⁸⁶⁶ Geoffrey Howe wanted to remit the discussion on

⁸⁵⁹ Wall, *The Official History of Britain and the European Community, Volume III*, 150–51; Smith, *Policy-Making in the Treasury*, 66 ff., 75 ff.; Dyson and Featherstone, *The Road To Maastricht*, 543 ff.; Howe, *Conflict of Loyalty*, 273–75; Lawson, *The View from No. 11, Memoirs of a Tory Radical*, 483 ff.; Ludlow, *The Making of the European Monetary System*.

⁸⁶⁰ Howe, *Conflict of Loyalty*, 448; Lawson, *The View from No. 11, Memoirs of a Tory Radical*, 888.

⁸⁶¹ Howe, *Conflict of Loyalty*, 449–51; Lawson, *The View from No. 11, Memoirs of a Tory Radical*, 497–500.

⁸⁶² *Ibid.*, 504.

⁸⁶³ Howe, *Conflict of Loyalty*, 455–56.

⁸⁶⁴ Lawson, *The View from No. 11, Memoirs of a Tory Radical*, 889–90.

⁸⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 893.

⁸⁶⁶ TNA FCO30/6167, folio no. 162, R. Lomax to C. Powell, “Development of the European Community,” 1 May 1985.

EMU into the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN), which had the advantage of keeping any discussion of Delors' proposals to write a commitment to EMU into the SEA out of the discussions in the IGC.⁸⁶⁷ However, whereas the FCO's policy towards the IGC was consistent, one can detect a shift in how Lawson approached the question of including EMU in the SEA. On 12 June 1985, Lawson suggested to Thatcher that he was against the UK government opposing further financial integration in public but said he wanted to resist them quietly in ECOFIN.⁸⁶⁸ Such a policy was in line with Howe's "questioning approach" in the IGC. Five months later, Lawson was much more outspoken in demanding that EMS should be excluded from the discussions on treaty amendment in the IGC. Lawson's outright refusal to include EMU in the SEA and his suggestion to Thatcher to argue the same achieved the opposite of the original aim. Instead of letting the issue fizzle out, it contributed to galvanising support for including a commitment to EMU in a revised treaty.

The question of including a commitment to the EMU in the revised EEC treaty had been repeatedly raised by Jacques Delors but had, at the insistence of the UK during the Milan European Council, been relegated to ECOFIN.⁸⁶⁹ On 14 November 1985, Nigel Lawson wrote a memo to Margaret Thatcher arguing that if the UK became isolated with the insistence on excluding EMU from the IGC, then he suggested to concede to a "minimal mention of the EMS" in the changed EEC treaty as long as this did not compel the UK to join the ERM.⁸⁷⁰ Thatcher wrote in her hand at the top of the letter that she agreed with pursuing this line of argument.⁸⁷¹ Charles Powell annotated Lawson's letter by hand, saying that he believed that a refusal to include EMS in the treaty would be supported by Germany.⁸⁷² According to Powell, Thatcher had accepted Lawson's recommendation of a "minimal

⁸⁶⁷ TNA FCO30/6290, folio no. 46, telegram no. 353, FCO to UKRep, "Coreper (ambassadors) 31 October," 30 October 1985.

⁸⁶⁸ TNA PREM19/1491, N. Lawson to G. Howe, "Milan European Council: Tax Harmonisation," 12 June 1985.

⁸⁶⁹ Ibid.; TNA PREM19/1491, N. Lawson to G. Howe, "Milan European Council: Tax Harmonisation," 12 June 1985; G. Howe to M. Thatcher, "Milan European Council: Development of the Community," 25 June 1985.

⁸⁷⁰ TNA PREM19/1480, N. Lawson to M. Thatcher, "Anglo-French summit: Inter-governmental Conference (IGC): Amendment to article 107 (exchange rate provisions) of the treaty," 14 November 1985.

⁸⁷¹ Handwritten note on Ibid.

⁸⁷² Ibid.

mention” as backup option if the issue could not be kept out of the revised EEC treaty altogether.⁸⁷³ However, Powell noted that “the Chancellor subsequently saw the Prime Minister this evening and said that he wished to change his advice following a conversation with Stoltenberg, the German finance minister. It was clear to him that the Germans had now decided against any amendment of the monetary provisions of the [EEC] Treaty”.⁸⁷⁴

Lawson was briefed by Treasury officials that he should “if possible to persuade the [ECOFIN] Council that no amendments should be made to the monetary provisions of the [EEC] Treaty”.⁸⁷⁵ Lawson was briefed to tell Gerhard Stoltenberg before the ECOFIN Council that the UK had “objections to any EMU reference [in the SEA]” and wanted to “keep the issue evidently under Finance ministers’ control”.⁸⁷⁶ Lawson’s advisor recommended that “the only safe course [of action] will be to have a text virtually agreed by this time of the December [European] Council”.⁸⁷⁷ In ECOFIN, Stoltenberg backed Lawson’s position by arguing that “the Commission’s proposals [of EMU in the IGC] would jeopardise the conduct of external and internal policy [of the EC]”.⁸⁷⁸ David Hannay, the head of UKRep, reported that Nigel Lawson had argued in ECOFIN that amending the EEC treaty to develop EMS further was “technically unnecessary and risky”.⁸⁷⁹ Jacques Delors reportedly “expressed surprise at the rejection by [Germany and the UK] of a fairly modest text”.⁸⁸⁰ Delors argued that “it altered nothing. The EMU was already implicitly in the [EEC] Treaty”.⁸⁸¹ The French Finance minister and the successor of Jacques Delors, Pierre Bérégovoy, supported Delors by saying that he considered “a monetary dimension was an

⁸⁷³ TNA FCO30/6543, folio no. 68, C. Powell to R. Lomax, “Anglo-French summit: Intergovernmental Conference Amendment to Article 107,” 17 November 1985.

⁸⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷⁵ TNA T640/150, “ECOFIN Council, 18 November,” n.d.

⁸⁷⁶ TNA T640/150, R. Lavelle to N. Lawson, “Stoltenberg,” 15 November 1985.

⁸⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷⁸ TNA PREM19/2162, telegram no. 3903, D. Hannay to FCO, “ECOFIN: 18 November 1985: Amendment to monetary provisions of the Treaty,” 18 November 1985.

⁸⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸¹ *Ibid.*

essential ingredient in the changes to the community which [were] now under discussion”.⁸⁸²

The result was an ECOFIN meeting, which in the words of Hannay was “divided down [the] middle” on the subject of EMU.⁸⁸³

The Cabinet sub-committee on European questions of the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee (OD(E)) was told that the ECOFIN meeting on 18 November 1985 had been “split”.⁸⁸⁴ The UK, Germany, Ireland and Denmark were arguing against including EMU in the SEA, whereas France and the European Commission “attached political importance” to committing to EMU with the SEA.⁸⁸⁵ In OD(E), ministers argued that “for as long as this remained [Germany’s] position we could let them take the lead on the matter”.⁸⁸⁶ The OD(E) briefing for Malcolm Rifkind explained that Lawson and Stoltenberg had bilaterally coordinated their positions to refuse including EMU in the SEA.⁸⁸⁷ Moreover, Delors was reportedly “angry” with Lawson for roundly dismissing his EMU proposal.⁸⁸⁸ Rifkind “agree[d] with [the] Chancellor [of the Exchequer and argued] that while we have support we should continue to oppose [inserting a reference to EMU into the SEA]”.⁸⁸⁹ However, he added that the UK needed a “fallback position on [the] lines of [the] Chancellor’s minute of November to Prime Minister”, which as mentioned above argued for “notional mention” of EMU in the SEA.⁸⁹⁰ In the FCO, Stephen Wall argued that Lawson’s refusal to discuss EMU in the IGC could only work with German backing, which was by no means assured, especially since Wall expected Mitterrand to strongly urge Kohl to accept

⁸⁸² Ibid.

⁸⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁴ TNA CAB148/248, “OD(E)(85) 8th Meeting, Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee Sub-Committee on European Questions, Minutes of a Meeting held in Conference Room A, Cabinet Office, Whitehall on Thursday 20 November 1985 at 10.00 am,” 20 November 1985, 5-6; “OD(E)10, Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee Sub-Committee on European Questions, Intergovernmental Conference,” 15 November 1985.

⁸⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁶ TNA CAB148/248, “OD(E)(85) 8th Meeting,” 20 November 1985, 6.

⁸⁸⁷ FCO30/6178, document 540, S. Wall to M. Rifkind, “OD(E): 20 November,” 19 November 1985; “OD(E) 20 November: Intergovernmental conference,” n.d.

⁸⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁹ Ibid.; PREM19/1480, N. Lawson to M. Thatcher, “Anglo-French summit: Inter-governmental conference (IGC): Amendment to article 107 (exchange rate provisions) of the treaty,” 14 November 1985.

⁸⁹⁰ Ibid.

EMU.⁸⁹¹ In essence, Wall recommended that in the IGC the UK should keep Lawson's original fallback position of allowing a nominal mention of EMU on the table, arguing that such a reference was in line with the UK commitment for "progress" on the issue of EMU that was mentioned in the report of the Dooge Committee.⁸⁹² This approach had the advantage that the UK would not become isolated on the issue of EMU and could avoid being held responsible if the European Council did not reach an agreement.⁸⁹³

Jacques Delors made sure that the issue of EMU was not allowed to be dropped in the IGC. He tabled a draft to insert the aim of EMU into the definition of the Single Market.⁸⁹⁴ Hannay reported that because of German opposition to EMU, the UK had not yet had to directly oppose Delors in the IGC.⁸⁹⁵ According to French sources, Delors had angrily threatened to withdraw all papers of the European Commission if EMU was not included in the discussions of the IGC.⁸⁹⁶ Delors was not alone in wanting to keep EMU on the agenda. The French government supported EMU, arguing that liberalising the Single Market and pursuing monetary integration had to happen alongside each other.⁸⁹⁷ Moreover, Élisabeth Guigou, Mitterrand's European policy advisor, believed that Kohl and Delors had privately agreed on keeping the issue of EMU on the agenda of the IGC.⁸⁹⁸ At a dinner with Delors on 24 November 1985, Howe got the impression that Delors was unhappy with Lawson's outright refusal to discuss EMU.⁸⁹⁹ Robin Renwick was aware that Delors was thinking of bringing up the issue of EMU at the Luxembourg European Council, on 2-3 December

⁸⁹¹ FCO30/6178, folio no. 540, S. Wall to M. Rifkind, "OD(E): 20 November," 19 November 1985; "OD(E) 20 November: Intergovernmental conference," n.d.

⁸⁹² Ibid.

⁸⁹³ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁴ TNA FCO30/6178, folio no. 530, telegram no. 3845, D. Hannay to FCO, "The Inter-governmental conference (IGC), 14 November 1985.; folio no. 549, "Cabinet official Committee on European Questions, Inter-governmental Conference, EQO (85)140, note by the secretaries," 19 November 1985, annex L, "monetary provisions (new commission proposal), 16 November 1985.

⁸⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁶ Archives Nationales (henceforth AN), Mitterrand papers, AG/5(4)/FC/25, E. Guigou to F. Mitterrand, "Note pour le président de la République, Objet: Conférence intergouvernementale, system monétaire," 19 November 1985.

⁸⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁹ TNA FCO30/6178, folio no. 555, R. Renwick to L. Appleyard, "Inter-governmental Conference," 25 November 1985.

1985.⁹⁰⁰ Nigel Lawson told Thatcher that he believed Kohl would stand with her in opposing EMU at the Luxembourg European Council.⁹⁰¹ Moreover, Lawson argued that even if Kohl did not come through in support of her position, it would be best “not to get caught up in this whole exercise” of EMU.⁹⁰² Geoffrey Howe echoed this sentiment by telling the assembled Cabinet that “Herr Kohl was at present taking a firm line against the Commission’s proposals on monetary issues”.⁹⁰³ However, the briefing for Rifkind and the OD(E) minutes show that the FCO was aware of the possibility that Germany might make concessions on this issue of EMU.⁹⁰⁴

Lawson’s actions and recommendations to Thatcher were based on the assumption that if Germany and the UK opposed EMU it could not be inserted into the EEC treaty. What was not considered was that there might be a divergence in views between Kohl and Stoltenberg. Lawson spoke mainly to Stoltenberg in or around ECOFIN, which must have informed his thinking. The divergence between Thatcher, Howe and Lawson came in part from who they talked to and the forum in which these discussions were held. In essence, they all pursued the same aim, which was to avoid or minimise the reference to EMU in the SEA. If that was not possible, they wanted to keep any reference in the SEA to a broad statement. Therefore, the difference between Thatcher, Howe and Lawson was not a difference in policy but more one in negotiation style. They all wanted to refer the issue to ECOFIN to keep it out of the IGC. Lawson was just a little bit more direct in saying so. Had the issue of EMU been contained in ECOFIN this would probably never have come into the open. However, Delors kept the issue successfully alive in the IGC and was supported by France in doing so. To Élisabeth Guigou, the refusal by the British and the German finance ministers to discuss EMU

⁹⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁰¹ TNA PREM19/1752, N. Lawson to M. Thatcher, “European Council: Amendment to monetary provisions of the Treaty of Rome,” 28 November 1985.

⁹⁰² Ibid.

⁹⁰³ TNA CAB128/81/34, “Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on Thursday 28 November 1985 at 10.30 am,” 28 November 1985, 5-6.

⁹⁰⁴ TNA CAB148/248, “OD(E)(85) 8th Meeting,” 20 November 1985, 5-6; FCO30/6178, document 540, S. Wall to M. Rifkind, “OD(E): 20 November,” 19 November 1985; “OD(E) 20 November: Intergovernmental conference,” n.d.

“demonstrated starkly” the differing “conceptions of Europe” between the French view and the “Anglo-Saxon” view, whereby Europe would become “a large free trade area, with the common policies reduced to a strict minimum (no CAP harmonisations)”.⁹⁰⁵

Even though Margaret Thatcher was not personally in the IGC, she discussed some of these subjects in bilateral high-level meetings with her fellow heads of government. Thatcher held a bilateral meeting with François Mitterrand on 18 November and one with Helmut Kohl on 27 November 1985.⁹⁰⁶ Both of these meetings happened in the framework of regular bilateral consultations. The issue of EMU was becoming increasingly important in these meetings. During these high-level summits, Thatcher and her counterparts did nothing more than to restate their established positions. The reason why not much detailed ground was covered in these bilateral meetings was because these discussions covered a wide range of topics. For instance, Mitterrand and Thatcher discussed the Channel tunnel, China, East-West relations and the IGC.⁹⁰⁷ The IGC and EMU were only mentioned in passing, without entering into any great detail. According to a summary prepared by Charles Powell, Thatcher’s Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs, she told Mitterrand that “like the Germans, we did not see any need to amend the monetary provisions of the [EEC] treaty”.⁹⁰⁸ Mitterrand replied that he “noted the German and UK position on this”.⁹⁰⁹ Roland Dumas, the French foreign minister, added that “the German position had recently moved closer to France”.⁹¹⁰ According to both the British and the French sources, Thatcher dismissed this notion by

⁹⁰⁵ “la question du système monétaire Européen fait apparaître l’opposition entre notre propre conception de l’EUROPE et une conception anglo-saxonne où l’EUROPE devaient une grande zone libre échange avec des politiques communes réduites au strict minimum (pas d’harmonisation de la politique agricole commune). Par leur refus de discuter du S.M.E., les ministres des Finances Anglais et Allemand ont totalement mis en évidence cette oppositions.” (my translation) AN, Mitterrand papers, AG/5(4)/FC/25, E. Guigou to F. Mitterrand, “Note pour le président de la République, Objet : Conférence intergouvernementale, system monétaire,” 19 November 1985.

⁹⁰⁶ A meeting was also planned with Bettino Craxi for 29-30 October 1985 but was postponed because of the Anglo-Irish agreement until 12 March 1986. TNA FCO33/8037, folio no. 54a, C. Powell to L. Appleyard, “bilateral summit with the Italian government,” 2 September 1985, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/201371>.

⁹⁰⁷ TNA FCO33/7944, folio 105, C. Powell to C. Budd, “Anglo-French summit,” 18 November 1985; attachment: “Record of a meeting between the Prime Minister and President Mitterrand on the occasion of the Anglo-French summit at 10 Downing Street on Monday 18 November 1985 at 0930 hours,” 27 November 1985.

⁹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 8

saying that “the German position changes at each meeting” but that she believed the Bundesbank would never agree to such policies.⁹¹¹

Perhaps the most significant moment during the bilateral Thatcher-Mitterrand meeting was when both leaders explained their policy towards the IGC to each other. Both Thatcher as well as Mitterrand expressed themselves as remaining detached from the IGC and said they were waiting for their officials to finish negotiating before they would take a position.⁹¹² According to Powell, Thatcher “said that she had not been following developments over the Intergovernmental Conference very closely”.⁹¹³ Thatcher added that “her intention was to wait and see what was on the table at Luxembourg before reaching any conclusions”.⁹¹⁴ In similar vein, “President Mitterrand said that he did not know exactly the positions taken by French officials”.⁹¹⁵ According to the French minutes, Thatcher also told Mitterrand that she would decide how to handle the European Council once she was in Luxembourg but that it was important to keep the process simple and short.⁹¹⁶ Thatcher warned Mitterrand that if it was not possible to come to an agreement on the open issues and avoid any “misunderstandings”, then she would “behave at Luxembourg like an unguided missile”.⁹¹⁷ This quote is not in the British records, nor is there anything similar. However, Thatcher remembered after the meeting that Mitterrand had told her “I wish you all success at Luxembourg”.⁹¹⁸ These comments show that both Mitterrand and Thatcher perceived the upcoming European Council in Luxembourg in terms of the past one in Milan. Thatcher told

⁹¹¹ “German views tended to change from meeting to meeting” Ibid.; “la position allemande change à chaque reunion” (my translation) AN, Mitterrand papers, AG/5(4)/FC/25, “Compte rendu de l’entretien entre le Président de la République et Madame Thatcher 18 novembre 1985,” 20 November 1985, 6.

⁹¹² TNA FCO33/7944, folio 105, C. Powell to C. Budd, “Anglo-French summit,” 18 November 1985; attachment: “Record of a meeting between the Prime Minister and President Mitterrand on the occasion of the Anglo-French summit at 10 Downing Street on Monday 18 November 1985 at 0930 hours,” 27 November 1985.

⁹¹³ Ibid., 6.

⁹¹⁴ Ibid.

⁹¹⁵ Ibid., 8.

⁹¹⁶ AN, Mitterrand papers, AG/5(4)/FC/25, “Compte rendu de l’entretien entre le Président de la République et Madame Thatcher 18 novembre 1985,” 20 November 1985, 8.

⁹¹⁷ “malentendus ... je me comporterai à Luxembourg comme un missile non guidé” (my translation) Ibid., 4.

⁹¹⁸ TNA FCO33/7944, folio 105, C. Powell to C. Budd, “Anglo-French summit,” 18 November 1985; attachment: “Record of a meeting between the Prime Minister and President Mitterrand on the occasion of the Anglo-French summit at 10 Downing Street on Monday 18 November 1985 at 0930 hours,” 27 November 1985, 9.

Mitterrand how much thought she had put into the preparations for the Milan European Council.⁹¹⁹ According to the French sources, Thatcher added that once she had arrived in Milan all her preparations had been “overthrown” and the Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi was acting as “the worst president I ever saw”.⁹²⁰ This statement would suggest that there still was a rankling feeling of dissatisfaction about how the Milan summit had ended.

