

The Ministerial Statements of 28 November 1951 and the Conservatives' European Debate, 1947-1957*

Introduction

On 28 November 1951 two members of the British Cabinet delivered eagerly anticipated remarks on the second Churchill government's policies towards European integration in defence and economic matters. The first was given by the Home Secretary, Sir David Maxwell Fyfe, to the Council of Europe at Strasbourg; the second, by the Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, following a N.A.T.O. meeting in Rome. For many contemporaries, their comments marked the Conservative government's rejection of direct involvement in the two main strands of European integration – economic cooperation and defence. However, the events of 28 November were also a watershed for the Conservatives' internal debate on Europe, marking the escalation of an overt struggle between two increasingly well defined factions – those favouring a more active involvement with integrationist schemes, and those wishing to maintain the traditional equilibrium between Commonwealth, Atlantic and European commitments. The leading protagonists continued their feud over the events of 28 November 1951 for more than twenty years, through speeches, memoirs, correspondence with the press - and even threats of litigation. (These attempts to set the record straight can be followed in the protagonists' later writings, and is not a prime focus of this article.¹)

The first thorough historical examination of the events surrounding the two statements, drawing on a range of contemporary sources, including official Foreign Office papers, was Yasamee (1987), which concluded that the 'The passion stirred up by the two statements of 28 November 1951 turn out to be a bit of a red herring sending one looking for differences which did not really exist.' Yasamee's article was a case study of the problems arising from partial and incomplete documentary evidence, and while her judgement over the alleged differences between the immediate intended meaning of the two statements is entirely valid ('The only real difference between the two was the window dressing'), more can be done to explain why the statements did, nevertheless, cause such a storm within the Party. For Yasamee, the wider dispute that followed the two statements concerned 'tactics not substance', but this claim can be tested against a broader body of immediate and near-contemporary evidence, including communications from the main protagonists.²

The broader disagreements among the Conservatives over Europe have featured prominently in recent historiography, but the factors leading to, and the consequences arising from, the statement of 28 November 1951 merit further scrutiny, especially for the light that they cast on policy formation and developing internal fault lines. In recent years, the historical treatment of Conservative European policy in the 1950s has swung

away from the “missing the boat consensus”, popular in pro-European political memoirs, to a positive revision of Eden’s policy, especially in the writings of Young and Dutton.³ Anthony Seldon, John Young, John Ramsden and Sue Onslow, among others, have also set the Conservatives’ European difficulties in the broader context of post-war foreign policy, while also highlighting the interplay of personality and principle in shaping individual and collective attitudes.⁴ In particular, Onslow’s *Backbench Debate within the Conservative Party* (1997) established a prosopography of intra-party factionalism, in which polarities over European integration were shown, in many instances, to complement personal fault-lines around the main figures of Eden, Macmillan, Maxwell Fyfe and Boothby, while also highlighting the key functional significance of figures such as Anthony Nutting, Duncan Sandys, Julian Amery and David Eccles.⁵ The debate was further advanced by Crowson’s *The Conservative Party and European Integration Since 1945* (2006), which emphasised how grass-roots suspicion against integrationist moves meant that any engagement with the nascent E.E.C., and its forerunners, had to be packaged in terms of British strategic, and especially security, interests in order to be made acceptable to the majority sentiment within the Party.⁶

The focus of this article is neither to remodel the extensive scholarship that already exists on British reactions to the Schuman Plan and to the European Defence Community, nor to attempt a synthesis of recent historiography on the broader European debate in the “long” Eden years (1945-1957), but rather to set the statements in the context of a policy debate, and to determine whether they reveal anything about the processes and structures of policy formation within the Party.⁷ Communications between the Foreign Office, and the Conservative Delegates to the Council of Europe in the period 1950-1953 help to illustrate the major tensions developing between, on the one hand, Eden and the Foreign Office, and, on the other, a group of European enthusiasts connected to Harold Macmillan. While the activities of the pro-European circle are well known, the support that Eden’s stance received from key pro-Empire Conservatives, such as Lord Salisbury and Oliver Lyttelton – all three friends and allies in politics since the 1930s – deserves greater prominence in the historical treatment of this period. Salisbury’s leadership of those Conservatives who saw the Commonwealth as a defining allegiance in foreign policy made him a highly significant opinion-former within the broader Party.⁸

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The Conservatives and Europe, 1945-1950

In the period 1945-1950, many leading Conservatives were involved in debates on European integration, and a small core led by Duncan Sandys - at that time a son-in-law of Churchill - helped to establish the European Movement in 1947-8.⁹ Churchill himself, and allies such as Leo Amery and Robert Boothby, had first addressed the issue during the short-lived international optimism of the late 1920s, when Aristide Briand and Gustav Stresemann were attempting Franco-German rapprochement.¹⁰ Over the last three decades the works of John Young and Anthony Seldon have explored the disparity between the pro-European tone of Churchill's rhetoric in his great set speeches, in Zurich (1946), London (1947), The Hague (1948) and Strasbourg (1949), and his consistent stance that Britain was "with, but not of, Europe."¹¹ As Forster has noted, Churchill's interest waned precipitately after these rhetorical triumphs, and the evidence from his private papers shows that he was anxious to avoid further international speaking commitments on Europe, although this may have been partly motivated by the ever-increasing demands of his writing.¹² Eden later acidly observed 'somebody had to lead the Opposition during Winston's frequent absences.'¹³

A further indicator of Churchill's declining enthusiasm for a British role in Europe came during the Opposition debate in the Commons on 26-27 June 1950, in the wake of the Attlee government's rejection of the Schuman Plan.¹⁴ While the purpose of the debate was clearly to capitalise on Labour's embarrassment - and, perhaps, to threaten a government whose Parliamentary majority had been slashed in the recent general election - it also offered the platform for a distinct and contrasting Conservative response to Schuman. However, when Churchill rose to speak in the Commons on 27 June 1950, it was as if *he* was the Prime Minister who had been caught out by events in Europe:

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

None of the remainder of the speech offered any alternative to the Attlee government's response, other than to repeatedly criticise its course of action.¹⁵ With the exception of the obvious backbench Europhiles - notably Robert Boothby, David Eccles, Julian Amery and Edward Heath (his maiden speech) - the most overtly positive speech from either front bench came from the Shadow Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden. Indeed, his very first words were "I begin by submitting to the House that it is an essential British interest that the Schuman proposals should succeed, and to enable them to do so, Britain should take her part in them." On the meat of the Schuman proposals, the question of whether Britain could submit to a "common high authority",

he criticised the government's "literal view of this condition", and urged that Britain should at least be at the negotiating table to help to determine its remit."¹⁶ While Eden's remarks should not be interpreted as acceptance of British membership of the Schuman Plan as tabled, they tend to challenge Rhodes James' view that he was 'conspicuously muted' during the debate.¹⁷