Helmut Kohl’s briefing for his bilateral meeting with Margaret Thatcher, on 27 November 1985, suggested that after Milan Thatcher had become “especially touchy”.⁹²¹ According to the German sources, Thatcher had said clearly that she wanted to be included in all discussions and not be presented with another German-French proposal.⁹²² Horst Teltschik, Kohl’s foreign policy advisor, told him that Thatcher saw him as an “ally” in resisting Delors’ EMU proposals.⁹²³ This meeting with Kohl could have been an opportunity to clarify differing positions on EMU. However, since Kohl had said to Delors that he would examine the case for EMU again, Kohl’s briefing advocated that he should let Thatcher know that his position on EMU was evolving.⁹²⁴ According to a summary of the meeting by Charles Powell, Kohl did not divulge this information to Thatcher.⁹²⁵ The meeting lasted for one and a half hours. The first half of the meeting was spent talking about East-West relations, particularly the first meeting between Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev on 19-20 November 1985, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force Treaty and British as well as German participation in SDI research.⁹²⁶ Thatcher told Kohl that she “understood that that the views of Britain and German officials [in the IGC] were quite close. In particular, we agreed that there

⁹¹⁹ Ibid., 6; AN, Mitterrand papers, AG/5(4)/FC/25, “Compte rendu de l’entretien entre le Président de la République et Madame Thatcher 18 novembre 1985,” 20 November 1985, 2.

⁹²⁰ “renversé”, “le plus mauvais président que j’ai vu” (my translations) Ibid.

⁹²¹ “besonders empfindlich” (my translation) BArch, B136/29986, H. Teltschik to H. Kohl, “Deutsch-Britische Konsultationen am Mittwoch, dem 27 November 1985 in London,” 25 November 1985, fol. 221.

⁹²² Ibid.

⁹²³ “Verbündeten” (my translation) Ibid., fol. 223.

⁹²⁴ Ibid.

⁹²⁵ TNA PREM19/1507, C. Powell to C. Budd, “Prime Minister’s meeting with the Federal German Chancellor,” 27 November 1985; attachment: “Record of a meeting between the Prime Minister and the Federal German Chancellor at 10 Downing Street on Wednesday 27 November 1985 at 0930 hours,” 27 November 1985.

⁹²⁶ Ibid.

was no reason to amend the [EEC] treaty on monetary matters”.⁹²⁷ Thatcher continued by saying “she knew that Monsieur Delors took a different view but we would not be swayed by that”.⁹²⁸ Kohl replied, “on this point the Federal Republic and the United Kingdom were more or less in agreement”.⁹²⁹ He had made it clear to Delors that the “essential” conditions for amending “monetary matters in the treaty” were “convergence of economic policies” and “free movement of capital”.⁹³⁰ According to Powell’s summary, Kohl argued that these were “two points which Delors could not dispute”.⁹³¹ The two heads of government also repeated their familiar positions, arguing they both wanted to develop the Single Market but were disagreeing on the European Parliament.⁹³²

On the day after Thatcher’s meeting with Kohl, Nigel Lawson wrote to the Prime Minister to tell her that her meeting with Kohl “confirmed that the Germans, like us, are totally opposed to any amendment to the monetary provisions of the Treaty of Rome”.⁹³³ Lawson recommended to Thatcher that it would be best “not to get caught up in this whole exercise”.⁹³⁴ Thatcher underlined a lot of text in Lawson’s letter and brought a copy of it to the Luxembourg European Council, which shows that the Chancellor’s suggestions were important to her. Was Lawson right, did the meeting show that Kohl was against a reference to EMU? Or did Kohl say that he was contemplating EMU but did not express himself clearly? Whether Kohl did not say that he was considering a reference to EMS in the revised treaty or whether Thatcher did not want to hear the message is not entirely clear. Neither is it clear why she preferred Lawson’s advice on the issue over Howe’s, or why she did not instruct Lawson to follow Howe’s more cooperative line. What is clear from analysing the archival sources is that Kohl was prepared to change the EEC treaty and was contemplating a

⁹²⁷ Ibid., 4.

⁹²⁸ Ibid.

⁹²⁹ Ibid. 5.

⁹³⁰ Ibid.

⁹³¹ Ibid.

⁹³² Ibid.

⁹³³ TNA PREM19/1752, N. Lawson to M. Thatcher, "European Council: Amendment to monetary provisions of the Treaty of Rome," 28 November 1985.

⁹³⁴ Ibid.

reference to EMU. Thatcher on the other hand was still at the stage of reflecting on the fundamental issue of the principle of treaty change.

In summary, the British policy of remitting EMU to ECOFIN and Lawson's attempt to drop the subject entirely failed when the issue was discussed by the heads of government at the Luxembourg European Council, on 2-3 December 1985. Robin Renwick's warning to OD(E) against taking a minority position on EMU was increasingly looking like a realistic scenario.⁹³⁵ The reason why the UK was becoming isolated on the issue of EMU was because in his advice to Thatcher and in ECOFIN, Nigel Lawson was pursuing a harder line than Howe in the IGC. Lawson could do so because Howe had advocated moving the discussion of EMU into ECOFIN and thus effectively handed over the issue to Lawson, who was representing the UK in that council. The consequence was a mismatch between the "questioning approach" followed by Howe and Lawson's more confrontational line of negotiation. This divergence was not lost upon Britain's negotiating partners. Élisabeth Guigou argued that it was rumoured in Brussels that Lawson's position was isolated and that his views neither reflected the views of the FCO nor those of Thatcher's advisors.⁹³⁶ Eventually, Lawson's attempt to dispose of the issue by refusing to discuss EMU in the IGC backfired. With France's support, Delors succeeded in keeping the issue alive until Kohl came out in favour of including a reference to EMU in the SEA at the Luxembourg European Council. The next section will analyse the European Council in Luxembourg, on 2-3 December 1985, which was the summit where the SEA was agreed.

4. 3. End of IGC and agreement to SEA: "a gruelling marathon"

The final stage of the IGC was the Luxembourg European Council, from 2-3 December 1985. In these two days Margaret Thatcher's policy of waiting to see what the outcome of the IGC would be was replaced with her working point-by-point through all the

⁹³⁵ TNA FCO30/6178, folio no. 545, R. Renwick to M. Rifkind, "Inter-governmental conference: OD(E)," 18 November 1985.

⁹³⁶ Ibid.

items that were still open, i.e. on which the diplomats in the IGC could not find an agreement. The most important unanswered question was whether or not Thatcher would be able to accept what was agreed in the IGC and would come to an agreement with the other heads of government on the points that were still unresolved. The IGC concluded with a list of open issues, which were to be discussed by what the EC foreign ministers called a *conclave*, before being submitted formally to the European Council. The Luxembourg European Council was described by R. Oliver Miles, the British ambassador to Luxembourg, as “a gruelling marathon”.⁹³⁷ The combined length of the meeting was 27 hours and was together with the *conclave* of foreign ministers the longest European Council on record. Even Thatcher, with her famous stamina and penchant for working through the night afterwards reflected to David Hannay that “it was a fairly trying occasion but I think we came out of it in good shape”.⁹³⁸ To Oliver Miles she said that “I fear that late evening meetings are part of the ritual of European Councils”.⁹³⁹ Thatcher and Howe negotiated their way point by point through the list of “key points” and obtained an outcome by which “all our key objectives were secured”.⁹⁴⁰ All in all, Thatcher rated the meeting as “a job well done”.⁹⁴¹ This section looks at how the Luxembourg European Council played out, focusing on the policy making of the UK government towards the conference, the position of Margaret Thatcher and her contribution to the SEA.

The run up to the Luxembourg European Council involved the narrowing down of proposals to bring them into a shape that could be discussed and agreed to by the heads of government. The foreign ministers held a *conclave* over the weekend before the European Council to thrash out the last remaining points. A gloomy account by David Hannay showed

⁹³⁷ TNA PREM19/1752, telegram no. 508, R. Miles to FCO, “European Council, Luxembourg 2/3 December 1985,” 4 December 1985.

⁹³⁸ TNA PREM19/1752, M. Thatcher to D. Hannay, 9 December 1985.

⁹³⁹ TNA PREM19/1752, M. Thatcher to R. Miles, 9 December 1985.

⁹⁴⁰ TNA PREM19/1752, telegram no. 508, R. Miles to FCO, “European Council, Luxembourg 2/3 December 1985,” 4 December 1985.

⁹⁴¹ TNA PREM19/1752, M. Thatcher to R. Miles, 9 December 1985.

that this was an acrimonious process with an uncertain outcome.⁹⁴² Hannay wrote in a telegram after the *conclave* that there were “significant differences of position”, especially on the Single Market.⁹⁴³ Ultimately, nobody knew if the IGC could succeed or not. The subject of PoCo was an exception. It was so uncontroversial that an agreement on a final text was already reached in the *conclave* of foreign ministers.⁹⁴⁴ In this *conclave*, Howe continued his tactic of a “questioning approach” by asking clarifying questions, such as replacing the words “measures” with “directives” on the issue of the proposed article 100(a), which dealt with “approximation” of laws to implement the Single Market.⁹⁴⁵ Clarifying such terms narrowed the scope of the agreement to make it more specific and in this case only applicable to formal directives. Only on social policy, where Denmark also had an existing reservation, did Howe formally request that unanimous voting should be retained.⁹⁴⁶ On the issues of EMS, tax, technology and the implementing powers of the European Commission, both Germany and the UK expressed reservations.⁹⁴⁷ Élisabeth Guigou summarised the state of affairs before the European Council as “[the French] want to reinforce the European Currency Unit, which the Germans refuse, they want a reference to the European Union and to [a] Monetary [Union], which Mrs Thatcher refuses”.⁹⁴⁸ However, Guigou argued that during the *conclave* the foreign ministers all softened their positions and simply indicated what the sticking points were for their countries, which would give their heads of government more elbow room to find compromises.⁹⁴⁹

⁹⁴² TNA FCO30/1979, folio no. 562, telegram no. 4103, D. Hannay to FCO, “IGC: Brussels 25/26 November, summary,” 26 November 1985.

⁹⁴³ This was a setback in the discussions, which brought a series of opt outs back. Moreover, Andreotti tried unsuccessfully to bring the free movement of people back into the definition of the Single Market. TNA FCO30/6179, folio no. 562, telegram no. 4103, D. Hannay to FCO, “IGC: Brussels 25/26 November, summary,” 26 November 1985; folio no. 563, telegram no. 4089, D. Hannay to FCO, “IGC: Brussels, 26 November 1985 – discussion over lunch,” 26 November 1985.

⁹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴⁵ TNA PREM19/1752, “Conference of the governments of the member states, presidency report to the European Council,” 2 December 1985, 6.

⁹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 8, 11-12,

⁹⁴⁸ “Nous voulons renforcer l’ECU, ce qui refusent les Allemands, cux ci veulent une référence à l’Union Européenne et monétaire, ce que refuse Mme Thatcher.” (my translation) AN, Mitterrand papers, AG/5(4)/FC/25, E. Guigou to F. Mitterrand, “Note pour le président de la République, Objet: votre entretien avec M Delors, vendredi à 10h30,” 28 November 1985.

⁹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Unlike at the Milan European Council, no neat handwritten summary covering the entire European Council survived. Whereas the records covering the Milan European Council analysed in great detail why the summit failed, the records on the summit in Luxembourg focused on the outcome of the talks and the agreements reached. Stephen Wall said after the summit that “there is no way that we can write a detailed account of the negotiations”.⁹⁵⁰ Perhaps the lack of informal records is also due to the fact that the summit was an uphill struggle of nearly 30 hours, which resulted in a compromise text that was achieved in an incredibly difficult process.⁹⁵¹ Once Otto von Bismarck’s proverbial sausage was made, nobody wanted to detail ad nauseam how exactly the ingredients had come together.⁹⁵² The archival sources explain the outcome of the European Council but dwell less on the points of disagreement. Moreover, neither the French nor the German archives contain copies of readily accessible informal records that detail who said what, when and to whom. The records that exist of this European Council focus on describing the agreement once it was made. The Cabinet Office and ECD(I) compiled “a compendium of the main reports covering the key issues so that we have them as a ready work of reference for the future”.⁹⁵³ These were fragments of informal summaries, notes, telegrams and minutes that officials thought to be most important which were compiled in lieu of a coherent summary.

The spine of this “compendium” was a briefing that the European Secretariat at the Cabinet Office prepared with an overview of the extent to which the presidency conclusions reflected the interests of the UK government.⁹⁵⁴ This briefing was largely a juxtaposition of the “key points” that Thatcher had been given when she went into the European Council, with

⁹⁵⁰ TNA FCO30/6527, folio no. 3, S. Wall to All Desk Officers in ECD(I), “Inter-governmental Conference: Follow-Up,” 30 December 1985.

⁹⁵¹ Hannay, *Britain’s Quest for a Role*, 128–33.

⁹⁵² Although the quote is probably apocryphal, Otto von Bismarck is said to have remarked that laws were like sausages and that it was better not to see how either was made.

⁹⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵⁴ The government holding the rotating presidency of the European Council wrote the conclusions, which appeared in the Bulletin of the European Communities. TNA FCO30/6180, folio no. 642, M. Mercer to M. Jay, “European Council: IGC,” 9 December 1985; FCO30/6527, folio no. 3, S. Wall to All Desk Officers in ECD(I), “Inter-governmental Conference: Follow-Up,” 30 December 1985.

the presidency conclusions that emerged after 27 hours of discussion.⁹⁵⁵ Moreover, this briefing and Thatcher's "key points" reflected the discussions of UK policy towards the IGC in the Cabinet sub-committee OD(E) and the full Cabinet.⁹⁵⁶ In the aftermath of the Luxembourg European Council, this briefing document continued to be developed and redrafted by Stephen Wall at the ECD(I) in the FCO and Michael Jay at the Cabinet Office.⁹⁵⁷ In this process, the document morphed from a simple overview of what had been achieved to a fully-fledged analysis of the position of the UK in the IGC and at the Luxembourg European Council. This document intended to answer the question whether or not the "UK's major interests in the IGC [were] met in the presidency's conclusions"?.⁹⁵⁸ This document is therefore of considerable importance when analysing which of the "key points" that Thatcher had been given beforehand were successfully negotiated and which fell by the wayside as concessions. The following account of Thatcher's negotiations in the Luxembourg European Council is based on triangulating this document with the original negotiating aims that Thatcher was given, which she was told she would have to secure in order to bring the IGC to a successful conclusion, and the official presidency conclusions.

On the Friday before the European Council, Charles Powell wrote a précis of all the briefing material to Margaret Thatcher.⁹⁵⁹ His main argument was that either there would be "modest agreement in principle to amend the [EEC] treaty in a number of rather minor

⁹⁵⁵ PREM19/1752, S. Wall to C. Powell, "European Council," 2 December 1985, appendix a: "key points for the European Council," n.d.

⁹⁵⁶ TNA CAB148/248, "OD(E)(85) 8th Meeting, Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee Sub-Committee on European Questions, Minutes of a Meeting held in Conference Room A, Cabinet Office, Whitehall on Thursday 20 November 1985 at 10.00 am," 20 November 1985, 5-6; "OD(E)10, Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee Sub-Committee on European Questions, Intergovernmental Conference," 15 November 1985; CAB128/81/34, "Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on Thursday 28 November 1985 at 10.30 am," 28 November 1985, 5-6; TNA CAB128/81/35, "Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on Thursday 5 December 1985 at 10.30 am," 5 December 1985, 5-6.

⁹⁵⁷ TNA FCO30/6527, folio no. 2, S. Wall to M. Jay, "IGC: Conclusions and analysis," 24 December 1985; appendix, "Luxembourg European Council: Extent to which UK's major interests in the IGC are met in the presidency's conclusions," n.d.

⁹⁵⁸ TNA FCO30/6180, folio no. 642, M. Mercer to M. Jay, "European Council: IGC," 9 December 1985; FCO30/6527, folio no. 2, S. Wall to M. Jay, "IGC: Conclusions and analysis," 24 December 1985; appendix, "Luxembourg European Council: Extent to which UK's major interests in the IGC are met in the presidency's conclusions," n.d.; M. Jay to D. Williamson, "IGC: Analysis of Conclusions," 2 January 1986.

⁹⁵⁹ TNA PREM19/1752, C. Powell to M. Thatcher, "European Council," 29 November 1985.

respects” or the different positions would prove to be irreconcilable and the IGC would have to continue for “several more months”. Powell suggested that Thatcher’s starting point should be her statement to the House of Commons after the Milan summit, in which the Prime Minister outlined that she wanted to extend the Single Market, formalise PoCo and involve the “European assembly” more. Therefore, even though an IGC and treaty amendment had been “unnecessary”, and that “it would have been far simpler to make the various improvements without treaty amendment”, these were the policies that she had been suggesting all along. Powell argued that in order to reach an agreement that was acceptable to the UK government, Thatcher would have to secure the following points: firstly, she would have to limit majority voting only to cover article 100 (on approximation of laws for the Single Market) and possibly article 57(2) (on self-employed traders) of the EEC treaty. By doing so she would have to make sure that the Single Market did not affect immigration control and that unanimity would be maintained on issues of taxation, employee rights, human, plant and animal health. Powell argued that if all these aims could be attained, then Thatcher could recommend changing the EEC treaty to the House of Commons by arguing that at the Luxembourg European Council the Prime Minister had achieved what she had set out to do six months earlier in Milan.⁹⁶⁰

To prepare Thatcher for the Luxembourg European Council, Stephen Wall gave Charles Powell a list of “key points”.⁹⁶¹ This list summarised the issues on which the foreign ministers and diplomats had not yet been able to reach an agreement during the IGC and suggested a negotiating line to Thatcher. Firstly, the Single Market would have to be defined as a “market” not as an “area”.⁹⁶² Secondly, on the powers to be given to the “assembly” and the European Commission, the Council should always have the last word. Thirdly, the PoCo text could be agreed on. Fourthly, all new treaty articles on technology and the environment

⁹⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁶¹ PREM19/1752, S. Wall to C. Powell, “European Council,” 2 December 1985, appendix a: “key points for the European Council,” n.d.

⁹⁶² Ibid.

should be subject to unanimity if they looked significant. Fifthly, all questions of monetary, social and employment policy should be excluded from the current discussion on treaty amendment.⁹⁶³ Lastly, Thatcher would have to decide if she wanted to accept the “Act of European Union” which France had tabled, but which in the UK might “raise unnecessary suspicions”.⁹⁶⁴ Powell suggested to Thatcher she should accept it because defining the term “European Union” in the SEA would have the advantage of laying to rest the entire debate on the term “[European] union”.⁹⁶⁵

The list of “key points” consisted of the issues on which the IGC had not yet reached an agreement. Moreover, the list reflected the objections from different Whitehall departments, which were consulted by the Cabinet Office in the process described above. The “key points” on this list were important to the British government, which was confirmed by the ministers assembled in the Cabinet sub-committee of OD(E).⁹⁶⁶ They argued that these issues covered “major interests” and were “objectives” that the UK government needed to secure from the Luxembourg European Council.⁹⁶⁷ The discussions in the full Cabinet emphasised how “important” it was to the government “not to forfeit the advantage that accrued from being an island” and that therefore “protection for [the UK’s] regimes” of “human, animal and plant health” had to be sought at the Luxembourg European Council.⁹⁶⁸ The implicit question in the list of “key points” was, would it be possible to find an agreement on the issues on which Geoffrey Howe had not been able to secure a compromise? Moreover, would Thatcher be able to secure concessions where Howe and his negotiating team had not

⁹⁶³ TNA PREM19/1752, C. Powell to M. Thatcher, “European Council,” 29 November 1985.

⁹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶⁶ TNA CAB148/248, CAB148/248, “OD(E)(85) 8th Meeting, Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee Sub-Committee on European Questions, Minutes of a Meeting held in Conference Room A, Cabinet Office, Whitehall on Thursday 20 November 1985 at 10.00 am,” 20 November 1985, 5-6; “OD(E)(85)(10) Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee Sub-Committee on European Questions, Intergovernmental Conference, Note by the Secretaries,” 15 November 1985.

⁹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*; TNA FCO30/6527, folio no. 2, S. Wall to M. Jay, “IGC: Conclusions and analysis,” 24 December 1985; appendix, “Luxembourg European Council: Extent to which UK’s major interests in the IGC are met in the presidency’s conclusions,” n.d.

⁹⁶⁸ TNA CAB128/81/34, “Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on Thursday 28 November 1985 at 10.30 am,” 28 November 1985, 6;

yet succeeded? Would Thatcher win these concessions and by doing so be able to persuade any sceptics in the Cabinet, Whitehall and the House of Commons? As explained above, the Cabinet believed that if Thatcher could secure all the “key points” that were still outstanding in the IGC then she could be reasonably certain that she would have the backing of her Cabinet for the SEA.

When the European Council opened, Luxembourg, the country holding the rotating presidency of the European Council, suggested that the agreement reached at this European Council should be accepted as the “final decision” on all the issues that were being discussed in the IGC.⁹⁶⁹ Afterwards, the foreign ministers should only finalise the legal texts but not reopen substantive discussions.⁹⁷⁰ After the *conclave* of foreign ministers, a series of disagreements and official reserves were still open. On the Single Market, the only disagreement was whether to call it an “area” or a “market”, with the difference between these two terms being mainly of a broad or narrow definition of a market and the legal consequences thereof.⁹⁷¹ Article 100, on harmonisation, would be “the cornerstone for the implementation of the Single Market”.⁹⁷² The presidency proposed adding a clause to that article to implement the Single Market by qualified majority voting.⁹⁷³ In this discussion the UK as well as Ireland raised issues of human, animal and plant health and Germany as well as Denmark wanted to be allowed to maintain higher standards. The presidency report argued that if there was a large list of exemptions then the Single Market would be weakened to the point of “destroying the credibility” of the aim to create the Single Market in the first place.⁹⁷⁴ No solution was as yet in sight but Germany suggested in the *conclave* that a commitment to the principle of high standards could potentially solve this debate.⁹⁷⁵ Further disagreements

⁹⁶⁹ TNA PREM19/1752, “Conference of the Governments of the member states, presidency report to the European Council,” 2 December 1985, 4.

⁹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, “annex 1,” n.d., 5.

⁹⁷² *Ibid.*, 6.

⁹⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

remained on whether or not to include taxes and EMS, how much “cohesion” money should be spent, how to reconcile the different proposals on the European Parliament, how to bring technological cooperation into the treaty and which of the other proposals on issues such as the environment or fighting cancer should be included in the SEA.⁹⁷⁶ The text on PoCo was largely unopposed and discussions soon focused on the precise wording of the legal text.⁹⁷⁷ On the institutional questions, the Luxembourg presidency was positively disposed towards giving the European Parliament more “legislative” power and the Council more “implementing” responsibilities.⁹⁷⁸ The presidency also was positively disposed towards monetary integration and harmonising taxes.⁹⁷⁹

Thatcher secured four agreements on her list of “key points” in which she managed to keep issues or practices of cooperation out of the revised EEC treaty and on an intergovernmental level. Firstly, Thatcher succeeded in limiting the use of majority voting under article 100, so that it would not apply to taxation, free movement of people, or labour law. Secondly, Thatcher won the point that article 99, on taxation, would not be subject to majority voting. Thirdly, Thatcher won the point that collaboration on issues such as drugs, terrorism and immigration would stay on an intergovernmental level, i.e. in the form that she had suggested in her original PoCo paper. A fourth negotiation success for northern European countries was to limit the extent to which the SEA would commit countries to equalising standards of living with transfers from richer to poorer countries in accordance with the existing Social and Regional Fund regulations. Despite much pressure from Greece, a mention of converging living standards was avoided, and no resource transfer was agreed. The final text of the SEA linked cohesion policies to the Single Market but also introduced the European Regional Development Fund into the treaty.

⁹⁷⁶ Apart from proposals on the environment and social policies, proposals were put forward on the ECJ, culture, human rights, development, energy and animal protection. *Ibid.*, 5., 8, 10, 12-5.

⁹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, “annex 2,” 26 November 1985.

⁹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, “annex 1,” n.d., 2.

⁹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 5, 8.

On the contentious issue of the European Parliament, Margaret Thatcher and all those who wanted to preserve the existing balance of power amongst the EC institutions secured a text that resulted in very few changes. The final text introduced a “cooperation” mechanism under which the Council had to consult the European Parliament but retained the right to make a final decision. In addition, the parliament would be required to agree to new member states joining the EC. Crucially, it looked at the time as if no significant new powers would be transferred to the EP from national parliaments and the balance of power between institutions remained as before. The resulting text in the SEA was far from the “co-decision” model that had been discussed during the IGC and had been favoured by the Italian government. The Italian delegation was so disappointed with this result that they made the agreement of the Italian government contingent on approval by the European Parliament.

The first concession that Thatcher had to make was on the thorny issue of defining the Single Market as a “market” or an “area”. On this issue no agreement could be found during the IGC. The fundamental difference was between those who wanted to limit majority voting to free trade and those who argued that the EC was more than free trade and that the definition of the Single Market should take account of such a broader view. An unsigned document in the FCO recorded on “possible solutions to key problems” and suggested that an “area” could be accepted if the qualifying remark “as provided by the treaty” was added.⁹⁸⁰ This was exactly the formula that was used in the end for the presidency conclusions and the SEA. This was a clever solution to the fundamental question of how wide or narrow a market should be defined, which had implications on the extent to which majority voting would apply to different regulations. This small instance of finding a clever solution in a drafting process shows how important an effective diplomatic team was to achieving results in such negotiations.

⁹⁸⁰ TNA FCO30/6179, folio no. 595, “possible solutions to key problems,” n.d.

The second concession was on human, animal and plant health, where majority voting would apply, and no special exception would be made for the UK. However, the amended treaty did not rule out an EC member acting independently, which according to legal advice was sufficient protection. National law would apply until it was overturned by the ECJ. The third and related concession was on the “measures” that would be introduced by majority voting. Thatcher had wanted to split this into “directives” and “regulations”, with majority voting applying only to the former in order to make sure that it would only apply to the framework of the Single Market. Such a narrow definition of “measures” did not make its way into the final treaty. Measures to implement the Single Market would remain only broadly defined. However, the European Commission committed itself through a statement on record that they would prefer using directives to harmonise laws.⁹⁸¹ Moreover, the UK and Germany won their points on the importance of national health standards and food hygiene. This issue was an important point on which both countries agreed in principle and both managed to insert their preferred formula into the final text.

As mentioned above, one of the most contentious issues in the negotiation of the SEA was EMU. According to her memoirs, Margaret Thatcher went into the Luxembourg European Council believing that Kohl was on her side on the issue of EMU.⁹⁸² At their bilateral meeting on 27 November 1985, Thatcher and Kohl had agreed that they would keep the issue out of the revised treaty. Lawson and Stoltenberg followed the same policy in ECOFIN. David Williamson, the head of the European Secretariat at the Cabinet Office, believed that the Anglo-German agreement to keep EMU out of the revised treaty “would no doubt run into flack” from other delegations.⁹⁸³ When it reached the plenary debate, fire was indeed opened on this agreement. Jacques Delors – who had been lobbying for the inclusion of the goal of EMU into the revised EEC treaty from the beginning of the IGC – threatened to

⁹⁸¹ TNA FCO30/6527, folio no. 2, S. Wall to M. Jay, “IGC: Conclusions and analysis,” 24 December 1985, appendix, “Luxembourg European Council: Extent to which UK’s major interests in the IGC are met in the presidency’s conclusions,” n.d., 3.

⁹⁸² Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, 555.

⁹⁸³ TNA FCO30/6179, folio no. 576, M. Jay, “File note, IGC,” 3 December 1985.

publicly disassociate himself from the entire conference if EMU was not included in the SEA.⁹⁸⁴ During the Luxembourg European Council, Kohl reneged on his assurance to Thatcher to fight to keep EMU out of the amended EEC treaty. Kohl changing his mind meant for Thatcher that she had to choose if she wanted to be isolated in refusing to include EMU or settle for a symbolic reference in the preamble.

On social policy, Thatcher held firm against agreeing to majority voting because she feared that this would increase the regulatory burden on small companies. David Hannay recalled how this debate caused Giulio Andreotti to remark that he never wanted to be employed by a company that Thatcher ran.⁹⁸⁵ This intervention caused a row and necessitated a break to allow for apologies.⁹⁸⁶ Thatcher held out to the end and entered a reserve on the issue. She wanted to avoid majority voting on this issue. The final text only partly vindicated Thatcher. A separate paragraph was inserted in the final text that committed EC member countries to avoid social legislation that would harm small companies. However, the decision for “minimum standards” would be taken by qualified majority voting, would be based on a proposal from the European Commission in collaboration with the European Parliament and would include consultations with the European Economic and Social committee.⁹⁸⁷ The agreed text also strengthened the legal basis for research and technology as well as environmental legislation. On the subject of technology, the British aim of securing unanimous decision making in the financing of the different research programmes was met. A reference to the “market dimension” was inserted and it was agreed that EC programmes imposed no limits on the freedom of action for national research and development programmes. On the issue of the environment, no additional powers were transferred to the

⁹⁸⁴ TNA FCO30/61780, folio no. 621, telegram no. 4465, D. Hannay to FCO, “IGC: Brussels 16/17 December, Concluding statements,” 17 December 1985; TNA FCO30/61780, folio no. 620, telegram no. 4460, D. Hannay to FCO, “IGC: Brussels 16/17 December,” 17 December 1985.

⁹⁸⁵ Hannay, *Britain's Quest for a Role*, 130.

⁹⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁷ The European Economic and Social committee is an advisory body, founded in 1957, which is made up of representatives from industry and labour unions. See European Economic and Social Committee, ‘European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)’, accessed 16 June 2016, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/institutions-bodies/european-economic-social-committee_en.

EC and there would be no coordination on environmental issues at international organisations. However, there was no hard and fast guarantee that article 100 would not be used to introduce directives that had an effect on environmental legislation. Finally, the agreed text introduced a court of first instance to reduce the case load for the ECJ.

On the whole, the UK government could achieve its aims in areas that were within the consensus of what other countries also wanted. Cases in point were the formalisation of PoCo and the extension of the Internal Market to form the Single Market, which included services and meant reducing non-tariff barriers to trade, until the non-binding deadline of 1992. The UK government negotiated less successfully in areas where it was isolated, such as on the issue of human, plant and animal health, or EMU. Therefore, the Luxembourg European Council vindicated the negotiating strategy of a “questioning approach” that Geoffrey Howe had devised. During the European Council, Thatcher came to realise that she had to concede on the legal form of the agreement if she wanted to secure the substantive policy outcomes that she wanted. Hence, Thatcher accepted to change the EEC treaty with the SEA as the price she had to pay to achieve the outcome that she believed to be in the interest of the UK and the EC as a whole, particularly codifying PoCo and extending the Single Market. Oliver Miles, the British ambassador to Luxembourg, reflected that the UK government had played a constructive role in the entire process even though “our own role ... was never an easy one” because the UK never wanted treaty change in the first place.⁹⁸⁸ However, Miles also believed that there was a “consensus” among the French, German and UK governments that the collapse of the negotiations in the IGC would have had a detrimental effect on the EC as a whole, which helped to reach a final agreement at the Luxembourg European Council.⁹⁸⁹

⁹⁸⁸ TNA PREM19/1752, telegram no. 508, R. Miles to FCO, “European Council, Luxembourg 2/3 December 1985,” 4 December 1985.

⁹⁸⁹ Ibid.

An important part of the agreement reached at Luxembourg was the commitment not to reopen the negotiations once the heads of government had reached an agreement. Normally the presidency conclusions of a European Council were the officially agreed wording and were written up by the government holding the rotating European Council presidency. It was customary not to pick these conclusions apart, even though they did not always represent a country's views to the full extent.⁹⁹⁰ For instance, the Italian delegate at the IGC preparatory group attempted to question the presidency conclusions of the Luxembourg European Council but was widely criticised for doing so.⁹⁹¹ The chief of staff to Roland Dumas, Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, argued that the presidency conclusions of the European Council "faithfully reflect the results of the summit at Luxembourg and the content of the agreements" on the SEA.⁹⁹² Although the presidency conclusions nearly always understated the bargaining involved they were a balanced interpretation of the compromise that had been reached in the European Council.⁹⁹³ Therefore, at the Luxembourg European Council it was agreed that the compromise reached at this summit would be the final word on the agreement about the SEA.⁹⁹⁴

Most importantly however, it was UK government policy to resist any reopening of the texts that had been agreed at the European Council in Luxembourg.⁹⁹⁵ If anything, this was perhaps the overriding sentiment after the conference. Nothing that was agreed should be reopened because if it was the whole agreement might fall. What had been achieved had been

⁹⁹⁰ TNA FCO30/6179, folio no. 587, telegram no. 4289, D. Hannay to FCO, "IGC preparatory group: Brussels: 6 December, text of the single act," 6 December 1985.

⁹⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹⁹² "réflètent fidèlement les résultats du sommet de Luxembourg et le contenu des accords intervenus" (my translation) CADN, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Brussels, box 771, telegram no. 8902, P. de Brichambaut to Diplomatie, "Suites du Conseil Européen," 6 December 1985.

⁹⁹³ TNA FCO30/6544, "Conclusions of the European Council, Luxembourg, 2-3 December 1985," n.d.; PAAA, B87, Bd. 165753, "Schlussfolgerung des Präsidenten des Europäischen Rates aus den Arbeiten der Konferenz der Vertreter der Regierungen der Mitgliedstaaten; aus der Tagung des Europäischen Rates vom 2/3 Dezember 1985 in Luxemburg hervorgegangene Texte," n.d.; European Council, 'The European Council, Luxembourg, 2-3 December 1985, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, no. 11/1985 (1985), <http://aei.pitt.edu/1416/>.

⁹⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁵ TNA FCO30/6179, folio no. 598, P. Goulden to S. Wall, "Intergovernmental conference: Preparatory group," 5 December 1985; TNA CAB128/81/37, "Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on Thursday 19 December 1985 at 10.30 am," 5 December 1985, 6.

hard fought over. Although the result was not perfect, it reflected the best that could be done. Collin Budd told Charles Powell that “since we won all our key points in the European Council, it is essential for us that the texts should not be changed”.⁹⁹⁶ Geoffrey Howe reported to the assembled Cabinet that “the United Kingdom had maintained its position close to that of France and the Federal Republic of Germany; this had headed off attempts by Italy in particular, to reopen or add to the texts which had been agreed by the heads of government on 2-3 December”.⁹⁹⁷ This impression was not lost on other EC countries. Jacques Viot, the French ambassador to the UK, argued that “our British partners have welcomed the results of the Luxembourg European Council with evident satisfaction. They consider this meeting to have been a real success”.⁹⁹⁸ Viot argued that the UK government had had three objectives after the Milan European Council, which were all met in Luxembourg: firstly, “achieve a minimum package in December ... particularly on the Internal Market”.⁹⁹⁹ Secondly, “put an end” to the IGC and the “ambitions for institutional reform”.¹⁰⁰⁰ Thirdly, focus the negotiations on “free trade” but stay within the provisions of the EEC treaty.¹⁰⁰¹ The ambassador argued that for the UK the “satisfaction is so much greater” because to achieve these aims, Thatcher had only to make slight concessions on treaty change and on accepting a text on EMU that described the already existing commitments.¹⁰⁰²

After the SEA was agreed, Thatcher’s presentation of the agreement emphasised the Single Market as its main outcome and deemphasised PoCo. In the press conference after the Luxembourg European Council, Thatcher not even once mentioned the PoCo agreement,

⁹⁹⁶ TNA FCO30/6179, folio no. 604, C. Budd to c. Powell, “European Council: Follow up, 11 December 1985.

⁹⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁸ “c’est avec une satisfaction évidente que nos partenaires Britanniques ont accueilli l’issue du Conseil Européen de Luxembourg. Ils considèrent que cette réunion a été un réel succès” (my translation) CADN, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Brussels, box 771, telegram no. 9733, J. Viot to Diplomatie, “Conseil Européen de Luxembourg et Conseil Affaires générales des 16-17 décembre 1985,” 13 December 1985.

⁹⁹⁹ “aboutir en décembre à un paquet minimum, mais néanmoins significatif, en particulier en matière du marché intérieur” (my translation) Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁰ “mettre ainsi un terme aux travaux de la conférence intergouvernementale et aux ambitions de réforme institutionnelle” (my translation) Ibid.

¹⁰⁰¹ “libertés commerciales” (my translation) Ibid.

¹⁰⁰² “la satisfaction est d’autant plus grande” (my translation) Ibid.

which she had championed personally in Milan. Thatcher presented the agreement as a story of freeing up the Single Market to increase trade. Thatcher argued that the British government's overriding aim was to liberalise the Single Market for British companies, especially for services. Michael Brunson, a journalist for ITN, asked Thatcher in an interview if the SEA was not "lessening the sovereignty of Westminster and the right of Britain to make its own laws"?¹⁰⁰³ Thatcher's reply is interesting because it acknowledged that powers were taken away from Westminster and would now be decided on a European level by majority voting:

"Yes, but you know, in some things a qualified majority was adversely affecting us. People, because they would not vote unanimously, were stopping us for example in setting up in insurance in Europe. We are good at it. ... They were stopping some of our young people with qualifications practising in Europe. We did not think that was fair, so we have gone to qualified majority on those things. On other things, you are quite right. We had to stand out and say that if there was qualified majority, our special interests were protected. For example, as you know, we have to keep out rabies, brucellosis, Colorado beetle and a number of special health things in both animals and plants, and we have managed to keep those out by special provision. So, you are right. It cuts both ways and you have to watch and see that your interests are not adversely affected, but you can in fact set up trade and business. There is one thing, you know, this thing called the Luxembourg Compromise which says that even if the majority agrees, if you have a special interest you can invoke that Compromise and really stop it from going through, and that remains".¹⁰⁰⁴

It is evident from this quote how Thatcher used the trade and the health narrative as powerful tools to show that she had fought for the national interest of opening up trade and had fought to keep dangerous illnesses away from the British Isles. What makes this reply interesting is that the example which Thatcher named as "special provision" to majority voting, what in the negotiations was called "human, plant and animal health", was in fact subject to majority voting. The deal reached on this issue was simply that other countries, upon insistence of the UK, could keep their deviating national laws unless they were

¹⁰⁰³ Interview by Michael Brunson (ITN) with Margaret Thatcher on 4 December 1985, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106188>.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Emphasis added. Margaret Thatcher, quoted in Ibid.

overturned by the ECJ. The assembled Cabinet had decided that this was sufficient a safeguard. For the UK government it was important to be able to pass health and safety legislation “without prior authorisation by the [European] Commission” and that only the ECJ could rule that such laws were trade barriers.¹⁰⁰⁵ Moreover, Thatcher argues that the Luxembourg Compromise would remain in place and presented it as amounting to a veto, which strictly speaking was not correct. Presenting the Luxembourg Compromise in such terms omitted to explain that it was in fact a convention that had never been formalised in the EEC treaty.¹⁰⁰⁶

Geoffrey Howe told the assembled Cabinet that “the conclusions [of the IGC] were very satisfactory. The United Kingdom had secured all its main objectives”.¹⁰⁰⁷ There remained a few outstanding reserves, points of qualification as well as legal and linguistic checks to be done. On cohesion, Greece, Ireland and Italy kept a reserve. Italy also kept a reserve on the European Parliament. The UK kept a reserve on majority voting on health and safety, arguing that such regulations should not become a burden to smaller companies, which was formally lifted on 27 January 1986, upon the insertion of a clause to that effect. The UK government also successfully resisted French and German attempts to call the agreement an “Act of European Union”.¹⁰⁰⁸ In a short-term alliance with Italy, who thought the SEA did not go far enough to be called an “act of European Union”, the UK thus contributed to giving the SEA its name. Luxembourg, holding the presidency of the European Council, suggested to call the agreement a “single act”.¹⁰⁰⁹ Geoffrey Howe reported to the Cabinet that “the results of the Intergovernmental Conference would be included in a European Act, the United

¹⁰⁰⁵ TNA CAB128/81/35, “Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on Thursday 5 December 1985 at 10.30 am,” 5 December 1985, 6.