The question of Anthony Eden's personal orientation towards Europe has been subject to considerable attention from biographers as well as from historians and theorists of European integration.¹⁸ His first major post-war foray into this issue came in a speech at The Guildhall on 30 April 1948, delivered at the invitation of the recently formed United Europe Movement (U.E.M.). In this speech he outlined a stance to which he remained broadly consistent for the remainder of his career, the gist of which was that Britain lay at the centre of overlapping spheres – the Commonwealth, the Atlantic Alliance and Europe – and that it could not and should not compromise the first two (which were sanctified by shared sacrifice in two world wars), in order to participate in an artificial continental-based political union. Therefore, Britain would remain a benevolent supporter of any continental scheme, short of actual participation in any institutions that might compromise its economic or political sovereignty.¹⁹ Some of these arguments were repeated in his Columbia University graduation address of 11 January 1952, in which he famously concluded that "joining a federation on the continent of Europe ... is something which we know, in our bones, we cannot do."²⁰

However, Eden maintained his faith in the European Defence Community, albeit with limited British "association", much longer than the pro-European Conservatives, Churchill or the French²¹, and from its wreckage he was able to salvage the Western European Union, with the extension of the Brussels Treaty provisions to Germany and Italy.²² While the substance of Eden's views remained broadly consistent - he remained true to his rejection of full British membership of supranational institutions, first articulated in the Commons in May and September 1944 - his variations in tone were sufficiently broad for him to be credited as a friend of Europe by as devout a federalist as Count Coudenhove-Kalergi.²³ Briefly, in 1947-8, Eden himself was a member of the Executive Committee of the U.E.M., and in May 1948 he joined Churchill, Macmillan, Julian Amery, Peter Thorneycroft and Edward Beddington-Behrens as the Conservative caucus within the UK delegation to the Congress of Europe at The Hague.²⁴ However, any interest that Eden had in Europe was largely viewed through the prism of an Anglo-American security apparatus for western defence, as articulated in a speech delivered in Sheffield in August 1952:

"Our position in this country differs in important respects from that of continental nations. We cannot follow as far as many of them are willing to travel towards the union and federation. But we are fellow members of the Atlantic Community and we stand by them in all their efforts they are making to heal the wounds of this stricken continent."²⁵

In the words of Foreign Office Minister of State Anthony Nutting, “Eden was in every sense a N.A.T.O. man.”²⁶

Given the frequency and clarity with which Eden re-iterated his views on the primacy of Britain’s Atlantic strategy, and the obvious fact that this would form the basis of his policy in the event of his returning to office as Foreign Secretary, it begs the question why there was such a debate within the Party. The core issue is not merely the differences of opinion between the leading protagonists, but how and where they expressed. The late 1940s saw a flurry of speeches, manifestos and newsletters in the main West European states, generated by a range of organisations, debating the finer points of political and economic integration. Whereas the pro-European Conservatives were linked into this debate via their Strasbourg contacts, the discussions within the Conservative Party were far more sceptical in tone. Something of their flavour can be captured from an untitled paper from 1947 that asked:

‘Is Britain to link herself to devastated, Communist infested Europe, rather than with those countries that are peopled with her stock, motivated by the same love of freedom, full of the riches of the earth, and with unparalleled riches of all kinds except labour and capital equipment? Doubtless there are many greedy people in the world with their eyes fixed on the Empire markets that could be seized should Britain involve herself too deeply with European Unity, and doubtless there are fools and in knaves in Britain itself that would sell the Empire structure which requires developing, building, and rebuilding, in order to purchase a small and uncomfortable room in the ‘jerry-built’ structure which is Europe today?’

A second anonymous paper, ‘The Prospects for European Unity’, also written in 1947, argued the economic case that Britain and the continent were economic rivals, and that integration would never achieve the efficiencies enjoyed by the USA.²⁷

In contrast to the Party’s official stance of detached approval for integration initiatives, the European enthusiasts were interpreting Churchill’s public speeches as the green light for making contacts with the continental groups to pave the way for British leadership following a Conservative return to power.²⁸ For example, Julian Amery’s flight to Gstaad in late September 1946 to discuss with Count Coudenhove-Kalergi the mechanics of establishing a British based European movement was done at Churchill’s behest. The seriousness of the mission is evident from the extensive notes that Amery took for Churchill, listing his host’s publications and the history of the federalist movements since the 1920s.²⁹ In the crucial years of 1946-9, the pro-European Conservatives believed themselves to be the outriders for a foreign policy that would, once returned to power, translate Churchill’s rhetoric into action. Key evidence for this can be found in the

Conservative delegation's report on the second session of the Council of Europe's Consultative Assembly's

General Affairs Committee, held on 19 December 1949, which noted:

'In Mr Macmillan's opinion the attitude of Continental representatives was to await the result of a general election in Great Britain. With a Tory victory, it was considered that progress towards a United Europe under British leadership would be assured; but that if the Socialists were returned to power, Europe would have to consider the advisability of moving forward without Britain's leadership and despite [*sic*] British socialist attitude.'³⁰

Indeed, far from supporting Lipgens' judgement that the Conservative-dominated European Movement was a mere smokescreen to mask Churchill's European ambivalence, the evidence suggests that its leading members were often running far ahead of their own front bench.³¹ Writing in the late 1960s, Macmillan criticised Churchill for having "made no attempt to devise a constitution for Europe, whether political, military, or economic" during the Attlee administration.³² However, this fails to recognise a key paradox in the relationship between the Strasbourg caucus and the Conservative front bench. The Conservative Strasbourgers owed much of their prominence in the Council of Europe to Churchill's role in its inception, yet the depth of their immersion in this institution, where delegates sat as individuals rather than as whipped party members, with freedom to innovate on future policy, meant that they became a source of potential instability in areas of foreign policy as soon as any divergence emerged from the official front bench and Foreign Office lines. An early example of this was the public division between Churchill and Macmillan in their respective responses to the Schuman Plan after the Opposition-led Commons debate of 26-27 June 1950 – which the government had weathered with little difficulty in spite of its depleted majority.