¹⁰⁰⁶ See Ludlow, *The European Community and the Crises of the 1960s*; Jean Marie Palayret, Helen Wallace, and Pascaline Winand, *Visions, Votes, and Vetoes: The Empty Chair Crisis and the Luxembourg Compromise Forty Years On* (Brussels: PIE-Peter Lang, 2006); Teasdale, ‘The Life and Death of the Luxembourg Compromise’.

¹⁰⁰⁷ TNA CAB128/81/35, “Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on Thursday 5 December 1985 at 10.30 am,” 5 December 1985, 5.

¹⁰⁰⁸ TNA FCO30/6179, folio no. 604, C. Budd to C. Powell, “European Council: Follow up,” 11 December 1985.

¹⁰⁰⁹ TNA FCO30/6179, C. Robbins to S. Wall, “President text for a ‘single act’,” 6 December 1985; J. Shepherd to C. Robbins, “Acte Unique,” 9 December 1985.

Kingdom having ensured the rejection of the proposal to entitle this a Treaty of European Union”.¹⁰¹⁰ The name of the SEA was something Thatcher felt was important. Charles Powell said that that Thatcher had told him “it is one thing to accept language on European Union in a statement by the European Council but another to embody it in a Treaty text which has to be got through the House of Commons”.¹⁰¹¹ Powell continued, “I should warn you however that the Prime Minister will not accept ‘Act of European Union’, though would I think go along with ‘European Act’. This has the advantage of being meaningless”.¹⁰¹² This statement restated Thatcher’s long-standing aversion to the term “European Union”. However, these words also show her respect for the EEC Treaty, which equally are a constant theme in her views on European integration.

When Thatcher presented the agreement that had been reached at the Luxembourg European Council to the House of Commons she argued that it represented an achievement of the aims that she had already pursued at the Milan European Council, in June 1985.¹⁰¹³ Thatcher argued that the decision to change the EEC treaty was a procedural concession that amounted to “some tidying up of the treaty to reflect the community’s development”. As in the press conference, Thatcher emphasised that on issues of taxes, employment laws and border controls, unanimity would be retained. However, national freedom of action was retained on human, animal and plant health. Thatcher argued that these safeguards would protect the ability of the House of Commons to take decisions on issues such as terrorism, immigration as well as questions of human, animal and plant health. The Luxembourg Compromise would remain “unaffected”. The arrangements on giving the “European assembly” more say would not result in any “transfer of power” away from the House of Commons. Moreover, the PoCo draft that the UK had presented at the Milan European

¹⁰¹⁰ TNA CAB128/81/37, “Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on Thursday 19 December 1985 at 10.30 am,” 5 December 1985, 5.

¹⁰¹¹ TNA FCO30/6179, folio no. 605, C. Powell to C. Budd, “European Council: Follow up,” 12 December 1985.

¹⁰¹² *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹³ Margaret Thatcher quoted in Hansard, HC Debate on 05 December 1985 vol 88 cc429-39, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1985/dec/05/european-council-luxembourg>.

Council, on 28-9 June 1985, would be included. However, unlike in June 1985, in Thatcher's presentation of the SEA to the House of Commons, PoCo was no longer her primary focus. Thatcher presented the acceptance of treaty change and the greater use of majority voting as the two mechanisms by which the Single Market would be established, which was the fulfilment of a long-standing objective of her government.¹⁰¹⁴

In the debate that followed, Neil Kinnock, the leader of the opposition, criticised Thatcher for "performing a U-turn and agreeing to procedures for amending the [EEC] treaty".¹⁰¹⁵ He quoted Thatcher's own statement after the Milan European Council, where she said that "I saw nothing before us that would require an amendment to the [EEC] treaty".¹⁰¹⁶ Whilst Kinnock was right that Thatcher had changed her mind on the issue of treaty change, he accepted the premise of her argument that this was a procedural necessity to achieve the Single Market. Accepting this argument allowed Thatcher to claim in her rebuttal that the detailed provisions that were worked out in the IGC safeguarded the national interests and that the parts on monetary integration were "merely describ[ing]" the status quo.¹⁰¹⁷ Jonathan Aitken asked Thatcher why she accepted treaty change even though she had previously said this was not necessary. Thatcher replied that that even though a change of treaty was a procedural question she believed that "if one belongs to a Community, one has to take into account other people's views".¹⁰¹⁸ Therefore, the argument Thatcher put to the House of Commons was one of respecting and expanding the UK's existing commitments to the EC, which would result in benefits for the UK as well as the entire EC.

In conclusion, based on the evidence analysed for this research it is clear that in the IGC alternative ideas of how best to reinvigorate the process of European integration confronted each other. These were ideas about the balance between the economic, political

¹⁰¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁵ Neil Kinnock quoted in Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁷ Margaret Thatcher quoted in Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁸ Ibid.

and social aspects of the EC as well as to what extent the EC was an inward or outward looking community. The Dooge Committee had been a trial run of this process. The IGC went through essentially the same questions as this committee. The crucial difference was that in the IGC foreign ministers were negotiating possible changes to the EEC treaty. In this process, what Michael Butler called a “plethora of proposals” had to be reduced to a set of treaty changes that all ten EC countries could agree to.¹⁰¹⁹ This posed fundamental questions on the basic conception of the EC, whether a market included rules on social issues, taxes and converging monetary policies. Moreover, if there was a free flow of goods, was there a need to keep border checks on health standards? Should poorer members receive financial payments? In the process of making such rules, should there be majority voting, could there be a veto, and should the European Parliament not be involved more? These issues involved difficult trade-offs that were hard to reconcile within a country, let alone in a community of what from 1986 would be twelve countries. All of these issues had at their heart the question of the balance of decision making between EC institutions and member states. The outcome of the IGC was a compromise on exactly such questions. The result of the IGC, which was agreed in the European Council on 3 December 1985, was an agreement that focused on the notion of liberalising the Single Market, which would be implemented along the lines of a White Paper by the European Commission. This would be done by majority voting to prevent lengthy disagreements about individual directives. Therefore, majority voting aimed to contribute to the greater good of creating a large Single Market for the entire European Community. Moreover, the outward-looking political dimension of the EC was strengthened with the codification of foreign Policy coordination (PoCo) in the SEA.

For British diplomats, the IGC began with the challenge that diplomats did not know exactly what Thatcher wanted to get out of the IGC, nor what she was likely to accept. They were further hemmed in by cautious assessments that came out of consultations with

¹⁰¹⁹ TNA PREM19/1480, M. Butler to G. Howe, 10 October 1985, “Inter-governmental conference, report by Sir Michael Butler,” 17 October 1985.

Whitehall. Geoffrey Howe placed a reserve on the outcome of the IGC, arguing that only when the scope of the entire package had become clear could Margaret Thatcher decide whether or not she could commit her government to the outcome of the IGC. Thatcher's withholding of her commitment to the ongoing negotiations presented Geoffrey Howe and the diplomats at the FCO with the challenge of negotiating an outcome without knowing what Thatcher would or would not be able to accept. Geoffrey Howe managed this challenge with what he called a "questioning approach". Thereby, the UK government presented no new proposals of its own. Instead, the focus of the British diplomats was on the proposals that were already on the table. The agreement that emerged from the IGC vindicated Geoffrey Howe's "questioning approach". It achieved the two principal aims it was designed for. Firstly, it exposed the real position of other negotiating partners, while at the same time keeping the UK delegation as an interested partner in the negotiations, even though the UK presented no new initiatives. Secondly, this approach helped to focus minds at the negotiation table on reducing the "plethora of proposals" to a set of limited treaty changes. The reason why Howe's "questioning approach" worked however, was because a consensus congealed around the two issues of codifying PoCo and extending the Single Market. All countries were able to agree on these two objectives and all countries were willing to compromise on the question of how to implement these two objectives.

The attempt to get the thorny issue of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) remitted to the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) was not successful. Howe had intended to take the issue of EMU out of the IGC and let the finance ministers discuss the technicalities. Yet Nigel Lawson's much more confrontational approach in ECOFIN, arguing against including EMU in the IGC discussions, contributed to achieving the opposite of what it was designed to do. The difference between Howe and Lawson's approach was over style, not the substance of the policy of keeping a commitment to EMU out of the revised EEC treaty. Jacques Delors, with the support of François Mitterrand, succeeded in keeping the issue of EMU on the agenda of the IGC by arguing that liberalising the Single Market and

advancing the cause of monetary integration were inextricably linked. Margaret Thatcher disagreed with this view and refused to include a reference to EMU in the SEA. She believed that Helmut Kohl shared her view. However, Kohl did not give Thatcher the level of support in the European Council that Stoltenberg had given Lawson in ECOFIN. By not backing Thatcher on this issue, Kohl backtracked from his previous assurances to Thatcher on the subject. At the same time, Kohl's softer stance prepared the path for a compromise which included a commitment to EMU in the preamble of the SEA, but not in the actual text of the amendments of the EEC treaty. The case of EMU usefully highlights how Howe's constructive approach was not the only option available but was perhaps a more effective way to engage in the IGC than Lawson's more confrontational approach in ECOFIN.

The approach of the UK government towards the IGC reflected a fundamental shift in Thatcher's policy making towards the EC that happened after the Milan European Council. Until the Milan European Council, in June 1985, she had attempted to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo with the proposal of a standalone intergovernmental agreement. This approach failed when Germany and France presented their own bilaterally agreed proposal and when Italy tabled a vote on an IGC. Margaret Thatcher was thus forced to accept treaty change but the issues she had championed lived to fight another day in the IGC. During the IGC and at the Luxembourg European Council, the UK government tabled no new proposals. Hence, Thatcher gave up her ambition to lead in the EC into the codification of PoCo. Instead, she did the opposite of what she had done in the preparation for the Milan European Council. Thereby, Thatcher did not initially commit herself to the IGC, as she had done by leading the charge on PoCo but let the FCO conduct exploratory negotiations to determine if an agreement could be found that was satisfactory to the UK. In this process Geoffrey Howe's "questioning approach" worked to show what other countries would agree to. However, Howe's approach relied on the assumption that the position of the UK was in reality very

close to France and Germany, which was an aspect that Howe repeatedly stressed in Cabinet.¹⁰²⁰

At the European Council in Luxembourg, Thatcher essentially had to decide between accepting the package that was on the table or rejecting her entire European policy since the resolution of the BBQ in June 1984. Her entire policy programme of “Europe – the Future”, her plan to formalise PoCo, to liberalise the Single Market and thus making the EC more market-oriented and more outward looking would potentially have come to nothing. Thatcher accepted the package that emerged from the IGC because it contained the policies for which she had been fighting over the past eighteen months. The PoCo paper had become a section of the SEA and the Single Market would be created, which were the two constant themes in Thatcher’s European policy since June 1984. Thatcher’s success at the Luxembourg European Council rested to a large extent on the fact that she was able to stand back and let her diplomats do the work during the IGC on the basis of the priorities that she had established. What had initially begun as a concession to exploratory negotiations, which posed a challenge to Howe and the FCO diplomats because they did not know what Thatcher would accept, had emerged as a strength because Thatcher sealed an agreement at the Luxembourg European Council that contained all the policies she had been fighting for. What made this success possible was Thatcher’s abandonment of her refusal to change the EEC treaty. Her success in reaching an agreement on the SEA rested in her ability to change tack from wanting to lead the charge to codify PoCo in an intergovernmental agreement but then conceding to engage cautiously in negotiations that promised similar outcomes, but which were formalised as amendments to the EEC treaty.

Because the SEA consisted of objectives that Thatcher had been advocating repeatedly and consistently, she was vindicated on the substance of what was agreed –

¹⁰²⁰ TNA CAB128/81/34, “Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on Thursday 28 November 1985 at 10.30 am,” 28 November 1985, 5; CAB128/81/37, “Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on Thursday 19 December 1985 at 10.30 am,” 5 December 1985, 5.

although it happened in a different legal form from what she had originally proposed. In a sense, leading the charge on the codification of PoCo and the Single Market had worked in putting these issues on the agenda of the European Council. However, in the way in which she attempted to lead – by accepting to introduce the PoCo paper herself to the European Council, ruling out multilateral consultations by officials, refusing to contemplate changing the EEC treaty and not accepting any of the language of European integration – doomed her leadership bid from the start. Moreover, Thatcher did not put forward a vision for the European Community of tomorrow. She looked at the EC as it stood in 1984-5. The changes she proposed to how the EC worked were either altered practices that fell within the existing EEC treaty, or were conceived as intergovernmental agreements that fell outside the EC treaty framework. Her refusal to change the EEC treaty not only showed a respect for the treaty framework of the EC but also was an adherence on her part to the status quo. Therefore, despite proposing major initiatives, she conceived of European integration in static rather than in dynamic terms. The SEA consisted of both: a static dimension that addressed the current challenges that the EC was facing and a vision for a more integrated Europe. By seeing the SEA in terms of her own initiatives, Thatcher temporarily reconciled these two considerations – until they would reappear again with the Bruges speech in 1988.

Conclusions

*“That great character and statesman Ernest Bevin was asked what the aim of his foreign policy really was. His reply: ‘to go down to Victoria Station, get a railway ticket and go where the hell I like without a passport or anything else.’ That emphasis on breaking down barriers, on taking measures which benefit directly our ordinary citizens must be our priority in Europe.”*¹⁰²¹

Margaret Thatcher (1984)

*“And let me be quite clear. Britain does not dream of some cosy, isolated existence on the fringes of the European Community. Our destiny is in Europe, as part of the Community.”*¹⁰²²

Margaret Thatcher (1988)

The Single European Act (SEA) was Margaret Thatcher’s European moment. By negotiating and agreeing to the SEA, Thatcher contributed lastingly to the building of the European Community (EC). Nevertheless, the SEA was not the outcome Thatcher had originally envisaged. Thatcher proposed to lead the EC into the formalisation of European Political Cooperation (PoCo), the hitherto informal way of coordinating foreign policies on a European level. Thatcher’s PoCo initiative was meant to be an intergovernmental agreement between sovereign states, outside the EC treaty structure. However, Thatcher’s bid to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo and thereby make the Community more outward looking and more intergovernmental failed. Helmut Kohl, together with François Mitterrand and Bettino Craxi, suggested turning Thatcher’s ideas into a formal treaty to found what they called a “European Union”. Writing a formal treaty, to be ratified by parliament, and to call this the beginning of “European Union” went beyond what Thatcher wanted to achieve with her PoCo paper. She wanted to codify existing procedures and not introduce new ones.

The debate about whether the policies that were being discussed should take the form of a standalone intergovernmental agreement or amend the EEC treaty was very important. Changing the EEC treaty meant holding an Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) that could

¹⁰²¹ THCR5/1/5/284, Speech by Margaret Thatcher at Franco-British Council dinner, 30 November 1984, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105804>.

¹⁰²² Speech by Margaret Thatcher to the College of Europe in Bruges, 20 September 1988, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107332>.

reopen the entire founding treaty of the EC for potential renegotiation. In short, this was a question of either a piecemeal addition to how business was conducted in the Community or potentially a wholesale reform of the entire EC. This debate encapsulated the differences in views between Thatcher and most of her counterparts in the EC. Therefore, it is significant that even though Thatcher was outvoted on holding an IGC to amend the EEC treaty, she committed the UK government to taking part in the negotiations in the IGC. During the IGC, Thatcher withheld her consent until the shape of the final agreement had become clear.

Once it became clear that the content of the SEA included the policies that Thatcher had advocated, she accepted to change the EEC treaty as concession on the form of the new agreement in order to achieve the substance of the policies she desired. The resulting agreement, the SEA, turned the Common Market into the Single Market by abolishing non-tariff barriers to trade, on the basis of a detailed programme that was worked out by the European Commission. The PoCo paper, which Thatcher introduced, became one of the chapters of the SEA. Moreover, the SEA involved the European Parliament more in the process of making European laws, gave the European Commission more executive power and further gave the European Court of Justice a court of first instance. Finally, the SEA broadened the remit of the EC treaties with a commitment to “economic and social cohesion” as well as monetary, social, environmental and technical cooperation.

Findings and argument

My research traced the policy making of the UK government towards the SEA, over a period of 18 months from June 1984 to December 1985. I have analysed the policy making of the UK government towards the SEA in the high-level diplomatic forums that negotiated the SEA. My methodology is a historical analysis based on archival sources. I have expanded this approach into a multi-archival and multilingual study to broaden the source base and add context to my study of the UK and the SEA. Moreover, I have harnessed the computing powers of the new digital catalogue at the UK National Archives with a systematic, verifiable

and repeatable search of archival records, which is explained in Appendix Two. By conducting a multi-archival analysis of the SEA, drawing on a wealth of newly declassified sources, this dissertation sheds new light on the role of the British government in the diplomatic negotiations towards the SEA. Using the SEA as a lens allows me to assess the European policy making of the UK government in 1984-5 and to offer an interpretation as to what these events reveal about Margaret Thatcher's views towards European integration.

The literature on the UK and the EC has extensively covered the first two unsuccessful applications of Britain to join the EEC. In doing so, this literature has convincingly shown how since 1961 Harold Macmillan had put the UK lastingly on a path of membership of the EEC/EC/EU. Even though the first two applications to join the EEC failed, in 1963 and 1967 respectively, Edward Heath eventually secured membership for the UK in the EEC in 1973. The established view of Margaret Thatcher in the literature is that she began her career with views that were broadly in line with the Conservative policy of membership, at a time when the Labour Party was internally split and its leadership advocated staying out of the EEC, and ended her career with very sceptical views towards the EU. The SEA has been identified as the agreement that Thatcher accepted in order to implement the Single Market, but then she began to argue that agreeing to the SEA had been a mistake. In essence, the literature has identified the SEA as an important milestone, but has not engaged in a detailed study of the archival records that have led to this agreement. Omitting to do so has created a gap in the literature, which this Ph.D. dissertation has hopefully filled. Margaret Thatcher's apparent change of views about the SEA is the puzzle that this research has studied and on which my dissertation offers a new assessment.

My research suggests that the Single Market, the focus of most of the literature to date, is only part of the story of Thatcher's motives in signing the SEA. The Single Market was, of course, the most tangible result of the SEA – and Thatcher's advocacy of it also chimes with interpretations of her domestic economic programme – but looking only at the

outcome risks obscuring the importance of the build-up. If Margaret Thatcher had had her way, the process of the SEA would have been different. My analysis of the archival sources reveals that the Single Market was an important factor, and eventually became the overriding justification by Thatcher and the UK government for accepting the SEA. However, this research also revealed that the focus on the Single Market came to prominence only once the agreement for the SEA was in place. Crucially, the Single Market was only one part of the SEA. For Thatcher, especially in the first half of 1985, the issue of the Single Market was overshadowed by her ambition to lead the EC into an agreement that formalised PoCo. In the first half of 1985, the Single Market as an issue ran alongside the discussions of coordinating the foreign policies of EC countries. Back then, the overriding question for the UK government was whether or not the PoCo agreement should be a part of the EEC treaty, or form a separate intergovernmental agreement. Thatcher and the UK government were against changing the EEC treaty for fear that renegotiating the founding treaty of the EEC could risk reopening past compromises and could possibly take European integration in a more supranational direction. Helmut Kohl and François Mitterrand at first also expressed themselves against holding an IGC to change the EEC treaty. However, when they were asked to vote on the issue at the Milan European Council in June 1985, they voted in favour of an IGC. Amid all these disagreements about the form of treaty amendment, turning the Internal Market into the Single Market was a relatively uncontroversial issue, on which some kind of agreement was never in doubt.

From a British perspective, the real story underpinning the making of the SEA was Thatcher's ambition to lead the EC into the codification of the hitherto informal practice of PoCo. After the British Budget Question (BBQ) was resolved in June 1984, which had held up the business of the EC for five years, Thatcher presented a policy paper entitled "Europe – the Future". This paper was meant as a way to take part in a discussion on how to reform the EC and make it fit for the challenges of the 1980s, which included increased economic competition from Japan and the USA as well as the end of détente. The first chapter of this

dissertation showed how Thatcher's government engaged constructively in the debate on how to reform the institutions of the EC in the Dooge Committee. In spring 1985, Thatcher invited Helmut Kohl to a private meeting at Chequers to convince him to support her in the presentation of an initiative to codify PoCo, which she planned to present to the European Council. Chapter two showed the extent to which Thatcher perceived Kohl to be a key figure in the politics of the EC. This bilateral meeting exposed the differences in views on the question of European integration between the two heads of government. Thatcher wanted a standalone agreement to codify PoCo whereas Kohl wanted a formal treaty on "European Union", which he used as a broad term to base German foreign policy in a European context. Kohl wanted to give the institutions of the EC, especially the EP, more powers but Thatcher wanted to keep the status quo.

The third chapter explained how at the Milan European Council, on 28-9 June 1985, Thatcher was prepared to present the PoCo paper as a personal high-level initiative, with the backing of Kohl and Mitterrand, and to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo. It was personal because Thatcher agreed to present it herself to the other heads of government and high-level because only the heads of governments and a few selected foreign office officials were allowed to see it. Based on the recommendation from Geoffrey Howe, which Thatcher approved, foreign ministers and diplomats were instructed not to alter the PoCo initiative, until Thatcher had herself presented it to her counterparts. At the same time, Kohl and Mitterrand convened a series of secret meetings of trusted officials who amended Thatcher's paper to broaden its institutional ambitions and to give it the title "European Union". At the Milan summit, the clash between these two rivalling papers came to a head and Thatcher's PoCo initiative was overtaken by a vote to call an IGC to negotiate changing the EEC treaty.

The fourth chapter showed how the resulting IGC at first looked in many ways like a rerun of the Dooge Committee. Very importantly, Thatcher withheld her commitment to the IGC negotiations until the final outcome of the conference had become clear but allowed

Howe to negotiate on an exploratory basis. It was at the end of the IGC, when Thatcher saw that her PoCo initiative and extending the Single Market were both part of the agreement and she had secured safeguards on the issue of human, animal and plant health, when she took the decision to agree to the SEA. The initiatives she had championed, mainly PoCo and the Single Market, were all there. Thatcher made a concession on more majority voting to achieve the Single Market and gave up her insistence on not reopening the EEC treaty. All these considerations convinced her to agree to changing the EEC treaty and to commit the UK government to accepting the SEA. Thatcher's acceptance of the outcome of the IGC at the European Council in Luxembourg, on 3 December 1985, helped to pave the way for amending the founding treaty of the EEC with the SEA.

Most of the literature on Thatcher's attitudes towards European integration has either seen Thatcher's policy as a puzzle, perhaps a trick, or has charted a trajectory of her growing Euroscepticism. My research shows that extending PoCo and liberalising the Single Market were her overriding motivations to agree to the SEA. They were in line with her well-documented policy preferences of liberalising markets and strengthening the West in the Cold War. With her PoCo initiative, Thatcher wanted the EC to play a role in world affairs by aiding member states to coordinate their views on international events. Internally, Thatcher wanted a liberalised market to be at the heart of the EC. It helped of course that both in terms of wider foreign policy and liberalising the Single Market, she knew that Britain would be in a strong position to play a leading role. She therefore played to her own strengths, as one of the longest-serving Prime Ministers in the EC with strong international connections, and sought to make use of Britain's standing in the world as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Leading on the issue of PoCo in the EC would help to bring about a more outward-looking EC and could have given Britain a significant role in shaping the processes of PoCo. If one looks at her PoCo initiative in the context of her established views of the world, then advocating a more coherent voice of the EC in world affairs appears almost to be a logical conclusion. Moreover, by agreeing to present the PoCo paper and by championing

an outward looking EC – as a Community with a more coherent foreign policy, in a Western framework – she accepted a view that put Britain at the heart of the EC. In that sense she followed in the footsteps of Harold Macmillan and Edward Heath. Therefore, looking at Thatcher’s attitudes towards European integration through the lens of the SEA shows that Thatcher perceived the role of Britain to be a leading member of the EC.

Where Thatcher’s ambition to lead the EC into the formalisation of foreign policy coordination fell short was in her understanding of the diplomatic negotiation forums of the EC. She had little patience for the painstaking drafting and redrafting of texts in a multilateral setting. Sharing drafts widely and building a consensus were famously not her style of governing. Therefore, to present the PoCo paper as a personal high-level initiative left unused the resources of diplomats, who could have negotiated agreements in advance, and of the European Commission as broker of compromises. Holding multilateral consultations might have succeeded in convincing the other EC countries and the European Commission of Thatcher’s PoCo initiative. However, involving diplomats from other EC countries would probably have changed the PoCo paper and broadened its scope. Conceivably, Howe’s suggestion for a personal high-level initiative might also have been designed to let Thatcher declare how much she wanted to engage in the European integration. Seen from this angle, Howe might not have wanted any changes to the paper because Thatcher would perhaps not have agreed to them. To present the PoCo paper as a personal, high-level initiative by the Prime Minister saved him having to ask her if she approved any of these changes. Yet it is clear that she approved the initiative, presented it to Kohl as her own, and planned to present it herself to the European Council in Milan. She thus accepted the PoCo paper as her own and planned to present it as her own initiative.

Once the vote to hold an IGC exposed the shortcomings of Thatcher’s PoCo initiative, her ambition to lead the EC multilaterally into the codification of PoCo ended. Subsequently, her approach changed from a high-level intervention, with minimum

involvement of officials, to a broad but cautious level of engagement, driven by Geoffrey Howe and the FCO officials. Initially, it was not clear to Howe and the diplomats what Thatcher would be able to accept. Yet this change of approach, coupled with Thatcher's ability to stand back during the IGC to let Howe and the FCO officials negotiate, resulted in the SEA in its final form. Market liberalisation became in the later stages of negotiating the SEA the guiding principle and a public rationale for the British involvement in the IGC and commitment to the SEA. This all suggests that Thatcher's European policies were most effective when the UK government was constructively engaged in the process of European integration, such as during the Dooge Committee or the IGC. However, it was less successful when Thatcher attempted to confront or lead on the basis of presenting a personal high-level initiative to the European Council. Therefore, much of the success in Thatcher's negotiations towards the SEA can be attributed to Geoffrey Howe and the FCO in their ability to bridge gaps and negotiate effectively in a multilateral setting.

Missed opportunities in Thatcher's bid to lead the EC into foreign policy coordination

The literature has identified the SEA as an important moment in Britain's relations with the EC. However, how Britain negotiated towards the SEA has not yet been examined with a detailed multi-archival analysis, which is a gap my research fills. In the story of how the SEA came about, the Milan European Council, on 28-9 June 1985, was a watershed, both for the UK and the EC. For the EC it was the first time an IGC was convened with the objective of negotiating major changes to the EEC treaty. Since this IGC was not called by consensus, but by a vote in the European Council, Denmark, Greece and the UK took part in an IGC even though their heads of government had expressed themselves against holding such a conference. Setting up an IGC was not preordained. Indeed, on the first day of the European Council, most heads of government either rejected the idea or expressed reluctance. Bettino Craxi, the Italian Prime Minister who was chairing the summit, kept the issue on the agenda by a combination of determination and clever use of the agenda setting powers of the chair. On the second day, with the support of European Commission president Jacques

Delors, Craxi argued that all conditions for a vote under article 236 of the EEC treaty had been met. Margaret Thatcher disagreed, arguing that the EP had not yet been consulted. Delors replied that the EP's views were well known and argued that a vote could very well go ahead. Craxi then proceeded to hold a vote on whether or not to hold an IGC. Thatcher, together with the Danish and Greek Prime Ministers, found herself outvoted. With this vote, Kohl and Mitterrand were forced to abandon their conditional statements on holding an IGC and had to decide whether they wanted to either stand by their pro-European rhetoric and vote for an IGC, or vote against it and risk damaging their credibility as publicly committed "Europeans". They chose to affirm their pro-European credentials by voting for an IGC.

For the UK government, the Milan European Council also marked a turning point. In Milan, Thatcher's strategy of leading the EC into the codification of foreign policy was overtaken by a German-French initiative, which borrowed heavily from Thatcher's paper but aimed to further strengthen the EC institutions, give the agreement treaty status and the title "Treaty of European Union". In terms of its contents, Thatcher could not realistically turn around and oppose what Kohl and Mitterrand were proposing. However, her policy of avoiding changing the EEC treaty had failed and a change of strategy was needed. In altering her approach, Thatcher opted not to oppose an IGC but elected to engage without commitment and only decide if she wanted to support changing the EEC treaty once the results of the IGC had become clear. Even though an IGC could be convened by majority vote, changing the EEC treaty required unanimous consent from all EC members. Therefore, the German-French initiative and the Milan summit marked the end of a year in which Thatcher attempted to proactively and constructively influence the direction of the EC with personal high-level initiatives. For Margaret Thatcher, Milan was the moment when she was forced to abandon her strategy to lead and began to engage cautiously and reactively in the IGC. This change meant that Thatcher ceased to put forward her own proposals about how the EC could be improved, as she had done in Fontainebleau in 1984 and again in Milan with her PoCo paper. Instead, the FCO no longer presented new initiatives in the IGC and only

negotiated alterations to existing ones. Thatcher reserved her agreement to the outcome of the IGC until the shape of the final package had become clear, during the Luxembourg European Council, on 3 December 1985. For Thatcher this policy shift was rooted in the failure to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo at Milan.

Three missed opportunities can be identified on the road to the SEA. Analysing the act in terms of missed opportunities shows that the PoCo paper was not intended to put the UK on a conflicting path with the other EC members; on the contrary – accepting to put forward plans for the codification of PoCo shows that Thatcher saw the UK as a leading member of the EC. Moreover, looking at the SEA in terms of missed opportunities shows that the act was not from the outset meant to be an agreement that would be dominated by the Single Market, as is often argued in the literature, but was a battle of ideas and visions for the future of the EC. The first missed opportunity in how the UK negotiated towards the SEA was not to recognise that other countries saw an IGC not as threat but as an opportunity. The FCO assumed that Germany and France would not be drawn into an IGC, which turned out to be wrong. At the heart of this missed opportunity to gain support for the British initiative, was a failure to broaden the scope of the PoCo paper and make it more reflective of what was discussed in the Dooge Committee. Moreover, to focus almost exclusively on Germany and France was a mistake. Smaller member states, or the European Commission, could have usefully helped to find compromises or creative new ideas for possible ways forward. Giving Germany such a preeminent position in Britain's diplomacy towards the EC points towards a more fundamental shift in how the UK conducted diplomacy as a member of the EC in the 1980s. In the 1960s and 1970s, France, de Gaulle and Pompidou had been central to Britain's European diplomacy. Equally significant were smaller countries who were from the outset sympathetic to Britain's membership to the EEC, such as the Netherlands. The focus on Germany reflected a change in how the UK conducted foreign policy in the EC and a recognition of Germany's strong economy, which after Willy Brandt was replaced by Helmut Schmidt progressively translated into a more active role on the world stage.

The second missed opportunity was the visit of Helmut Kohl to Chequers on 18 May 1985. Helmut Kohl and Margaret Thatcher both wanted to win the other over for their own plans, but both failed to do so. Yet they were hampered by their famously difficult relationship, characterised by differences in personality, language and world view. Thatcher wanted to share her PoCo paper in confidence and win Kohl's support at the European Council. Kohl promised to be in touch with comments but was more interested in developing aspects that would fit into the broader theme of "European Union". Having failed to convince Thatcher, Kohl met Mitterrand and they agreed to work on a shared paper, which drew heavily on the PoCo paper that Thatcher had proposed. The German-French paper was written in secret consultations, led by Horst Teltschik and Jacques Attali. Italy was approached with the suggestion to present it as a presidency proposal but declined. The UK was to be kept informed, which never happened. Eventually, simply too much time was lost trying to find a compromise. When Kohl came under pressure in the *Bundestag* for not doing enough to advance European integration, he revealed the existence of the German-French paper without prior warning to anyone. The result was anger, both in Paris and London. The result of all these diplomatic efforts was that two conflicting papers were presented to the Milan European Council. The two papers were very similar in the sense that they both wanted to codify the existing informal foreign policy coordination practices. However, they were very different in their outlook for the future. Even though the German-French paper was based on the British PoCo proposals, it was much more ambitious in planning to give the EC institutions more powers and in wanting to create a "Treaty of European Union". The German-French paper has an institutional dimension that the British paper lacked.

The third missed opportunity was to reconcile both these papers at the meeting of foreign ministers in Stresa, on 8-9 June 1985. Geoffrey Howe shared the British PoCo paper with his colleagues but warned them that these ideas were not for discussion by officials. Howe suggested that Margaret Thatcher wanted to present this paper herself to the European Council in its current form. To present the PoCo paper at Stresa without allowing any input

from ministers or officials lost it the element of surprise. The proposal was known but could not be interacted with. Not permitting diplomats to discuss the paper meant that no support could be built around its key ideas. The outcome was neither a shared initiative nor a surprise. Therefore, not involving officials was a mistake that left many of the resources of persuasion that were available to diplomatic officials unused. The meeting of foreign ministers in Stresa could have been an opportunity to build support in favour of the British PoCo paper. Calling the PoCo paper a treaty could have been a worthwhile concession in exchange for political backing.

Neither the British nor the German-French approach to these negotiations eventually helped to bridge the divide that opened up at the Milan European Council. The rift that appeared at this meeting masked the extent to which Thatcher had been willing to accept the existing EEC treaty and her willingness to lead the EC into codifying existing foreign policy coordination mechanisms. It is an important finding of this dissertation that with the SEA, Thatcher displayed commitment to EC membership and even a willingness to lead in the EC. The failure of the PoCo initiative can be explained by the fact that when it came to winning support for her policies in the EC, she could not do so because she was arguing from a relatively isolated position. Therefore, a change of course became necessary. It was Thatcher's ability to change tack and her willingness to stay engaged in the ongoing discussions, despite all the disagreements, which made a successful participation of the UK in the IGC possible. Even though the commitment to treaty change was not yet there, the willingness to engage in talks in the IGC alone was a significant step towards an agreement to change the EEC treaty, paving the way for the SEA.

Agreeing to the SEA: trickery or compromise?

The question of what the British policy making towards the SEA was, and what this says about Thatcher's attitudes towards European integration has guided this research: how could she negotiate an agreement but afterwards criticise it – to the point of implying that she

regretted it? As the literature review has shown, this conundrum has often been explained by suggesting that Thatcher was “tricked”, “duped” or even “misled” when she negotiated the SEA. My Ph.D. dissertation shows that no such trickery took place, but that Thatcher agreed to the SEA as part of a series of compromises. Many of these compromises were reached in the IGC to negotiate the SEA, which took place over a period of three months and was attended by foreign ministers and officials. The Prime Ministers and presidents of the EC finalised this process of finding compromises and brought the agreement over the finishing line during the European Council, in Luxembourg on 2-3 December 1985. The beginning of the IGC looked in many ways like the Dooge Committee due to an emphasis on gathering ideas about how to reform the EC. Many of the papers and ideas presented in the IGC drew on the work of the Dooge Committee. The main proposals for the IGC suggested implementing the Single Market, collaborating more on research, technology and the environment, providing “cohesion” funds for poorer member states, coordinating foreign and security policies and committing the EC to monetary as well as fiscal integration. The European Commission had already floated the idea of calling the treaty amendment that would emerge from the IGC a “single act”, as a way to symbolically re-state the original aims of the EC.

For Geoffrey Howe and the FCO officials, one of the principal challenges in the IGC was to reach an agreement on a package without knowing whether or not Thatcher would eventually accept the outcome. Geoffrey Howe devised what he called a “questioning approach”, which managed this uncertainty by focusing on whittling down the proposals that were already on the table to what he thought was acceptable to Thatcher. For this approach, the Luxembourg European Council was a moment of truth. Would Margaret Thatcher accept the package that had been negotiated in the IGC, or would she reject months of careful negotiations? The FCO gave Thatcher a list of “key points” that the IGC had so far not been able to resolve. This list closely followed the priorities that the Cabinet sub-committee on European questions of the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee (OD(E)) had defined as

the UK government's policy aims for the IGC. This list was informed by Whitehall consultations on the issues that were being discussed in the IGC. The list of "key points" formed the negotiation brief that Thatcher took with her to the European Council in Luxembourg. The question implicit in this list was, would Thatcher be able to negotiate a compromise on the remaining outstanding points of the IGC and would she be able to accept the resulting compromise? Crucially, these negotiations forced Thatcher to clarify her own views on the detailed aspects of European integration which were discussed in the IGC and came to form the SEA.

Thatcher successfully negotiated the majority of the outstanding issues on her list of "key points", on the basis of what had been prepared in the IGC. Chapter four explained how the IGC and the Luxembourg European Council resulted in a series of compromises. Firstly, the Single Market was defined as an "area", but limited in scope to "as provided by the treaty". This debate was important because it was a clash between two different views of a market, one involving social legislation and the other emphasising deregulation. The result was a definition of the Single Market that encompassed more social and environmental aspects, but only as far as the EEC treaty allowed. For Thatcher, this agreement was not really a victory, but it was a compromise in the sense that she agreed to a wider scope of the Single Market as long as this was limited to the extent defined in the EEC treaty. In essence, it was a reaffirmation of the status quo in the form of the EEC treaty. This compromise showed how Thatcher viewed European integration in static rather than dynamic terms.

The second compromise was on the issue of human, animal and plant health. Thatcher had argued against majority voting on the issue but could not carry the point. Instead, she was given assurances that the treaty amendments of the SEA would not preclude an EC member government enacting its own health and safety laws, as long as they were not overturned by the ECJ. The points that Thatcher could secure successfully were issues of taxation, free movement of people and labour laws, on which all decisions would continue to

be made unanimously, i.e. not by majority vote. Moreover, collaborations on issues such as drugs, terrorism and immigration would remain at an intergovernmental level and would not fall under the remit of the SEA. Finally, no substantive “cohesion” transfer of resources would happen from richer to poorer countries, an issue which had been strongly advocated by Greece. In all these points, the final agreement was very close to the position that Thatcher and the British government had originally advocated. Thatcher succeeded in keeping these points out of the SEA and thereby managed to narrow the scope of the SEA. Therefore, her achievements are just as apparent in the issues that were left out of the SEA as in the clauses of the act itself. However, a commitment to “economic and social cohesion” was maintained in the SEA, which forms part of the legacy of the act in paving the way for the introduction of cohesion policies during the implementation of the SEA.

The third compromise concerned the institutional arrangements of the SEA, which had been one of the principal disagreements between Margaret Thatcher and Helmut Kohl as well as one of the main differences between the rivaling papers that were presented at the Milan European Council. The result in the SEA was not the “co-decision” model that had been advocated by Italy during the IGC. Instead, the result was in institutional terms a victory for the intergovernmentalist view of the EC because the European Council, and with it the heads of government, were keeping the last word on any major decision in the EC. The European Parliament would be consulted more by the Council, in what was called a “cooperation” process. However, even though these measures looked modest at the time, the European Parliament turned out to be able to use them effectively and expand them significantly during the 1990s, which forms part of the perhaps unexpected legacy of the SEA. Moreover, the European Commission would be given more executive powers, which however could again be taken away by the Council. Lastly, despite conceding only limited new powers to the institutions of the EC, the SEA broadened the scope of the EC treaties by introducing a commitment to collaborate in research, technology and environmental programmes. The commitment to these issues in the SEA was however limited and, on the

urging of Margaret Thatcher, a reference to a “market dimension” was inserted. On social policy, Thatcher had to concede to majority voting, despite having a furious row on the issue with Giulio Andreotti. Thatcher could only secure a provision arguing that administrative burdens should not be placed on small companies.