On 20 and 25 July 1950, both the British Conservative Parliamentary caucus in the Council of Europe, and the International Executive Committee (I.E.C.) of the U.E.M., with Sandys, Macmillan and Amery common to both, met in London. The first of these meetings was that of the Strasbourg Conservatives, chaired by Macmillan in Room 7 of the Commons on 20 July 1950. Significantly, contributions from David Eccles at this meeting reveal that he had already been in contact with the European League for Economic Cooperation to produce a costed alternative to the Monnet draft of the Schuman Plan, in competition with the government's own response which had been entrusted to Sir Edwin Plowden. Five days later, the Conservative Strasbourgers reconvened in the Commons, and Eccles was able to confirm that he had seen the Plowden Plan, which was "really no more than a series of notes on the original Schuman proposals; it was in no sense a real alternative ... the government was waiting on the T.U.C. before publishing anything."³³ In no

more than three weeks, Macmillan and Eccles produced their response to Schuman, ready for presentation at the next Council of Europe session at Strasbourg.

While the Conservative Strasbourgers had been highly active behind the scenes, public attention was focused on Churchill, especially in the light of the Attlee government's rejection of Schuman. Churchill's Council of Europe speech of 11 August 1950 is best remembered for airing the idea of a European Army, but his comments on Schuman are worth noting, given the intensity of preparation on this topic by the Strasbourg Conservatives:

“The message from the composite throne – if such I may term it – has directed our attention to the Schuman Plan of associating in an effective manner the basic industries of Western Nations, and invited us to express our opinion upon it. We are very ready to do so, and it may well be that it is in our power to smooth away some of the misunderstandings which have arisen and prejudices which have been stirred by the handling of this large and hopeful scheme in some of the national parliaments.”³⁴

Given the intensity of interest in Schuman in political circles, the failure of Churchill to offer a more definitive Conservative stance on the matter is a compelling indication of the extent of his personal withdrawal from the issue. Churchill's lukewarm words merit close comparison with those of Macmillan who, addressing the Council of Europe on 15 August 1950, welcomed the Schuman Plan as “a revolutionary, and almost mystical conception”.³⁵ Commending his own revised proposals for ministerial supervision of the proposed supranational authority, Macmillan concluded that it was “the kind of proposals which a British government could, and ought to, have put forward, at least as a basis of discussion.”³⁶

While historians have principally focused on the rejection of Macmillan's proposals by Monnet, Spaak and others³⁷ as an apostasy against the principles of supranationalism, equally significant is the lack of genuine support from Churchill for a key initiative produced by a senior and long-serving colleague. Macmillan had expectations for shadow-cabinet support, but these were tempered with a realisation of the fragility Churchill's own commitment:

‘Eccles and I have been at work on them for some time, but could not get the job done in time for me to submit to the Shadow Cabinet. However, since Oliver Lyttelton has approved them, and since I had sent copies before leaving London to all our leading colleagues, W.S.C. is fairly satisfied. The only question is whether his name is to be put to this or not. If not, he will give them a broad paternal blessing in his speech. This problem of how far we can operate here without precise prior agreement with our colleagues at home is a permanent and often acute one.’³⁸

Macmillan's unease was not without foundation, as on 14 August 1950 Lord Salisbury had written to Eden expressing concern as to whether his revised Schuman proposals had been approved by the Shadow Cabinet.

Ultimately, Macmillan's proposal for a modified Schuman Plan was talked out, and failed to divert the Six from the establishment of the E.C.S.C. without Britain.

The Conservative response to the E.D.C. proposal was no more coherent. Salisbury complained to Eden: 'I shall find it very difficult not to speak against it, and I suspect you will be in the same position. I wish he [Churchill] wouldn't rush ahead so fast.'³⁹ However, Duncan Sandys saw an attempted solution to the E.D.C. impasse as a means for Britain to regain the initiative in Europe that it had lost through Attlee and Bevin's rejection of the Schuman Plan. While Sandys' revised proposal for the E.D.C. contained no startling solution (and certainly not enough to rescue the ill-fated Pleven proposals), it is a sign of his confidence that he was prepared to send a draft copy to President Bidault of France on 9 February 1951. Perhaps this was another indication of the Pro-European conservatives over-reaching themselves in the anticipation of a return to power.⁴⁰ During the spring of 1951 the Conservatives Strasbourg caucus continued to argue for greater British European involvement, typified by David Eccles' exhortation that they should 'argue on every occasion the interplay of Commonwealth and European economic interests.'⁴¹

The disunited nature of the Conservatives' responses to both Schuman and the E.D.C. illustrates the problems posed by a bicephalous structure for policy formation, exacerbated by a party leader who was unable or unwilling to reconcile competing strands of thought on Europe.⁴² While in opposition, such differences were of limited political consequence - especially given the limited wider public interest in Europe - but once returned to power, these had the potential to create an impression of government disunity.

The growing divergence between the Eden/Foreign Office and Strasbourg Conservative approaches can be illustrated from two contrasting exchanges from November 1951 - a matter of days into the newly elected Churchill administration. On 4 November Sir Oliver Harvey, ambassador in Paris, concluded a section of his inaugural briefing to Eden with:

'... we have now got ourselves into the correct relationship to the European Community, and on the whole this relationship is accepted by the French and indeed welcomed by them as the next best alternative to our participation [in the Schuman Plan], which most of them realise to be out of the question.'⁴³

As the alignment between Eden and the Foreign Office against supranational institutions became more certain, the Strasbourg Conservatives remained hopeful for a decisive break with the policies of the previous administration. Something of this increasingly unwarranted optimism is captured in Julian Amery's observation to his father-in-law, Macmillan, on 12 November:

“Churchill’s return has, certainly, created the psychological background for us to take up the leadership of Europe and the present state of the Schuman and Plevén plans seems to offer a practical opportunity to take the initiative.”

On the following day, Amery urged Sandys:

“... we should come out first with some announcement of our readiness to join the Schuman and Plevén Plans. This should be worth it for its own sake, from the point of view of taking the leadership in Europe.”⁴⁴

Even without the benefit of hindsight, it can be argued the Strasbourg Conservatives were seriously misguided in their hopes that Churchill would embrace the Schuman Plan and lever the Party and the Foreign Office into alignment. Once returned to office, Churchill’s foreign policy concerns were dominated by the exigencies of Cold War strategy, and West European integration never captured his attention to the same degree as it had done in the years 1946-9. Moreover, Eden’s return to the Foreign Office, where he commanded considerable support from the Civil Service, combined with his long-delayed aspirations as Churchill’s heir, represented a considerable weighting against the Strasbourg Conservatives’ approach.⁴⁵

While the balance of opinion within government, party and Tory press was against British membership of the Schuman Plan, expectations within the Council of Europe were still pegged to Churchill’s rhetoric of 1946-9, and the recent attacks made by the Conservatives against Labour’s rejection. Given that pro-European Conservatives such as Sandys, Boothby and Amery had been the dominant British voices in Strasbourg for the past three years, continental expectations of a reversal of national policy were, understandably, high.⁴⁶ It is precisely at this point, in November 1951, that the structure of Conservative European foreign policy formation was found wanting. The growing divergence between a pro-European Conservative foreign policy franchise in Strasbourg, and the dominant line from both Cabinet and the Foreign Office, led to a crisis that brutally exposed both the Party’s divisions, and Churchill’s declining grasp on this element of foreign affairs.

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The statements of 28 November 1951: context and immediate reactions

Just over a month after their return to power, the Conservatives were faced with a meeting of the Council of Europe’s consultative Assembly in Strasbourg. As well as awaiting a formal statement on the Schuman Plan, the continental governments also hoped for a commitment to British participation in the proposed European Defence Community, which had been outlined by René Plevén on 24 October 1950.

American expectations were also high, as the Truman government saw direct British involvement as essential to overcoming French reservations against the winding up of the occupation authority, and the re-arming of West Germany. Following tripartite talks with Robert Schuman and Dean Acheson, on 14 September 1951 Foreign Secretary Herbert Morrison had stated Britain's "desire to establish closest possible association with the European community at all stages in its development."⁴⁷ Naturally, hopes were raised in Europe that the Conservatives would shift from "association" to direct involvement.

In the new Conservative government, Anthony Nutting, Under Secretary at the Foreign Office, soon acquired a highly significant role in the development of European policy. The documentary evidence suggests that it was on Nutting's initiative that Maxwell Fyfe, who was also leader of the UK delegation to the Council of Europe, was chosen to outline government policy at Strasbourg. On 5 November 1951 Nutting suggested that Maxwell Fyfe should meet with the Foreign Secretary prior to the Strasbourg Council and, eleven days later, the Home Secretary contacted Eden's Assistant Private Secretary, F. J. Leishman, to this effect. Eden responded:

"If the Home Secretary & Mr Nutting are happy on our agreed line, that would spare me. And really, I have no time before I leave Wed. [21 November] But I cannot refuse if Sir David requires to see me."⁴⁸

The phrase "our agreed line" is particularly significant, given the later controversy over the statements delivered by both men on 28 November. (The lack of any contradiction on this point from by Maxwell Fyfe *before* the 28 November suggests that he at least agreed that there was such an agreed line.) Yasamee has emphasised the degree to which Eden's punishing travel schedule at this time limited his opportunities for personal discussion⁴⁹, and this was not lost on Maxwell Fyfe, who contented himself with meeting Nutting on 21 November, which resulted in a proposal to cabinet that Britain should establish a permanent delegation to associate with the Schuman Plan High Authority.⁵⁰

The following day, Cabinet agreed a form of words for Maxwell Fyfe to use at Strasbourg:

'His Majesty's Government recognise that the initiative taken by the French Government concerning the creation of a European Coal and Steel Community and a European Defence Community is a major step towards European unity. They welcome the Schuman Plan as a means for strengthening the economy of Western Europe and look forward to its early realisation. It is our desire to establish the closest possible association with the European Continental Community at all stages in its development. If the Schuman Plan is ratified His Majesty's Government will set up a permanent delegation at the seat of the authority to enter into relations and to transact business with it.'⁵¹

Therefore, as Yasamee notes, a basic agreed position had been established.⁵² However, it is worth considering this statement in the context of the broader tone of the meeting. According to the Cabinet Minute, the government's expectation was that one or more of the Schuman Plan signatories would fail to ratify:

‘... in that event the UK Government would be well advised to participate in any fresh effort which might be made to find a better solution to this problem.’⁵³

A second reservation was that the Schuman Plan ‘was viewed with suspicion by workers in the coal and steel industries in this country’, echoing in sentiment Herbert Morrison’s oft-quoted remark that “the Durham miners won’t wear it.”⁵⁴ Therefore, the undertaking to associate with the Coal and Steel Community proceeded, in part, from the expectation that it would fail, and that its successor would be of a form more agreeable to British national interests. Whether Macmillan and Maxwell Fyfe argued for a more positive evaluation of the Schuman Plan’s prospects is not known, but it is clear that the balance of opinion in Cabinet was decidedly against British membership.

Six days later, Maxwell Fyfe rose to address the Council of Europe in Strasbourg:

“May I at this point say a word about federation? Many doubts could be laid, and much misunderstanding spared, if that word were only and always used in its correct meaning. To us, it means a decision to transfer in advance and finally certain governmental functions to a federal body with a consequent elaborately drawn separation of federal and state powers. We do not believe it is possible for a country in our position ... to take such a step. We do not think that anyone, realist, or idealist, looking at the world today, would desire us to take this course.”

On the subject of Britain’s response to the proposed European Defence Community, Maxwell Fyfe noted that a formal statement would follow the N.A.T.O. discussions in Rome, but that:

“I cannot promise you that our eventual association with the European Defence Community will amount to full and unconditional participation, because this, as I have said, is a matter which must, in our view, be left to intergovernmental discussions elsewhere. But I can assure you of our determination that no genuine method shall fail for lack of the thorough examination which one gives to the needs of trusted comrades.”⁵⁵

Responding immediately, former French Prime Minister Paul Reynaud characterised the speech as “a direct repudiation of the stirring motion as worded by the present leader of the British Government and adopted at his request by this Assembly by a large majority” – a point which he would repeat shortly afterwards in correspondence with *The Times*.⁵⁶ For Eugen Gerstenmaier⁵⁷, Britain had now forfeited its leadership of Europe, while for Paul-Henri Spaak Maxwell Fyfe’s speech was “derisoire.”⁵⁸ By way of contrast, C. O. Wakefield-Harrey, the Foreign Office’s Consul-General Strasbourg, thought that Maxwell Fyfe’s speech was

“on the whole well received”, and would have been a greater success but for Reynaud’s “sarcasm and occasional malice.”⁵⁹

Later that evening, Eden faced reporters at a press conference following the Rome N.A.T.O. meeting.

On the subject of the E.D.C. he noted:

“Our position in relation to Europe in general was laid down last September in the Three-Power declaration in Washington, which I will not weary you by quoting to you except for one sentence which spoke of “the closest possible association at all stages of its development.” Now we are not, as you are aware, members of the European Defence Community; but we have used the words to which I have just referred last September, words by which we stand. And it will be for us to consider ways and means by which we can make that association effective and useful to those who are in the European Defence Community.”