The issue of committing the EC to Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) was seen directly after the Luxembourg European Council as a compromise. The fourth chapter explained how Geoffrey Howe had wanted the entire discussion of EMU to be referred to ECOFIN, in order to keep the finance ministers in charge of the debate and keep the issue of monetary integration out of the EEC treaty. Despite Howe’s efforts, the discussion on EMU was kept alive in the IGC by the European Commission, with the support of France. It is tempting to argue that with hindsight this was a defeat for Thatcher. However, nobody could have known that the nominal mention of EMU in the preamble of the SEA would be the basis on which Jacques Delors could subsequently convince the European Council that the Single Market and monetary integration had to be implemented together.¹⁰²³ Monetary integration after 1985 and the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 lie outside the scope of my research. However, in the context of this Ph.D. dissertation, it is important to recognise that monetary integration was one of the issues that hardened Thatcher’s views towards the EC in the second half of the 1980s. Therefore, to fully appreciate how this fateful mention of monetary integration in the preamble of the SEA came about, and how Thatcher came to accept it, is an important part of an explanation why she later resented having signed the SEA.

Helmut Kohl had originally told Thatcher that he was against introducing EMU into the SEA, but then hinted to Delors as well as Mitterrand that he was ready to re-examine the issue. However, Kohl’s assurances, the Bundesbank’s traditional scepticism towards the issue and Nigel Lawson’s confidence that Germany did not want EMU, all contributed to giving

¹⁰²³ Jacques Delors, ‘Report on Economic and Monetary Union in the European Community’ (Brussels: European Commission, 1989), <http://aei.pitt.edu/1007/>.

Thatcher a sense of security that she had Kohl's support in arguing against EMU. Eventually, during the Luxembourg European Council, Helmut Kohl altered his position and agreed to a mention of the issue in the preamble of the SEA. Kohl's changed position presented Thatcher with a choice of whether or not she wanted to isolate herself on the issue by continuing her policy of refusing a mention of EMU in the SEA, or choose the path of cooperation by agreeing to a mention of the already existing practice of the EMS and a broader commitment to EMU in the preamble of the SEA. Such a solution had the added benefit that by bringing the issue within the remit of the SEA, any further development of the EMS would need unanimous support, which looked to Thatcher like a kind of insurance policy against anyone trying to achieve EMU by majority voting. By accepting a mention of EMU in the preamble of the SEA, Thatcher opted to continue Howe's policy of constructive engagement and did not follow Lawson's advice of a more confrontational approach.

Lawson's advice to Thatcher and his more confrontational line in ECOFIN, which deviated in style but not in policy substance from Howe's overall approach to the negotiations in the IGC, plays an important role here. Nigel Lawson, having at first advocated accepting a nominal mention of monetary integration in the SEA, hardened his position against including any mention of EMU in the IGC, because he thought he had the support of the German finance minister. Consequently, Lawson advised Thatcher to reject any mention of EMU in the SEA. By doing so, Lawson departed from Howe's "questioning approach" and opted for a straightforward confrontation with the European Commission which were advocating including a commitment to EMU in the SEA. Lawson's more straightforward refusal to discuss EMU in the IGC looked rather more like a question of style than policy. However, his harder position in ECOFIN ended up isolating Thatcher in the discussion about EMU in the IGC. During the Luxembourg European Council, Kohl changed the German position to support a mention of monetary integration in the preamble, which together with Delors and Mitterrand's support succeeded in bringing the subject of EMU within the remit of the SEA. The more confrontational line which Nigel Lawson pursued, usefully showed how a negative

negotiating line could backfire and as such resulted in making unplanned concessions once everyone was assembled around the European Council table.

For Thatcher, the negotiation of the SEA was a success in the instances where she followed Howe's "questioning approach" and built on the areas where support could be generated around shared interests. Such shared interests included extending the Single Market and introducing majority voting in order to lower non-tariff barriers to trade. Moreover, formalising the foreign policy coordinating mechanisms of the EC was also supported by a majority of EC countries. On the subject of PoCo, the final agreement was very similar to the paper that Thatcher had planned to present as her personal high-level initiative at the Milan European Council. Ultimately, Thatcher accepted the SEA for its content, despite its form as a formal amendment to the EEC treaty. Thatcher's ambition to lead failed not because there was not enough support for formalising PoCo. It was her bid to lead the EC into the formalisation of PoCo and her view of a more intergovernmental, outward-looking EC which the other heads of government rejected. They wanted a political vision to complement the Single Market and PoCo, a renewed impetus to strengthen the institutions of the EC and to broaden their remit into the fields of monetary, environmental and social policies, in a form which Thatcher could or would not provide.

For the British government, the success of the SEA lay in Thatcher's change of approach after her failure to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo at the European Council in Milan. The success of engaging in the IGC rested on taking a constructive attitude and avoiding isolation. The author of this success was Geoffrey Howe, with his "questioning approach" to the IGC, by which he followed a policy that harnessed a large degree of overlap in interests between the UK, France and Germany. However, Thatcher's change of approach, standing back after wanting to lead and letting events unfold, did much to commit the UK government to the outcome of the IGC. The reason why the PoCo agreement became to be seen as being less prominent in the SEA than at the Milan European Council can be found in

how Thatcher and the British government chose to present the SEA. The SEA was presented as a major achievement in freeing up the Single Market, both in the press conference after the Luxembourg European Council as well as in the House of Commons. Thatcher thus presented the agreement as a victory in market liberalisation, while not forgetting human, animal and plant safeguards. The foreign policy aspect which Thatcher had championed thereby faded into the background and the Single Market took centre stage.

Implications for the historiography

The research for this Ph.D. dissertation has narrowly focused on analysing how the UK negotiated towards the SEA from 1984 to 1985. The findings suggest implications for future research on the history of the UK in the EC. The UK was by 1984 a fully integrated member of the EC. The relationship of the UK and the EC could no longer realistically be seen in terms of “missing the bus” towards the continent, as most of the early literature had indicated. By analysing the diplomatic interactions on the subject of European integration, this dissertation suggests that by 1984-5 it was too simple to see Britain only in terms of the “awkward partner” that Stephen George observed.¹⁰²⁴ Moreover, this research intersects with the literature on the “relaunch” of European integration in the 1980s and the biographies of Thatcher. My Ph.D. dissertation highlights the importance of contrasting views and visions in shaping the process of European integration. My account of how the UK engaged in the negotiations that led to the SEA goes beyond examining the SEA in terms of the existing theoretical fault lines, such as interstate bargaining versus the importance of “supranational entrepreneurs”.¹⁰²⁵ Instead, by drawing on sources from multiple archives, this dissertation traced the evolution of Britain’s policies towards the SEA and analysed what this says about the role of Margaret Thatcher and her views on the subject of European integration. Doing so has allowed this dissertation to study what the policies of the UK government towards the

¹⁰²⁴ George, *An Awkward Partner*.

¹⁰²⁵ Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*; Moravcsik, ‘Negotiating the Single European Act’; Sandholtz and Zysman, ‘1992: Recasting the European Bargain’.

SEA was, without the benefit of hindsight. As explained in the introduction, the focus of the UK government and Thatcher and the access to archival sources has imposed limits on what this dissertation could say about French and German policies. Moreover, there are limitations to piecing together Thatcher's views based on archival sources and public statements. After all, her attitudes towards European integration were complex, changed over time and have remained enigmatic.

The methodology used for this Ph.D. research could usefully be applied to the study of Britain and European integration in the second half of the 1980s and the negotiations leading up to the Maastricht Treaty. Moreover, this methodology could be used to analyse the evolution of policy towards the SEA of the other nine EC countries as well as the European Commission. The findings of this Ph.D. dissertation are a useful puzzle piece not only for anyone who is interested in Thatcher's European policy making but also for researchers who work on Thatcher and the end of the Cold War. The archival sources from the early 1990s are now slowly being declassified. The release of new archival sources will offer fresh insights and could usefully be contrasted with further multiarchival research. My research on the UK and the SEA speak to wider themes that could be of importance to future research and may contribute to a reassessment of the significance of the SEA. Thatcher's policies towards the SEA were not the "basic failure of the British Europeanists to promote a fresh start" and were so much more than the "brief parenthesis of active engagement" that Poggiolini and Pravda have argued.¹⁰²⁶ When telling the story of the Single Market, it is important to recognise that the focus on market liberalisation was neither preordained nor automatic. It is true that reinvigorating the European economies was an issue that commanded much agreement across the EC. Yet how this should be done, or in which form, was part of the debate in which the SEA served as the agreement that prepared the treaty framework of the EC for the

¹⁰²⁶ Poggiolini and Pravda, 'Britain in Europe in the 1980s: East & West. Introduction,' 16.

implementation of the White Paper of the European Commission, which became to be known as the “1992 programme” to create the Single Market.¹⁰²⁷

Scholars working on the implementation of the Single Market and EMU will hopefully find this dissertation interesting in terms of what it reveals about how these issues became part of the SEA. However, this dissertation intends to put the economic element of the SEA in context and explain how it was one but not the overriding motivation for Thatcher – even though it later became her main justification for agreeing to it. Moreover, this dissertation sheds new light on the European Political Cooperation element of the SEA, which has frequently been overshadowed by the Single Market. For instance, Guasconi has argued that the SEA “was not originally designed to deal with foreign policy issues”.¹⁰²⁸ By situating the SEA as the moment when Thatcher attempted, and failed, to lead the EC into the formalisation of EC foreign policy coordination, this dissertation throws new light on the under-researched foreign policy aspect of the SEA. Therefore, for Thatcher foreign policy coordination was the dominant element of the SEA, one on which she was prepared to take the lead in the EC, whereas the Single Market was for most of the time an issue that ran alongside the political topics.

Telling the story of the SEA offers a lens to interpret Thatcher’s views on European integration and the world. Unlike Winston Churchill, Margaret Thatcher was not a prolific writer. In this context it is significant that she chose to write three long-hand accounts during her time as Prime Minister: one about the Falklands War, a second one about the settlement of the BBQ and a third account on the funeral of Konstantin Chernenko.¹⁰²⁹ Hence, Thatcher chose to write her own accounts on three broad subjects: the Falklands War, European integration and the Cold War. According to Andrew Riley, archivist of the Thatcher papers at the Churchill Archives Centre, these were the issues on which she wanted to “refute

¹⁰²⁷ Cockfield, ‘Completing the Internal Market’.

¹⁰²⁸ Guasconi, ‘The Single European Act, European Political Cooperation, and the End of the Cold War’, 189

¹⁰²⁹ Conversation of the author with Andrew Riley on 7 May 2018. See Margaret Thatcher’s Falklands Memoir, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/archive/1982retpap2.asp>.

misinterpretations".¹⁰³⁰ Thatcher's accounts of these events show that asserting national sovereignty, such as by defending the Falklands, and the West standing together in the Cold War were issues that were important to her. The Cold War aspect remained in the background of this dissertation but was nonetheless a significant underlying factor that motivated Thatcher to propose an agreement that would strengthen the unity of the EC and the West in terms of its shared foreign policy aims.

Thatcher's attempt to lead the EC into an intergovernmental agreement to codify PoCo was entirely in line with her larger aims to strengthen the role of Britain in the world and the West in the Cold War. Thatcher's policy towards the SEA was consistent with her views on the nation state and the Cold War. Moreover, it was in line with the established Conservative policy of Britain playing a leading role as member of the EC, which Macmillan and Heath had bequeathed to her. The SEA was, therefore, not the outlier it has often been characterised as in the literature, but rather an important precursor to the years when Thatcher's views on the EC hardened – a process in which her failure to win the support of her fellow heads of government to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo must have played a role. However, the fact that her PoCo proposal became enshrined in the EEC treaty with the SEA, and the Single Market was liberalised, meant that with the SEA she was successful in advancing the policies in Europe that she wanted to see. Therefore, the way that Thatcher negotiated the SEA shows that her views on European integration were set in the larger themes of Britain's world role, in the context of the Cold War and as a leading member of the European Communities.

In the way Thatcher negotiated and perceived the SEA, one can detect her limited understanding of how her counterparts in the EC saw European integration. Thatcher's high-level interventions had worked to force the issue of the BBQ on the agenda of the EC.

¹⁰³⁰ Ibid; See also Account by Margaret Thatcher of the European Council on 25-6 June 1984 in Fontainebleau, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/139100>.

However, when the question was one about winning support for competing visions or proposals for the future of the EC, her approach failed to convince her counterparts in the European Council. Whilst it may have seemed effective politics to present the paper as a high-level initiative, refusing to let diplomats try to reach a compromise meant that the paper could not garner the necessary support to be successful in a multilateral setting. What may have looked like compromise could have been the price for a policy that every EC country could accept. Yet it is conceivable that Thatcher did not want a compromise negotiated by the FCO. It is even conceivable that she did not want a compromise at all. What is clear is that she agreed to propose the codification of PoCo at the Milan European Council, for which she tried to win Kohl's support in advance. For the British government the charm offensive towards Kohl was designed to build support for Thatcher's PoCo paper. Both she and Howe were convinced that Kohl's support was the key to convincing the rest of the European Council. Mitterrand, in contrast, was given much less time with Thatcher and was only given an advance copy of the PoCo paper, which either suggests Thatcher believed him to back her proposals or that she did not want to try to convince him to do so.

The findings of this dissertation offer new lessons on the bilateral relationship between the UK and Germany as well as France. Thatcher and Kohl's disagreement over the role of institutions and different larger visions, as well as famously different personalities, were important barriers to presenting a shared proposal. Unlike Thatcher, who wanted policies to be narrowly defined, Kohl worried less about open-ended commitments. He embraced the term "European Union" as an umbrella phrase for his approach that based German foreign policy in a European context. Kohl wanted to strengthen the shared elements of European foreign policy, including security aspects, give the EP more power and liberalise the Single Market further. Moreover, Kohl was not averse to changing the EEC treaty. Thatcher, however, ruled out changing the EEC treaty. She also wanted to extend the Single Market and coordinate foreign policy, but was careful not to include security aspects into PoCo, for fear of weakening NATO and displeasing the USA. The meeting between Kohl and

Thatcher highlighted their disagreements but also failed to build on the areas where both leaders saw common ground. Mitterrand was more ambiguous about his long-term aims and focused more on technological cooperation. The secretly-written German-French counterproposal to Thatcher's initiative showed that Kohl found it easier, or more important, to work with France – despite Mitterrand's intransigence – than with Thatcher.

Thatcher's European moment

Margaret Thatcher's attitudes towards European integration have been discussed at length in the existing literature. The SEA is usually presented as interlude before she began to voice her scepticism towards the EC. This dissertation has argued that the SEA was Thatcher's European moment because she wanted to win the support of Germany and France to lead the European Community into an intergovernmental agreement to codify PoCo. The PoCo paper was written by the FCO and then accepted by Thatcher as her own initiative, which she presented to Helmut Kohl first and then to the European Council. Thatcher's refusal to embed the PoCo initiative in the EEC treaty, or even to give it the status of a treaty, betrayed an intergovernmental view of the EC. However, her PoCo proposal did not imply a rejection of European integration altogether. Thatcher conceived of the PoCo paper as an agreement that should complement the EC as it stood in 1985. Thatcher committed her government to collaborating constructively in the EC institutions in order to achieve the change she wanted to see in the EC. To convince the other heads of government in the European Council to back her PoCo initiative was a learning process for Thatcher. She had previously succeeded in the dispute on the BBQ not by positive engagement but mainly through dogged insistence. When this dispute was resolved, Thatcher presented her views on how to reform the EC with a paper entitled "Europe – the Future" in which she outlined the manner in which the EC could be developed in an intergovernmental and market-led way. The PoCo paper took one aspect of "Europe – the Future" and developed it into a proposal for an intergovernmental agreement.

By attempting to convince Helmut Kohl and by presenting the PoCo paper directly to the European Council in Milan, with minimal involvement of officials, Thatcher herself took charge of European policies. Yet this was done inconsistently because Howe showed the paper to his counterparts in the EC but told them that it could not be altered, nor even discussed until Thatcher had herself presented the paper to the European Council. Suggesting such a course of action could have been a way for Howe to manage his relationship with Thatcher. However, in 1985 their relationship was still very good and had not yet become as difficult as it would from 1988 and after his resignation as foreign secretary in 1989. It is more likely that Thatcher had approved the paper as it was and did not want it to be altered until the heads of government had discussed it, for fear its focus could be diluted or its scope expanded. By keeping the PoCo paper at the highest political level, the PoCo proposal should have reached decision makers in its original form and been accepted there and then as intergovernmental agreement. This plan did not come to fruition. The European Council in Milan caused an end to Thatcher's ambition to lead the EC into an intergovernmental agreement to codify PoCo by passing a vote to convene an IGC that aimed to negotiate changing the EEC treaty.

When Thatcher's PoCo plans failed in June 1985, she was not yet ready to give up on the detailed content of her proposal. What was needed was a change of approach. Thatcher was forced to recognise that even though she had been outdone on the formal aspect of her policy, there was a way to salvage the substantive content of what she had wanted to achieve. Accordingly, Thatcher adopted a new strategy: she stood back. The new strategy no longer put the Prime Minister at the centre, it no longer emphasised foreign policy coordination and no longer tried to exclude civil servants. Howe and the FCO officials would represent the UK government in the IGC. By virtue of necessity, the new strategy put the FCO in charge of negotiating a package and of staying constructively engaged in the IGC, without presenting any new policies. At the same time, Thatcher made her agreement to the IGC conditional on the shape of the overall package that would emerge after the negotiations had finished. It was

her ability to change her approach from wanting to lead in the EC, abandoning her earlier refusal to change the EEC treaty in the process – judging the new policies on the basis of their content – which made her agreement to the SEA possible.

Margaret Thatcher's views on European integration continued to evolve after the SEA was agreed and ratified. On 20 September 1988, Thatcher took a speech she was asked to give at the College of Europe in Bruges as the occasion to spell out her views about the direction the European integration project should take.¹⁰³¹ The backdrop to Thatcher's Bruges speech were a series of speeches by Jacques Delors. He had told the European Parliament on 6 July 1988 that 80% of economic and social laws would in the future be made on a European level.¹⁰³² On 8 September 1988, Delors had spoken to a Trade Union Congress conference in Bournemouth on the "social dimension" of the Single Market, explaining that Europe was going through a "peaceful revolution" and inviting the delegates to "join" the "architects [of] Europe".¹⁰³³ In the Bruges speech, Thatcher answered many of these claims by arguing that cooperating on policies in the EC meant in her view that member states should find areas where they could collaborate and that they should do so in an intergovernmental way. In Thatcher's view, shared institutional competences should be limited to what was necessary to achieve such intergovernmental collaborations.¹⁰³⁴ There was a very political dimension to the Bruges speech. She did not mention the word socialism once. Yet with the phrase "We have not successfully rolled back the frontiers of the state in Britain, only to see them re-imposed at a European level with a European super-state exercising a new dominance from Brussels" she rebelled against what she must have seen as dirigiste attempts to introduce a shared social component into the European market.¹⁰³⁵ Hence, Thatcher's view of the EC emphasised the

¹⁰³¹ D. Hannay to J. Kerr, "Invitation to the Prime Minister to address the inauguration of the new academic year at the College of Europe, Bruges," 29 March 1988, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/111772>.

¹⁰³² Speech by Jacques Delors to the European Parliament on 6 July 1988, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/113689>.

¹⁰³³ Speech by Jacques Delors to the Trades Union Congress on 8 September 1988, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/113686>.

¹⁰³⁴ Speech by Margaret Thatcher to the College of Europe in Bruges, 20 September 1988, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107332>.

¹⁰³⁵ Ibid.

role of nation states, put the market economy at the centre, kept defence in the Western alliance and suggested collaboration on a “practical” level.¹⁰³⁶ Thatcher’s Bruges speech was thereby just as much based on the approach that she had taken in attempting to lead the EC into the codification of PoCo as it was grounded in the policies that she had pursued in domestic politics as well as on the world stage.