Pressed by a reporter as to whether the word “association” ruled out the direct involvement of British forces, he replied, “So far as British units are concerned, yes. As far as formations are concerned, yes, but there might be some other form of association.” To the next question: “Is the report true, which I have just heard, that Sir David Maxwell Fyfe has just rejected the Schuman Plan?” he replied:

“I haven’t seen the text of Sir David’s speech, but I imagine that he would have based himself, as I have, on the Declaration of 14th September which did mark a considerable advance in the British attitude towards both the Schuman Plan and the European Army. I quoted from it just now. If the questioner likes I can give him a longer quotation from the document. I would imagine that Sir David must surely have based himself on that.”⁶⁰

Recalling his feelings nine years later, Nutting described Eden’s remarks as “nothing short of shattering.”⁶¹

While disappointment prevailed on the continent, *The Times* defended Eden’s consistency in ‘plainly stating ... British policy remains unaltered’ while chastising Maxwell Fyfe for having attempted to ‘soften the blow.’⁶² Macmillan captured the confusing impact of the two statements in his diary for 29 November 1951:

‘Eden has stated definitely in Rome (in a press conference) that we shall not join the European Army. Maxwell-Fyfe has stated definitely in Strasbourg that we may do so. Reynaud says that no French assembly will vote for a European army in which Britain is not represented ... Such an army will never be formed and if formed will not fight.’⁶³

Unsurprisingly, the confused events of 28 November, and the aftershocks in continental political circles, provoked strong reactions from key participants in Britain’s European policy formation. Boothby struck first with a personal telegram to Eden on 30 November:

‘I am disturbed and depressed by the present situation here, which is approaching demoralisation. I know that you have always taken a dim view of the Council of Europe ... The fact remains that it exists; and its collapse, at this juncture, would I am convinced be a shattering blow to the morale of continental Europe.’⁶⁴

It is not known whether Eden replied, but his thinking is evident from his annotation, made that same day, to a minute from Sir R. Makins reporting American pressure for a British lead on European integration: ‘Strasbourg was always a misfortune; it is now clearly a calamity.’⁶⁵ Around this time Eden observed to Nutting “I am sorry if Bob and Co. feel let down, but I never suggested that we could or should join the European Army.”⁶⁶

On 3 December 1951 Julian Amery wrote directly to Churchill on behalf of the entire Strasbourg Conservative delegation, characterising Eden’s remarks as a “shattering blow to most members of the Assembly.” Amery was also alert to the broader consequences of the direction of British policy, fearing “... the fall of the French and German governments and the advent to power of De Gaulle and Schumacher, and a revived German General staff with a renewed German domination over continental Europe.”⁶⁷ In a conclusion that Boothby would later echo in a letter to Churchill on 12 December, Amery urged the Prime Minister to take action to restore British prestige in Europe.⁶⁸ Eden’s response to both letters was contained a minute to Churchill, on 5 December 1951, in which he noted contradictions between Amery and Boothby. In future, Eden urged, Churchill should only listen to John Foster (Under Secretary, Commonwealth Affairs), who was aware of the shift in US opinion against UK participation in supranational European agencies.⁶⁹

While both Maxwell Fyfe and Eden had both departed from the basic text agreed in Cabinet (a confusion exacerbated perhaps by the lack of face-to-face contact between the two men in the days before 28 November) there was no substantive difference between the message of the two statements. Nonetheless, timing and tone were very important, because the Strasbourg Conservatives had built up their contacts on a shared (albeit rather vague, and apparently mistaken) understanding that a re-elected Conservative government would take a lead in integration.⁷⁰ When set in the context of the three years of close contact that they had enjoyed with like-minded continental politicians, and newly returned to political power, the Strasbourg Conservatives now had to adjust to the painful reality that they were out of alignment with the Foreign Office, and perhaps the majority sentiment within Cabinet and the broader party. Crowson has shown how a similar problem arose from the Young Conservatives’ liaison with the *Nouvelles Equipes Internationales* (the youth wing of the Christian Democrats), which ran into difficulties over the latter’s commitment to federalism, resulting in the termination of the relationship by Anthony Nutting in 1950.⁷¹

The text of Maxwell Fyfe’s statement suggests that the Strasbourgers were unwise to make it the focus of their hopes, as his commitment to support the Schuman Plan did not extend beyond the phrases: “If a new organisation emerges we shall consider how best to associate ourselves with it in a practical way” and “I

can assure you of our determination that no genuine method shall fail for lack of the thorough examination which one gives to the needs of trusted comrades.” Moreover, Maxwell Fyfe’s own comments on the E.D.C. scarcely amounted to keeping the door open: “I cannot promise you that our eventual association with the European Defence Community will amount to full and unconditional participation ...”⁷² Indeed, the agreed phrasing of “association” was common to both sets of remarks. It has been asserted that the Strasbourgers’ letters to London went unanswered - in fact Churchill did respond to Amery on 15 December 1951, albeit with a brush-off answer - “things will work out better later on when our full policy is understood in Europe.”⁷³

For Maxwell Fyfe, who had returned to Britain immediately after his 28 November speech, fault was more broadly distributed, as he observed in a letter to Amery on 2 January 1952:

“I think A[nthony]. E[den]. was unwise not to give the whole subject more attention and perhaps unwise in his language in Rome which gave a wrong impression but most emphatically it was an unfortunate move from the point of view of those who want to assist the European movement to attempt to bear pressure on him from above. He naturally was informed about it immediately and he already had a bias against Strasbourg, it is likely to have been increased. Considering the existing political set up in our party as it in fact is, one could only hope for results in such a field as this, by working through A.E. and convincing him personally of the value of a particular line in European affairs. Taking his personality into account, anything other than a direct approach is likely to antagonise him and ruin any chance of a more sympathetic outlook on these matters. ... I am afraid we are in for a rough time in the political arena for the first half of next year. Our backbenchers had much better make up their minds to this early on, and it may teach them the lesson that it is ... silly to take Central Office propaganda as divinely inspired truth.”⁷⁴

Maxwell Fyfe’s balanced attribution of blame in January 1952 is worth noting, as these nuances are absent from the more strident judgements reached in his memoirs, twelve years later.⁷⁵ By comparison, Macmillan’s diary entry for 7 December 1951 is less equivocal:

‘Eden is a queer man. He has great charm and some great gifts. He is really a first-class negotiator. But he is almost childishly jealous – hence his dislike for me, for David Fyfe [*sic*], for Sandys and for all of us who have dared to show an interest in foreign affairs.’⁷⁶

The Cabinet discussion of defence policy on 4 December 1951, in preparation for a forthcoming Commons debate, concluded that:

‘The European Defence Force, which is to be a vital element in the defence of Western Europe, will be closely and effectively associated with the British Forces which constitute another element of the same defence system, through their common allegiance to N.A.T.O. ... As far as Britain is concerned, we do not propose to merge in the European Army, but we are already joined to it.’⁷⁷

The Political Consequences of the 28 November 1951 statements

While the events of 28 November were soon overtaken by other foreign policy priorities, they marked an important turning point in the Conservatives' European debate. In spite of the barrage of criticism from the Conservative Strasbourgers, Eden maintained and strengthened his control of European policy, suggesting that he commanded the support of the broader Party, and the press. However, now that political and personal fault lines had been exposed (visible at least within the Party leadership), the consequences of 28 November would continue to reverberate, and would help to define personal alignments over later issues such as the UK response to the Messina negotiations, and the later decision under Macmillan to seek E.E.C. membership.