The argument that Margaret Thatcher was “tricked” into signing the SEA, as segments of the literature claim, cannot be substantiated with my research. This dissertation researched and presented the policy making and diplomacy of the UK towards the SEA and showed with evidence from the primary sources how the discussions were undertaken, presented the personalities involved and established that Thatcher acted in accordance with her recognised views when agreeing to sign the SEA. In the SEA negotiations, Thatcher went through a process of accepting that she had no choice but to change the EEC treaty in order to implement the policies on PoCo and the Single Market that she had championed. Therefore, Thatcher made a concession on the legal form of the agreement to attain the substantive policy goals that she wanted. However, what looked like a concession on form, changing the EEC treaty rather than signing an intergovernmental treaty, was in reality a much larger question. Taking the SEA as a lens to analyse Thatcher’s attitudes to European integration shows that the subject of changing the EEC treaty encapsulated a larger question of committing the UK further to a dynamic process of European integration. The dynamic aspect rested in the supranational element of the EC, with distinctive executive, legislative and judicative bodies, which was a polity in its own right and continued to evolve, as indeed it had done since 1950. The fact that Thatcher wanted an intergovernmental agreement on PoCo and neither a treaty nor an amendment of the EEC treaty shows how her conception of the EC was static, in the sense that she accepted the treaty framework and the institutions of the EC as they stood in 1985 but saw no need for the EC to be an evolving polity. Her acceptance to

¹⁰³⁶ Ibid.

change the EEC treaty looked like a pragmatic concession on form, rather than substance, because the SEA achieved the policies that Thatcher originally had advocated. However, consciously or otherwise, with the concession to change the EEC treaty, Thatcher also had to accept the conceptions of European integration that went with updating the founding treaty of the EEC.

It was this dynamic aspect of European integration that she criticised when she addressed the College of Europe in Bruges in 1988. Her attitude to European integration, which has been described in the literature as turning negative, was in reality not changing. With the Bruges speech, she argued against the underlying concept of the SEA as a treaty amendment in a dynamic process of European integration, which problematically was an agreement that she had herself helped to bring about. Realising that she had always much preferred a static version of the EC, and perhaps also realising that she had departed from this by agreeing to change the EEC treaty with the SEA, she attempted to reformulate her views of an EC and emphasise the aspects that were static and intergovernmental. Only this time she phrased these views in terms that were akin to a vision. In this speech, Thatcher attempted to regain the initiative to lead in the EC, which she had sought and lost with the PoCo paper. At the same time as she was outlining her renewed European vision in Bruges, she also attempted to regain the initiative in her own Cabinet on the issue of European integration. None of these considerations speak against her acceptance of Britain as a leading country in the EC. Neither does any of this mean that she did not know what she was doing when she signed up to the SEA. What this means is that as events were unfolding, Thatcher felt that the debate on European integration both at home and abroad was slipping away from her. As a consequence, she attempted to regain control of events by outlining a reinvigorated and more sharply formulated European vision.

The constant feature of Thatcher's attitudes towards European integration was a static and intergovernmental view of the EC. Once the SEA was agreed, the way that

Thatcher thought about the act began to shift. In some ways she began to revert back to her refusal to change the EEC treaty, which had characterised her European policy making in spring 1985. An early sign of Thatcher's changing views was that she began to argue in the House of Commons that majority voting had been limited to achieving the Single Market and that it would fall into disuse once the Single Market was achieved. In the House of Commons, Thatcher began to equate the SEA with the Single Market and majority voting. On 12 December 1989, she argued that amending the EEC treaty with the SEA was "not necessary to achieve the Single Market; it could have been achieved without that".¹⁰³⁷ Thatcher said that the central feature of the SEA was that it extended the use of majority voting "for a limited purpose" to achieve the Single Market.¹⁰³⁸ On 30 October 1990, following the Rome European Council, Thatcher argued that the agreement to majority voting was "for the specific objective of achieving the Single European Act only" but had been used to pass "more matters" on issues to which she believed the House of Commons was opposed.¹⁰³⁹ Later in the debate, she argued that majority voting "should cease when we have the single European market".¹⁰⁴⁰ Therefore, the way that Thatcher perceived the SEA gradually morphed into emphasising how it was limited to implementing the Single Market. Perhaps she was thinking of the 297 specific provisions in Cockfield's White Paper on the Single Market.

Thatcher was mistaken in her belief that majority voting would end when the Single Market had been established. The SEA itself framed majority voting more broadly than Thatcher claimed in this debate. Both the abolition of tariffs in the 1960s as well as the successive reduction of non-tariff barriers in the 1980s and 1990s, as part of the 1992 Single

¹⁰³⁷ Margaret Thatcher quoted in Hansard, HC Debate on 12 December 1989 vol 163 cc845-56, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1989/dec/12/european-council-strasbourg>.

¹⁰³⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁹ Margaret Thatcher quoted in Hansard, HC Debate on 30 October 1990 vol 178 cc869-92, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1990/oct/30/european-council-rome>.

¹⁰⁴⁰ In this debate Margaret Thatcher also delivered a stinging rebuttal to Jacques Delors arguing for an extension of the powers of the European Commission. Thatcher argued that "The President of the Commission, Mr. Delors, said at a press conference the other day that he wanted the European Parliament to be the democratic body of the Community, he wanted the Commission to be the Executive and he wanted the Council of Ministers to be the Senate. No. No. No." Ibid.

Market programme, showed that market regulation or deregulation is just as much a process as it is an event. It was this hardening of views on the part of Thatcher, aided by the imagined limitations of majority voting, which paved the way for a series of rifts, both in Cabinet and in the EC. Most of Britain's partners in the EC also saw European integration as more of a process than as an event. Thatcher's strident tone both nationally and internationally did nothing to ease any of the emerging tensions. This point was at the centre of a split in Cabinet, most visible in the disagreements between Thatcher and her long-time ally, Geoffrey Howe. This divergence of views between Thatcher and her longest-standing Cabinet colleague precipitated a split in Cabinet and would eventually contribute to the end of Thatcher's time as Prime Minister.

In October 1990, the UK government signed the Pound Sterling up to the ERM, under an unfavourable exchange rate. In addition, a new IGC was on the horizon – this time on the subject of EMU. Thatcher argued in the House of Commons that EMU meant to her “co-operation in Economic and monetary policy”, just as the SEA had defined it.¹⁰⁴¹ She emphasised that this economic cooperation was between “sovereign states”. Drawing her own lesson from the SEA, she recalled how the SEA negotiations had started with “very grandiose and rather vague designs” and then resulted in a “very much more modest document which we were able to sign up to”.¹⁰⁴² She argued that the discussion on EMU would become more realistic once member countries of the EC had looked at its detailed aspects. Therefore, to Thatcher the SEA served as the guiding principle for the subsequent discussions on European integration. It was to her a guide as to what was possible in an IGC and what could be achieved when Britain was positively engaged as a leading member of the EC. Because the SEA became the standard by which she judged European integration, and in effect became the new status quo of her views of the EC, her rejection of EMU and the Maastricht Treaty has to be seen in the context of how she negotiated the SEA. Therefore, the SEA became Thatcher's

¹⁰⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴² Ibid.

European moment, not because it remade Europe in Thatcher's terms, but because it marked that singular yet monumental defining moment when she sought to play a leading role in the European Community.

Appendix 1: List of characters

Name	Position in 1985 or relation to research topic
Acland, Antony	FCO Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Head of Diplomatic Service
Adonnino, Pietro	MEP and Chairman of the Adonnino Committee
Aitken, Jonathan	Conservative MP for Thanet South
Andriessen, Frans	The European Commission's representative in the Dooge Committee (September 1984 to January 1985)
Andreotti, Giulio	Prime Minister of Italy (1976-9), Foreign Minister (1983-9)
Appleyard, Leonard	Principal Private Secretary to Geoffrey Howe
Armstrong, Robert	Cabinet Secretary
Attali, Jacques	Special advisor to French president François Mitterrand
Baker, Kenneth	Secretary of State for education and Science, Minister for Information Technology
Benn, Anthony	Labour MP for Chesterfield
Bernard, Daniel	Foreign policy advisor of French Prime Minister
Bérégovoy, Pierre	French Finance Minister
Bertele, Franz-Josef	Head of Department no. 5: Legal Department at German Foreign Ministry
Best, Keith	Conservative MP for Ynys Môn
Bianco, Jean-Louis	Chief of Staff to French president François Mitterrand
Bone, Roger	Assistant Private Secretary to Geoffrey Howe (1982-4)
Brittan, Leon	Secretary of State for Trade and Industry
Braithwaite, Rodric	FCO Deputy Under-Secretary of State Head of Chancery at UKRep from 1975-1978 First head of EI (E) 1973-5
Bretherton, Russel	Under-Secretary at the Board of Trade, UK delegate at the Messina conference in 1955
Bridges, Lord Thomas	UK ambassador to Italy
Brunson, Michael	Journalist for Independent Television New (ITN)
Budd, Colin Richard	Assistant Private Secretary to Geoffrey Howe (1984-7)
Bullard, Julian	UK ambassador to Germany
Butler, Michael	UK permanent representative to the EC (1979-85) UK representative in preparatory group for IGC
Butler, Robin	Principal Private Secretary to Margaret Thatcher (1982-5)
Carrington, Lord Peter	British Foreign Secretary (1979-82)
Carstens, Karl	President of Germany (1979-84)
Cheysson, Claude	French Foreign Minister (1981-4)
Cockfield, Arthur	Secretary of State for Trade (1982-3), European Commissioner (1985-9)
Coles, A. John	Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Thatcher (1981-4)
Colombo, Emilio	President of EP (1977-9), Italian Foreign Minister (1990-3)
Cossiga, Francesco	Prime Minister of Italy (1979-80)
Couve de Murville, Maurice	French Foreign Minister (1958-68)
Craxi, Bettino	Prime Minister of Italy (1983-7)
Curien, Hubert	French minister for Research and Technology
De Gaulle, Charles	President of France (1959-69)
Deakins, Eric	Labour MP for Walthamstow
Dekker, Wisse	CEO of Philips, Chairman of ERT
Delors, Jacques	President of the European Commission (1985-95)

Dondelinger, Jean	Luxembourg permanent representative to EC (1970-84), Secretary General of ministry of foreign affairs (1984), Luxembourg representative in the Dooge Committee Chair of official preparatory working group for IGC
Dorrell, Stephen	Conservative MP for Loughborough
Dooge, James	Chairman and Irish representative in the Dooge Committee
Dumas, Roland	French Minister for Europe and Foreign Minister (1984-6)
Dykes, Hugh	Conservative MP for Harrow East
Eaton, Martin	FCO Legal Counsellor
Edwards, Nicholas	Secretary of State for Wales
Elles, Diana	Conservative MEP for Thames Valley
Ersbøll, Niels	Secretary General of the European Council
Fabius, Laurent	Prime Minister of France (1984-6)
Fairweather, Patrick	FCO Head of European Community Department (Internal) (1983-85)
Faure, Maurice	French representative in the Dooge Committee Co-signatory of the EEC treaty in 1957
Fergusson, Adam	Special advisor on European Affairs to Geoffrey Howe
Ferri, Mauro	Italian representative in the Dooge Committee
Fitzgerald, Garret	Prime Minister of Ireland (1981-7)
Ford, Gerald	38 th President of the United States (1974-7)
Forth, Eric	Conservative MP for Mid Worcestershire
Fretwell, John	UK ambassador to France
Genscher, Hans-Dietrich	German Foreign Minister (1982-92), leader of the Free Democratic Party (FDP) and coalition partner of Kohl Lord Privy Seal (1979-81), Government spokesman on Foreign Affairs in the House of Commons, Conservative MP for Chesham and Amersham
Gilmour, Sir Ian	French President (1974-81)
Giscard d'Estaing, Valéry	UK ambassador to Ireland
Goodison, Allan	Counsellor and Head of Chancery UKRep
Goulden, John	Diplomatic advisor to Mitterrand on European Affairs
Guigou, Élisabeth	Under-Secretary MAFF
Hadley, David	President of the European Commission (1958-67)
Hallstein, Walter	Assistant Under-Secretary of State (responsible for European integration, 1979-84)
Hannay, David	UK permanent representative to the EC (1985-90) UK representative in preparatory group for IGC (successor to David Butler)
Hartmann, Peter	Head of European Policy at German Federal Chancellery
Haunschild, Hans-Hilger	<i>Staatssekretär</i> , i.e. holding the rank of a permanent secretary in the German Ministry for Research and Technology
Heath Edward	Prime Minister of the UK (1970-4), Conservative MP for Old Bexley and Sidcup
Henderson, Nicholas	Ambassador to Poland, Germany, France and USA
Herman, Fernand	Belgian representative in the Dooge Committee
Howe, Geoffrey	British Chancellor of the Exchequer (1979-83) Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1983-9)
Howell, David	Conservative MP for Guildford
Hurd, Douglas	Secretary of State for NI (1984-5) and HO (1985-9)
Jackson, Robert	Conservative MP for Wantage
Jay, Michael	Foreign affairs counsellor Cabinet Office

Jebb, Gladwyn	UK permanent representative to UN (1950-4) UK ambassador to France (1954-60)
Jenkins, Roy	President of the European Commission (1977-81) SDP MP Glasgow Hillhead
Johnston, Russel	Liberal party MP for Inverness, Nairn and Lochaber, spokesperson for foreign affairs of the Liberal Party
Jopling, Michael	Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Kerr, John	Principal Private Secretary to Chancellor of the Exchequer (1981-4)
Kiechle, Ignaz	German minister for agriculture
Kohl, Helmut	Chancellor of West Germany (1982-98)
Kudlich, Christian	Head of Department no. 410: European Communities, fundamental issues, institutions, institutions, enlargement and budget at German Foreign Ministry
La Barre de Nanteuil, Luc de	French permanent representative to the EC French representative in the preparatory group for IGC
Lalumière, Catherine	Minister for European Affairs at French Foreign Ministry
Lambert, John	Head of European Communities Branch at department of Employment
Latham, Michael	Conservative MP for Rutland and Melton
Lawson, Nigel	UK Chancellor of the Exchequer (1983-9)
Legras, Guy	Head of European Department at French Foreign Ministry
Loughhead, Peter	First secretary UKRep (1982-5) Assistant Secretary DTI (1985-92)
Lubbers, Ruud	Prime Minister of the Netherlands (1982-94)
Luce, Richard	Minister for the Arts
King, Tomas	Secretary of state for Employment (1983-5), Secretary of state for NI (1985-9)
Kinnock, Neil	Leader of the Labour party and opposition (1983-92)
Kissinger, Henry	United States National Security Advisor (1969-75) United States Secretary of State (1973-77)
McNess, Anne	FCO official in research department
Major, John	Prime Minister of the UK (1990-97)
Marlow, Antony	Conservative MP for Northampton North
Martens, Wilfried	Prime Minister of Belgium (1981-92)
Mercer, M.	Official in Cabinet Office
Meyer-Landrut, Andreas	<i>Staatssekretär</i> , i.e. holding the rank of a permanent secretary in the German Foreign Ministry
Miles, R. Oliver	British ambassador to Luxembourg
Mitterrand, François	President of France (1981-95)
Møller, Otto	Danish representative in the Dooge Committee
Morel, Pierre	Political Director in French Foreign Ministry, foreign policy advisor to François Mitterrand
Mortimer, James	Official in Her Majesty's Treasury
Mueller-Thuns, Waldemar	Department head at German Ministry of Economics
Nelson, Anthony	Conservative MP for Chichester
Nicholson, Robin	Chief scientific advisor to the UK government
Neuer, Walter	Head of Department no. 211: European Integration, Bilateral Relations to States of Western Europe and Turkey at German Foreign Ministry
Noël, Emile	Secretary General of the European Commission
O'Keefe, Jim	Minister of State at the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs
Papandreou, Andreas	Prime Minister of Greece (1981-9)
Papantoniou, Ioannis	Greek representative in the Dooge Committee

Pattie, Geoffrey	Minister of State at the Department of Trade and Industry Minister for Information Technology
Perrin de Brichambaut, Marc	Chief of Staff to Roland Dumas
Pfimlin, Pierre	President of the European Parliament
Phillips, Hayden	Assistant Under-Secretary of State at HO
Poos, Jacques	Foreign Minister of Luxembourg
Plumb, Henry	Conservative MEP for the Cotswolds, leader EDG
Powell, Charles	Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Thatcher (1984-91)
Renwick, Robin	FCO Assistant Under-Secretary of State (responsible for European integration, successor to David Hannay) (1984-7)
Rifkind, Malcolm	FCO Minister of state for Europe, UK representative in the Dooge Committee
Ripa di Meana, Carlo	The European Commission's representative in the Dooge Committee (January to March 1985)
Ruggiero, Renato	Secretary General at the Italian Foreign Ministry
Ruhfus, Jürgen	German representative in the Dooge Committee, <i>Staatssekretär</i> , i.e. holding the rank of a permanent secretary in the German Foreign Ministry
Santer, Jacques	Prime Minister of Luxembourg (1984-95)
Schäuble, Wolfgang	Federal Minister and Head of German Federal Chancellery
Schilling, Wolf-Dietrich	Head of department no. 200: European integration and EPC, Council of Europe, non-governmental European organisations, WEU
Schlüter, Poul	Prime Minister of Denmark (1982-93)
Schmidt, Helmut	Chancellor of Germany (1974-82)
Schoeller, Franz Joachim	German ambassador to France
Schreckenberger, Waldemar	Federal Minister and Head of German Federal Chancellery
Shepherd, John	Counsellor and Head of Chancery UKRep (1982-4), Head of European Community Department (External) FCO (1985-7)
Simonet, Henri	Belgian Foreign Minister (1977-80)
Simpson, Julie	Official in Her Majesty's Treasury
Soames, Christopher	European Commissioner (1973-7)
Spaak, Paul-Henri	Prime Minister of Belgium (1938-9, 1946-9), Chairman of Spaak Committee (1955-6)
Spearing, Nigel	Labour MP for Newham South
Spinelli, Altiero	European Commissioner (1970-6), MEP (1979-86), prominent federalist campaigner
Stabreit, Immo	Head of department no. 21: Foreign Ministry, federal ministry for economic cooperation at the German Federal Chancellery
Stoltenberg, Gerhard	German Finance Minister (1982-9)
Taylor, Edward	Conservative MP for Southend East
Teltschik, Horst	Head of department "Foreign and inter-German relations, development politics and external security" at the German Chancellery and personal advisor to Kohl
Thatcher, Margaret	Prime Minister of the UK (1979-90)
Thomas, Derek	Deputy Under-Secretary of State for Europe and Political Director at FCO
Thorn, Gaston	President of the European Commission (1981-5)
Tickell, Crispin	Chef de Cabinet to the President of the European Commission, Roy Jenkins (1977-81) Deputy Under-Secretary of State (1983-4) Permanent Secretary Official Development Assistance

Tindemans, Leonard	Belgian Foreign Minister (1981-9)
Trumpf, Jürgen	Head of Department no. 40 then from 8 July 1985 head of department no. 41: sub-departments of department no. 4: Foreign economic policy, development and European economic integration at German Foreign Ministry
Tugendhat, Christopher	European Commissioner (1977-85), vice president of European Commission (1981-5)
Ungerer, Werner	Head of department no. 4: Foreign economic policy, development and European economic integration at German Foreign Ministry (1984-5)
Varfis, Gregori	German permanent representative to the EC (1985-9)
Van Eekelen, Willem	Greek representative in the Dooge Committee, then European Commissioner
Védrine, Hubert	Netherlands representative in the Dooge Committee
Vidal, Jean	Foreign policy advisor to François Mitterrand
Viot, Jacques	Head of department: Economic affairs and finances at French Foreign Ministry
Vogel, Hans-Jochen	French ambassador to the UK
Von Braunmühl, Georg Edler	Chairman of German Social Democratic Party
Von Wechmar, Baron Rüdiger	Head of department no. 2: Political department at German Foreign Ministry
Walker, Peter	German ambassador to the UK
Wall, Stephen	Secretary of State for Energy
Wicks, Nigel	FCO Assistant Head European Community Department (internal) (1983-5), head European Community Department (internal) (1985-8)
Williamson, David	Principal Private Secretary to Margaret Thatcher (1985-8)
Young, David Ivor	Head of the European Secretariat at the Cabinet Office (1983-7), deputy representative of the UK government to the IGC, UK representative to the Adonnino Committee
Younger, Viscount George	Minister without portfolio (1984-5), Secretary of State for Employment (1985-7)
	Secretary of State for Scotland

Where there are no translations in “who’s who”, all translations are mine. Titles were omitted, except in the case of hereditary titles.¹⁰⁴³

¹⁰⁴³ Sources: *Who’s Who 1995: An Annual Biographical Dictionary*, 147 edition (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995); Colin Mackie, ‘British Diplomats Directory’, accessed 9 November 2016, <http://www.gulabin.com/britishdiplomatsdirectory/pdf/britishdiplomatsdirectory.pdf>; British Diplomatic Oral History Programme, Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge University, <https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/bdohp/>; Historical Archives of the European Union, Oral History, European University Institute, https://archives.eui.eu/en/oral_history; Pautsch et al., *Akten Zur Auswärtigen Politik Der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1985*, 2016, 2:1893 ff.; ‘Who’s Who in France: Biographies Des Meilleurs Talents Français’, accessed 11 September 2019, <https://www.whoswho.fr/>.