While Eden had won the battle within cabinet for Britain's defence posture to be based on the Atlantic alliance,⁷⁸ the pro-European Conservatives had not abandoned their hopes for a more active engagement with the Schuman Plan and the E.D.C. Increasingly, the Strasbourg Conservatives looked to Macmillan as their standard-bearer within cabinet; however he was increasingly preoccupied with his Housing Minister portfolio and his own European posture was becoming increasingly ambivalent.⁷⁹ While he criticised Eden and Salisbury for their "tepid" attitude, he confessed in his memoirs the hope that both the Schuman and E.D.C. plans might fail, enabling Britain to recapture the initiative with new policies. However, what forms these might take were never elaborated beyond the vague aspiration to "an acceptable compromise."⁸⁰ Effectively, Macmillan was subtly re-positioning himself within government as a voice of reason between the Strasbourgers and the official Foreign Office view. As he observed to Eden on 21 December 1951:

'If we had been "in" on the Schuman Plan or European Army Plan two years ago, we might have moulded both to our liking. But it would have been impertinence, as well as folly, to butt in at the last stage of the negotiations. It could even have been called a wrecking policy. This, at least, is what I have been trying to say all the time to my European friends.'⁸¹

Macmillan did not despair of influencing Cabinet policy on Europe, and in early 1952 he compiled a memorandum attacking the Foreign Office's approval of further integration by the Six, which he saw as both perpetuating Britain's exclusion from the continent, but also as a potential threat to its own economic and strategic influence. His solution was confederal in type – strengthening the power of the Council of Europe, linking the Commonwealth and European trading systems, and creating a European army without the superstructure of a supranational controlling agency. The Foreign Office took Macmillan's proposals no further, but responded with a set of proposals for the subordination of both the E.D.C. and the E.C.S.C. to the Council of Europe. For Macmillan, the "Eden Plan" presented even greater dangers of British isolation, as

the E.C.S.C., which effectively represented the national governments of the Six, greatly outweighed the Council of Europe. When Macmillan's proposals came to Cabinet on 13 March 1952, they received only limited support from Maxwell Fyfe, and were otherwise sidelined in favour of the Eden Plan. As Young has noted, Macmillan formally asked that his dissent be recorded in the Cabinet minutes.⁸²

In spite of Macmillan's defeat within Cabinet, he was still regarded by the Conservative delegates to Strasbourg as their man in Cabinet. However, the Strasbourg Conservatives also hoped to salvage their position through using their continental contacts to rescue the E.D.C. from stalemate by producing some form of compromise for British involvement. Julian Amery continued to function as Macmillan's eyes and ears in Strasbourg, where he was able to draw on well-placed French contacts - Guy Mollet and Jacques Bardoux.⁸³ For Mollet, the only significant difference between the British and French positions on the E.D.C. was the "supra-national terminology".⁸⁴ On 19 February 1952 Mollet had sponsored a motion in the *Assemblée Nationale* supporting further efforts to encourage British participation in the E.D.C., but although it was adopted, the degree of opposition within his own Socialist Party led him to conclude that the Plan would never be ratified.⁸⁵ On 28 February Amery forwarded this assessment to Eden, and urged that Britain should make the desired commitment. However, Eden was unmoved, as his principal concern was French ratification of German N.A.T.O. membership, regardless of the fate of the E.D.C., and the opinion of the Council of Europe. Concluding with one of those lines that helped to earn him a reputation for a brittle personality, he urged Amery: "I very much hope that you will decide to take no further action in this matter."⁸⁶ However, Amery disregarded Eden's instructions on what Boothby called "this damned European Army"⁸⁷, and maintained his lines of communication with Mollet, culminating in a personal meeting c.20 March 1952. While Mollet conceded that Britain could be no more than "country members of the Club" he noted that "the exact nature of our association with the E.D.C." could only be defined if Britain was involved in the negotiations from the outset.⁸⁸ On receiving this appraisal, Eden tried to talk down any revived notion of full membership, as Britain already prepared to negotiate formal terms of association with the E.D.C.⁸⁹ Amery's despair was evident from a un-dated letter to Mollet, in which he noted that the French Government had done nothing to respond to the *Assemblée Nationale's* resolution, and that Britain could not contemplate E.D.C. membership. He concluded, "I, personally, regret this situation."⁹⁰

Therefore, in spite of Eden's stated hostility against any private initiatives in European policy, the Conservative Strasbourgers were still trying to use their contacts to break the E.D.C. logjam independently of the Foreign Office.

The signing on successive days, 26 and 27 May 1952, of the intergovernmental treaties terminating the occupation of the western zones of Germany, and establishing the E.D.C., appeared to mark the triumph of Eden's policy of "association" with the continental institutions. Similarly, the formal establishment of the High Authority of the E.C.S.C. in August, with British association, might also be seen as a vindication of the established Foreign Office line.⁹¹ However, for the Strasbourg Conservatives, these events served to confirm the degree of Britain's isolation from continental developments. On 9 July 1952 briefing notes produced by Anthony Nutting for the UK delegation at Strasbourg admitted that Britain was increasingly seen as an obstacle to the further integration of the E.C.S.C. Six through its continued advocacy of the Eden Plan, while arguing that there was no alternative to perseverance.⁹² Throughout 1952, the UK delegation at Strasbourg followed the Strasbourg line of continuing to advocate French ratification of the E.D.C., but with increasing pessimism as to the outcome.⁹³ In February, Boothby had expressed his frustration to Amery in a parody of the Foreign Office's attitude to the Strasbourg Conservatives:

"You funny little European boys ... play away with the federation, if you like. And when you have burnt your fingers, this is what the great and glorious and most high and mighty British Government and Empire, by the Grace of God Defender of the Faith, might conceivably do."⁹⁴

Matters were further poisoned by Churchill's speech of 11 May 1953, opportunistically made during Eden's illness, that proposed a nineteenth-century style great power summit to re-order diplomacy in the aftermath of Stalin's death. For many, the effect of Churchill's speech was to negate and marginalize the European dimension of Britain's foreign policy, and to re-assert its claim to engage with the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. on equal terms as a great power. Eden, himself, was infuriated by the speech, as he felt that Churchill had exploited his illness to thoughtlessly grandstand on foreign policy. This speech also further complicated matters for the Strasbourg Conservatives, who had been repeatedly urged by Anthony Nutting to hold the line of British association with the E.C.S.C. and detached support for the E.D.C. In an undated note to Amery c.June 1953, Boothby railed:

"It is really quite intolerable that we should come here in ostensible support of Winston, and find our efforts ridiculed and derided ... I think you ought to ask what the hell is [*sic*] the policy of HMG? It can be the policy of the speech of 11 May. Or it can be the policy now announced by Mr Nutting. But it cannot be both."⁹⁵

On 22 September 1953 Boothby resigned from both the Consultative Assembly and the Vice-Presidency U.E.M., due to a combination of ‘inadequate British leadership’, ‘melancholy’ and ‘acute lumbago.’⁹⁶ Ultimately, the Strasbourg Conservatives in the years 1950-1954 had little impact on either the policies of the second Churchill government, or on the direction and pace of European integration. Britain’s stated policy of “association” with the E.C.S.C. found expression in the creation of a permanent delegate, the diplomat Sir Cecil Weir, who was *in situ* in Luxembourg from 11 August 1952. A formal treaty of association was negotiated on 21 December 1954, although this did not lead to full UK participation in the 1955 Messina negotiations leading to the Treaty of Rome (1957).⁹⁷ Opinion within the French Assemblée Nationale hardened against the European Defence Community, and a vote of 30 August 1954 determined that it would not be ratified.⁹⁸ The collapse of the E.D.C. resulted in a triumph for Eden, as on 28 September 1954 he convened a nine-power conference of the Brussels Treaty signatories in London to propose that treaty’s extension to Germany and Italy, resulting in the establishment of the West European Union on 23 October 1954.⁹⁹ But, the combination of continuing ill-health, and the escalating Middle East crisis, contrived to derail Eden’s long-anticipated premiership, which terminated abruptly with his resignation in January 1957. While Europe had scarcely been a priority for Eden during the morass of Suez, the leading role of Julian Amery in the backbench Conservative “Suez Group” helped to illustrate the complex layering and intersection of party loyalties, and the coalition of interests opposing the Prime Minister within his own Party.¹⁰⁰ Of course Eden’s successor, Macmillan, abandoned the policy of ‘association’ in 1961 in favour of seeking full UK admission to the E.E.C. which itself re-ignited the Conservatives’ European debate, at least partly along the fault-lines that had opened up a decade earlier.¹⁰¹

Conclusion

What broader conclusions can be drawn from the Ministerial Statements of 28 November 1951, and their impact on the Conservatives’ European debate during the Eden years? The dispute over the exact wording of the two statements of 28 November is no longer the key point of contention, as both talked in terms of UK ‘association’ with - as opposed to membership of - the Schuman Plan and the E.D.C. However, the sustained efforts by the Strasbourg Conservatives to influence the direction of European policy, especially in the period 1949-1953, challenges Yasamee’s verdict that ‘tactics not substance was becoming the real point of difference.’¹⁰² The real anger of the Strasbourg Conservatives over Eden’s statement of 28 November, and the subsequent direction of government policy, was also an expression of their political impotence in the face

of Press, Cabinet and Party support for the Foreign Office line. Indeed, the fact that Boothby continued to re-fight the battles of the 1950s, even after the UK's accession to the E.E.C., suggests the intensity of feelings generated by the debates of this period.¹⁰³

Another key question is why the Strasbourg Conservatives had invested so much faith in a major departure from the Attlee government's policy following Churchill's return to power in October 1951. In part this was due to the excessive credence that they attached to Churchill's rhetoric – intended principally for overseas consumption – which in turn led their contacts in the Consultative Assembly to believe that they were the outriders for a new British engagement with schemes such as the Schuman Plan and the E.D.C.

Had Churchill allowed two parallel, but apparently contradictory, Conservative European policies to emerge as a Machiavellian design to clip the wings of his successor-in-waiting? This seems unlikely, but if Churchill had acted to dampen the expectations of the movement that he himself had done so much to inspire, then the existence of conflicting and disconnected policy-forming blocs in the Foreign Office and the U.E.M/Consultative Assembly might not have had such a divisive effect. (Perhaps Anthony Nutting should be credited here with an ability to cooperate with both his political master, Eden, and with the Strasbourgers, for whom he had considerable sympathies.¹⁰⁴) Whatever their high public profiles in other areas of Conservative politics, Macmillan, Sandys and Boothby appear to have had virtually no influence on Eden, who readily took offence at what he perceived to be interference in his preserve of foreign policy.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, the pro-Europeans were left to air their views in forums that were sympathetic to their aims – such as the U.E.M. and the Consultative Assembly – but which had no real bearing on the thrust of Conservative policy, which remained firmly in the hands of Eden and the Foreign Office. Although characteristically over-blown, Boothby's claim that the Foreign Office saw the Conservative Strasbourgers as merely “funny little European boys” betrays the harsh truth of a cause that had been marginalized and defeated, if only during the years of Eden's dominance.¹⁰⁶

Alastair Dunn

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¹ The dispute can be followed in the protagonists' writings: D. Maxwell Fyfe, *Political Adventure, The Memoirs of the Earl of Kilmuir* (London: Weidenfeld, 1964); R. Boothby, *My Yesterday, Your Tomorrow* (London: The Quality Book Club, 1962); H. Macmillan, *Tides of Fortune, 1945-1955* (London: Macmillan, 1969); R. Boothby, *Boothby, Recollections of a Rebel* (London: Hutchinson, 1978). Eden's threats of litigation against Maxwell Fyfe and Boothby can be followed in University of Birmingham, Special Collections, Avon Papers, 20/50, nos. 50-145. For a discussion see D. Dutton, *Anthony Eden A Life and Reputation* (London: Hodder Arnold, 1997), pp. 293-4 and *passim*. For Eden's attitude to the writing of History, see P. Beck, 'Lord Avon's 'Appeasement Battle' against 'Lamentable, Appeasement-Minded Historians', *Twentieth Century British History*, 9 (1998), 396-419.

² H. J. Yasamee, 'Anthony Eden and Europe, November 1951,' *Foreign and Commonwealth Office Historical Branch, Occasional Papers*, I, (Nov. 1987), 47.

³ J. W. Young, 'The Schuman Plan and British Association', in J. W. Young, ed., *The Foreign Policy of Churchill's Peacetime Administration 1951-1955* (Leicester: University Press, 1988), p. 131; Dutton, *Anthony Eden, A life and Reputation*, p. 293.