Appendix 2: Systematic catalogue of search terms

In order to understand how my search of sources differed from traditional archival research one has to understand the change that archives have made in moving away from an analogue catalogue towards a digital one. At the National Archive, my main source for primary evidence, this shift happened gradually over the past couple of years but with the sorting and declassification of the 1970s files out of the way the shift to a reference database is now complete and the printing of paper catalogues has been discontinued. In many ways one can liken this shift from manual to digital catalogue to no longer producing table of contents but more elaborate and searchable indexes. The linearity of the catalogue, with its easily understandable overview, has made way for an interactive and searchable database.

In my research I combined the approach of a manual – or linear – catalogue search with a systematic search through databases, which harnessed the power of digital technology for my research. It helped me enormously to attend one of the courses that the National Archives offer on their different archiving, cataloguing and referencing systems, which of course differ depending on the time frame and department one is researching. It also helped me for my own research to begin by looking at the traditional book of referencing and look up European policy making in the 1979s and then transfer what I had learned on structures of departments, subject headings, descriptions and chronologies into the digital world. Equally, for the digital world it has helped me enormously to learn how databases are structured and used.

In order to understand my list of search terms below, one has to understand that the database responds to codes that make up the search formulas. Moreover, one can filter for departments, dates and keywords. The rules for the formulas are as follows:

1. Terms in inverted commas are searched as one term, rather than separate words
2. AND connects words or terms and searches for both of them
3. OR excludes either one or the other of the terms but searches for both of them
4. Parentheses create levels of search terms that separate codes
5. Asterisks search for everything, i.e. allow for different endings or spellings of a word
6. NOT excludes the term mentioned afterwards

My aim was to develop a set of search formulas that harnessed the strengths of the computing powers of the new National Archives catalogue, without losing the benefit of overview that the traditional approach (i.e. working through the linear paper-based catalogue) offers. I have only done this systematic catalogue search for the UK National Archives because that's where the lion share of my resources came from, whereas other archives have other systems, patchier records and I have spent less time researching there.

My approach was developed and refined for the purposes of my research through a lot of experimenting. I wanted to make sure that nothing significant was excluded and that the search terms as well as the formulas that I was developing were suitable for my research. At the beginning, the formula for the search terms were built from the indexed terms in the catalogue of the National Archives database. To this end I first conducted a broad research that would roughly correspond to an index subject in the traditional paper-based catalogue. The searches I launched were the following:

List no.	KEY WORDS FORMULAS	Dept.	DATE RANGE	# of results	Analysed for
1	“European policy”	PREM 19*	1983-6	87	content
2	“European community”	FCO	1985	725	Key words and relevant files
3	“European Community” AND (Brussels OR Milan OR Stresa OR Luxembourg OR “Intergovernmental Conference”)	FCO	1984-6	149	Key words and relevant files

The result of these searches gave me the rough equivalent of a list of indexed file numbers in the old catalogue, which when printed and sorted by reference number corresponded with the paper-based catalogue. I systematically worked through these printouts and looked at all the PREM files in detail, i.e. the individual papers in the file reference. I also worked through all the FCO file headings identified and all the content of the FCO files on the 1985 IGC. The result was a broad overview of the run of policy and a set of key words that described aspects or elements of the topic under consideration:

1. Single European Act
2. Market or Internal Market
3. Political cooperation or PoCo
4. Intergovernmental Conference or IGC (not the Irish one though)
5. European Parliament (more as a subject than an actor)
6. European Union (as an aspiration)
7. Qualified majority voting or majority voting
8. Variable geometry (the term diplomats used for what the press and parts of the literature called “two-speed Europe”)
9. Luxembourg Compromise (in the files sometimes referred to as “invoking a national interest”)
10. Value added Tax or what in the negotiations was called “monetary amendments [of the Treaty of Rome]”
11. White Paper (of the European commission) on the Single Market

Once the key terms were set, I defined the key departments for my research. In the 1980s European policy making happened mainly in the FCO, in Cabinet – in its function to coordinate the workings of government – and the Prime Minister’s office, especially when Thatcher had to prepare for the European Council. The most important departments for this research and their file references are:

1. Prime Minister’s Office (PREM)
2. Cabinet (CAB)
3. Foreign and Commonwealth office (FCO)
4. Treasury (T)

The records of the Cabinet Office were analysed separately by reading systematically all minutes of the full Cabinet in CAB128 and the relevant Cabinet committees. The committees were identified with the list of ministerial and official committees (CAB177/30 to 31). I consulted CAB130, 133, 134, 148, 165. For an overview of the relevant ministerial and official Cabinet committees and an explanation how they relate to my research see chapter 1.1.1. Moreover, I conducted a systematic search through the records of the European Secretariat at the Cabinet Office (CAB193).

Log of systematic search of UK National Archives catalogue

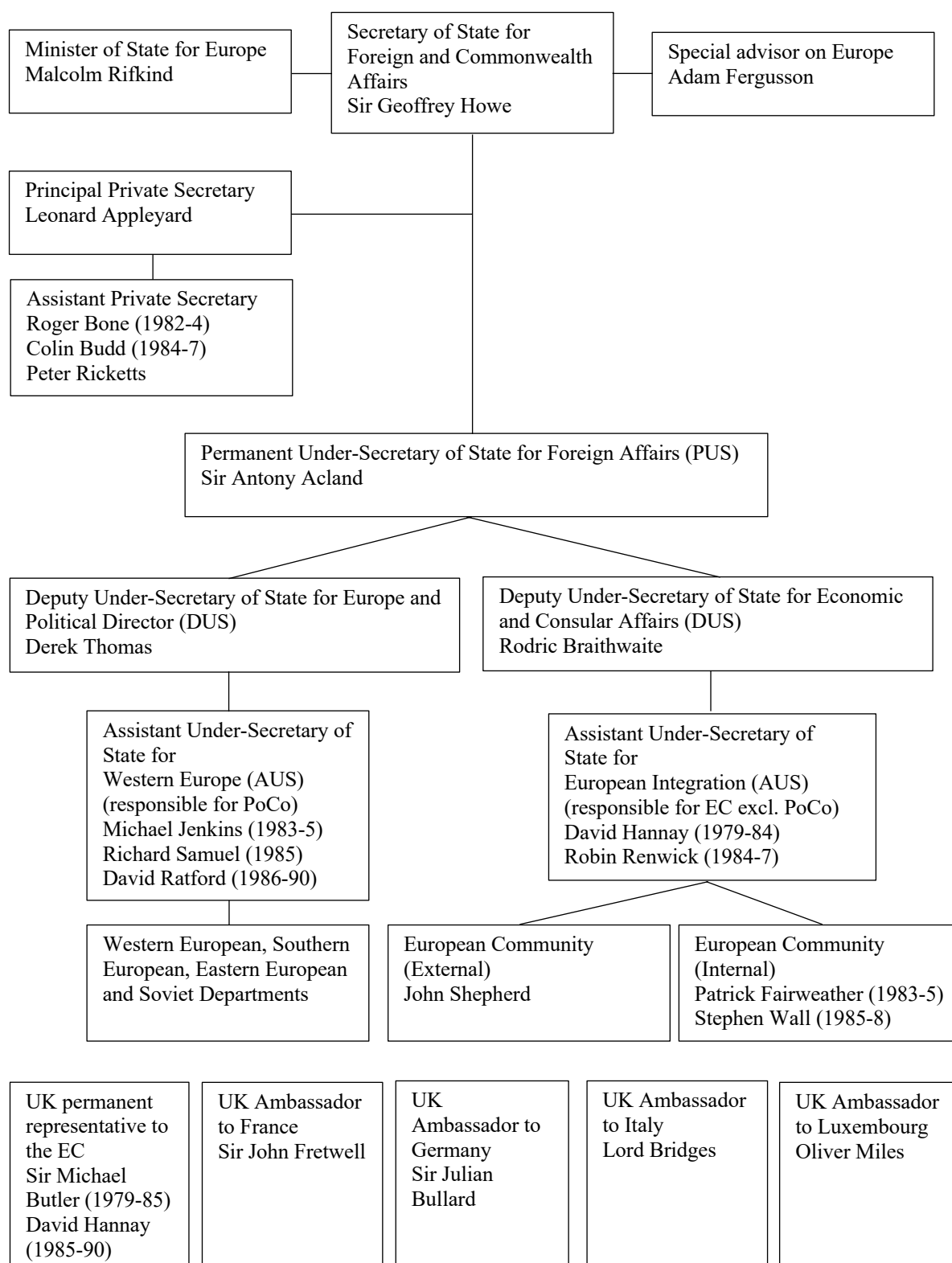
List no.	KEY WORDS FORMULAS	DEPARTMENTS	DATE RANGE	# of results
1	("Intergovernmental Conference" OR IGC) AND Europ*	PREM, FCO, T	1985	63
	("Intergovernmental Conference" OR IGC) AND Europ*	All depts	1984-6	87
	("Intergovernmental Conference" OR IGC) AND Europ*	All depts	1984	0
	("Intergovernmental Conference" OR IGC) AND Europ*	All depts (included in print)	1986	15
	("Intergovernmental Conference" OR IGC) AND Europ*	All other depts for 1985 (only CAB)	1985	9
2	Milan AND Europ*	PREM, FCO, T (and all depts)	1985	9
	Stresa AND Europ*	All depts.	1984-5	1
3	Brussels AND "European Council"	PREM, FCO, T (and all depts)	1985	11
4	Luxembourg AND "European Council"	PREM, FCO, T (and all depts)	1985	15
5	(Dooge OR Spaak OR "Ad Hoc Committee on Institutional affairs") AND Europ*	PREM, FCO, T (and all depts)	1984-5	62
6	"single European act"	All depts	1984-5	0
7	"single European act"	PREM, FCO, T (and all depts)	1984-6	21
8	"Internal Market"	PREM, FCO, T	1984-5	30
	"Internal Market"	All depts	1984-5	38
	"WHITE PAPER" AND "INTERNAL MARKET"	All depts	1984-5	4
9	"European Political Cooperation" OR POCO	PREM, FCO, T	1984-5	259
10	("European Political Cooperation" OR POCO) AND (treaty OR procedure OR Dooge)	PREM, FCO, T (and all depts)	1984-6	15
11	"treaty amendments"	PREM, FCO, T (and all depts)	1984-6	8
12	("European Union" AND "treaty") NOT NATO	PREM, FCO, T	1984-6	24
13	(*VOTING* OR "Decision taking") AND EUROP*	All depts	1984-6	9
14	"variable geometry"	All depts	1984-6	1
15	"Luxembourg Compromise" OR veto	All depts	1984-6	13
	"Luxembourg Compromise" OR veto OR "national interest"	All depts	1984-6	13
16	((VAT OR "value added tax") OR "monetary amendments") AND Europ* AND treaty	All depts	1984-6	4
	((VAT OR "value added tax") OR "monetary amendments") AND Europ*	All depts	1984-6	26

	((VAT OR "value added tax") OR "monetary amendments") AND Europ* NOT treaty	All depts	1984-6	22
	"European Parliament"	All depts	1984-6	187
17	"powers of the European Parliament"	All depts	1984-6	7
18	"European Parliament" AND (powers OR revenue OR treaty* OR "value added tax" OR "monetary amendments" OR "Luxembourg Compromise" OR veto OR "White Paper" OR Dooge OR "single european act" OR "european council" OR "Internal Market" OR "decision*" OR "Intergovernmental Conference" OR Dooge OR "european Political Cooperation")	All depts	1984-6	23
19	"European Community" AND (powers OR revenue OR treaty* OR "value added tax" OR "monetary amendments" OR "Luxembourg Compromise" OR veto OR "White Paper" OR Dooge OR "single european act" OR "european council" OR "Internal Market" OR "decision*" OR "Intergovernmental Conference" OR Dooge OR "european Political Cooperation")	T	1984-6	20

Appendix 3: Overview of the most important meetings

Dates	Place	Level	Principal subject of discussion (within scope of research)
25-6 June 1984	Fontainebleau	Heads of government	Resolution of British Budget Question
28 September 1984 to 27-8 February 1985	Brussels	Personal representatives of heads of government	Ad Hoc Committee on Institutional Affairs "Dooge Committee"
3-4 December 1984	Dublin	Heads of government	Interim report of the Dooge Committee
29-30 March 1985	Brussels	Heads of government	Dooge Committee report submitted but not discussed
3 May 1985	Bonn	Heads of government	Thatcher and Mitterrand briefly meet on the margins of an economic summit
18 May 1985	Chequers	Heads of government	Thatcher and Kohl discuss European integration
21 May 1985	Paris	Foreign ministers	Geoffrey Howe gives Roland Dumas the PoCo paper on a confidential basis
8-9 June 1985	Stresa	Foreign ministers	Preparation for Milan European Council
28-9 June 1985	Milan	Heads of government	Discussion of final report of the Dooge Committee; British PoCo paper; German-French "Treaty of European Union"; IGC called
9 September to 1 December 1985	Brussels	Foreign ministers	IGC
18 November 1985	London	Anglo-French consultations (president, Prime Minister, and ministers)	Part of regular bilateral consultations. Brief meeting between Thatcher and Mitterrand on the sidelines
27 November 1985	London	Anglo-German consultations (Chancellor, Prime Minister, and ministers)	Part of regular bilateral consultations. Brief meeting between Thatcher and Kohl on the sidelines
30 November – 1 December 1985	Brussels	Foreign ministers	"conclave" to prepare the Luxembourg European Council
2-3 December 1985	Luxembourg	Heads of government	SEA agreed

Appendix 4: Organogram of the key personalities charged with European policy making in the FCO (1984-5)



(excluding the British ambassadors to Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain for reasons of research scope) Adapted from Hennessy, *Whitehall*, 399, 530

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Sources: *Who's Who 1995: An Annual Biographical Dictionary*, 147th edition (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995); Colin Mackie, 'British Diplomats Directory', accessed 25 February 2020, <http://www.gulabin.com/britishdiplomatsdirectory/pdf/britishdiplomatsdirectory.pdf>.

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Confederation of British Industry Archive, Modern Records Centre, Warwick University

Conservative Party Archive, Bodleian Libraries, Oxford University

Hansard, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/index.html>

Margaret Thatcher Foundation, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/>

Thatcher Papers, Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge University (THCR)

UK National Archives (TNA)

Records of the Cabinet Office (CAB)

- | | |
|--------|--|
| CAB128 | Cabinet: Minutes |
| CAB129 | Cabinet: Memoranda |
| CAB130 | Cabinet: Miscellaneous Committees: Minutes and Papers |
| CAB133 | Cabinet Office: Commonwealth and International Conferences and Ministerial Visits to and from the UK: Minutes and Papers |
| CAB134 | Cabinet: Miscellaneous Committees: Minutes and Papers |
| CAB148 | Cabinet Office: Defence and Oversea Policy Committees and Sub-Committees: Minutes and Papers |
| CAB165 | Cabinet Office: Committees |
| CAB177 | Cabinet Office: Lists of Cabinet Committees and Allocation of Duties Tables |
| CAB193 | Cabinet Office: European Unit Files |

Records created or inherited by the Foreign Office (FO)

- | | |
|-------|--|
| FO949 | Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Multilateral Treaties |
|-------|--|

Records of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and predecessors (FCO)

- | | |
|-------|--|
| FCO30 | Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office: European Economic Organisations [from 1973 European Integration Department (Internal)] |
|-------|--|

FCO33	Subseries within FCO30: European Foreign Trade Agreement: Effects of EFTA trade partners and the UK entry to EEC: consultations
FCO46	Defence Department and successors
FCO73	Private Offices: Various Ministers' and Officials' Papers
FCO98	European Integration Department (External)

Records of the Prime Minister's Office (PREM)

PREM19 Correspondence and Papers, 1979-1997

Records created or inherited by Her Majesty's Treasury (T)

T432	Domestic Economy Sector, Fiscal Policy Group, Indirect Tax Division and successor bodies
T444	Overseas Finance Sector, European Community Group, European Community Divisions 1 and 2 [division 1 on EMS and division 2 on EC budget]
T449	Overseas Finance Sector, European Community Group, European Community Division 2 [on EC budget]
T470	Economics of Taxation Division
T622	Agriculture Division (IAE1) [Industry Agriculture and Employment Group]
T639	Private Office of the Chancellor of the Exchequer: Sir Geoffrey Howe's records
T640	Chancellor of the Exchequer: Private Office Papers [Nigel Lawson]

Germany

Bundesarchiv der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (BArch)

B136 Bundeskanzleramt

Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts (PAAA)

B21	Europarat, Europäische politische Integration, Schweiz, Liechtenstein, Island, Norwegen
B87	Völkerrechtliche Verträge
B200	Europäische Gemeinschaften Grundsatzangelegenheiten
B202	Internationale Währungspolitik, Verkehrs-, Sozial- und Energiepolitik der Europäischen Gemeinschaft
B220	Gemeinsame Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik, Steuerung des COREU-Verkehrs

France

Archives Nationales (AN)

Archives de la présidence de la République sous François Mitterrand (1981-1995)

AG/5(4)/EG Archives d'Élisabeth Guigou, conseiller technique pour l'économie internationale et le commerce extérieur (septembre 1982 – Janvier 1985), pour les affaires européennes et les sommets (janvier 1985 – juin 1988)

AG/5(4)/PM Archives de Pierre Morel, chargé de mission puis conseiller technique pour les affaires européennes et les sommets (1981-1985)

AG/5(4)/FC Dossiers documentaires constitués par Françoise Carle, chargée de mission officieuse pour les études historiques (1988-95)

Centre des Archives Diplomatiques, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (CADN)

98 Marché Intérieur; Acte Unique (Rédaction et application) (1985/87)

107 Dispositions fiscales (Marché Intérieur); Dossier général 1985/86; Conseils européens Milan (juin 1985) et La Haye (juin 1986); Travaux du groupe à haut niveau (1986); Taux des impôts indirects (1985/86); Gel des taux (1985/87); Livre blanc de la Commission (1985)

770 Conférence des Représentants des Gouvernements des États Membres. Révision du Traité de Rome; Généralités (1985/86); Positions françaises (1985); Notes à l'Ambassadeur (1985/86); Documents du Conseil et du Secrétariat de la Conférence (S.C.R.G.M.) (1984/85)

771 Conférence des Représentants des Gouvernements des États Membres. Révision du Traité de Rome; Documents du Conseil et du Secrétariat de la Conférence (S.C.R.G.M.); Documents du Quai d'Orsay; Télégrammes et télex

772 Conférence des Représentants des États Membres ; Révision du Traité de Rome; Réunions de juillet à novembre 1985 (1985); Réunion des 25 et 26/11/85 (1985); Réunions des 16 et 17/12/85 et du 17/01/86 (1985/86)

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