⁴ A. Seldon, *Churchill's Indian Summer, The Conservative Government 1951-1955* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1981); J. W. Young, 'Churchill's 'No' to Europe: The Rejection of European Union by Churchill's Post-War Government, 1951-1952, *The Historical Journal*, 28, no. 4 (Dec., 1985), 928; *idem*, *Winston Churchill's Last Campaign: Britain and the Cold War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); *idem*, *Britain and European Unity, 1945-1999* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000); J. Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden, 1940-1957* (London: Longman, 1995); S. Onslow, *Backbench Debate within the Conservative Party and its influence on British Foreign Policy, 1948-1957* (London: Macmillan, 1997).

⁵ The political backgrounds of the key personalities in the feud are summarised in Onslow, *Backbench Debate within the Conservative Party*, pp. 16-25.

⁶ N. J. Crowson, *The Conservative Party and European Integration Since 1945* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 74-5.

⁷ The full story of the E.D.C. can be followed in S. Dockrill, *Britain's Policy for West German Rearmament, 1950-1955* (Cambridge: University Press, 1991); S. Mawby, *Containing Germany: Britain and the Arming of the Federal Republic* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999); K. Ruane, *The Rise and Fall of the European Defence Community: Anglo-American Relations and the Crisis of European Defence, 1950-1955* (London: Macmillan, 2000).

⁸ Robert Gascoyne-Cecil (1893-1972), fifth marquess of Salisbury. A staunch empire loyalist, his offices included Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 1940-1942 and 1943-1945; Lord President, 1952; Commonwealth Relations, 1952; Lord President, 1957. Oliver Lyttelton (1893-1972), Ministerial offices: Foreign Office, 1940-1942; Supply, 1942; Resident in the Middle East, 1942-1945; Production, 1945; Colonial Office, 1951-1954; created Viscount Chandos, 1954.

⁹ The early years of Conservative involvement in the Council of Europe are summarised in Crowson, *The Conservative Party and European Integration Since 1945*, pp. 196-7.

¹⁰ G. Unger, *Aristide Briand, Le Ferme Conciliateur* (Paris: Fayard, 2005), pp. 557-560.

¹¹ Seldon, *Churchill's Indian Summer*, p. 413; Young, 'Churchill's 'No' to Europe: The Rejection of European Union by Churchill's Post-War Government, 1951-1952,' 923.

¹² A. Forster, *Euroscepticism in Contemporary British Politics, Opposition to Europe in the British Conservative and Labour Parties since 1945* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 23. Churchill College, Cambridge, Churchill Archives Centre, CHUR 2/26A. In response to an invite from Sandys to address the Western Economic Conference at Chatham House, Churchill scribbled "I'm going to try and get him to let me off this" (12 Apr. 1949). After repeated prompting, he rejected an invitation from Max Brauer, Oberburgomeister of Hamburg, to address the International European Movement's German-European Conference (14 Sep. 1951). For the impact of Churchill's writing commitments, see R. Jenkins, *Churchill* (London: Macmillan, 2001), pp. 806-811.

¹³ Avon Papers, 20/50/86. A point stressed by Dutton, *Anthony Eden, A Life and Reputation*, p. 286.

¹⁴ The chronology and consequences of British rejection have been addressed exhaustively in A. Bullock, *Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary, 1945-1951* (London: Heinemann, 1984), chapter 16. For other evaluations, see U. Sahn and K. Younger, 'Britain and Europe, 1950,' *International Affairs*, 43, no. 1 (Jan., 1967), 12-24; J. Melissen and B. Zeeman, 'Britain and Western Europe, 1945-51: Opportunities Lost?' *International Affairs*, 63, no. 1 (Winter 1986-1987), 81-95.

¹⁵ *Hansard*, 476, col. 2140-2146.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, col. 1959-1963 (Heath), col. 1969-1977 (Eccles), col. 2017 (Amery), col. 1909-1923 (Eden).

¹⁷ R. Rhodes James, *Anthony Eden* (London: Weidenfeld, 1986), p. 333.

¹⁸ Eden's attitudes to Europe have been subject to extensive analysis. For contrasting treatment, see the critical assessment by A. Carlton, *Anthony Eden, A Biography* (London: Allen Lane, 1981) and the positive revision in Dutton, *Anthony Eden, A Life and Reputation*, especially pp. 294-311. For other treatments, see V. H. Feske, 'The Road to Suez: The British Foreign Office and the Quai d'Orsay, 1951-1957,' *The Diplomats, 1939-1979*, ed. G. A. Craig and F. L. Lowenheim (California: Princeton, 1994), 167-200; Onslow, *Backbench Debate*, pp. 25-7; Young, *Britain and European Unity, 1945-1999*, pp. 36-7. For recent comment, see T. Judt, *Postwar, A History of Europe Since 1945*

- (London: Heinemann, 2005), p. 164; D. Sandbrook, *Never Had it So Good, A History of Britain from Suez to the Beatles* (London: Little, Brown, 2005), p. 208.
- ¹⁹ Bodleian Library, Oxford, Conservative Party Archive [hereafter C.P.A.], C.R.D. 2/42/2.
- ²⁰ R. A. Eden, *Full Circle, The Memoirs of The Rt. Hon. Sir Anthony Eden* (London: Cassell, 1960), p. 36; Yasamee, 'Anthony Eden and Europe, November 1951,' 40.
- ²¹ Young, *Britain and European Unity*, p. 36.
- ²² D. R. Thorpe, *Eden, The Life and Times of Anthony Eden, First Earl of Avon, 1897-1977* (London: Pimlico, 2004), p. 413.
- ²³ *Hansard*, 400, col. 1040-1055; *Ibid.*, 403, col. 706; R. N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, 'Notes from "Postwar European Federation",' Contributions of the Research Seminar for Postwar European Federation, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, New York University, No. 1 (Feb., 1943), p. 16.
- ²⁴ United Europe, Newsletter of the United Europe Movement, no. 1, 1948. The UK delegation also included the Liberals Lady Violet Bonham-Carter and Earl Russell, and the Labour federalist R. W. G. Mackay, MP. For Mackay, see J. T. Grantham, 'British Labour and the Hague Congress of Europe: National Sovereignty Defended,' *The Historical Journal*, 24, no. 2 (June, 1981), 443-452.
- ²⁵ Conservative Research Department: 'Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, Sep/Oct 1952, The European Political Authority.'
- ²⁶ A. Nutting, *Europe Will Not Wait* (London: Hollis and Carter, 1960), p. 40.
- ²⁷ C.P.A., C.R.D. 2/42/3.
- ²⁸ Crowson, *The Conservative Party and European Integration Since 1945*, p. 15.
- ²⁹ Churchill Archives Centre, Papers of Julian Amery 523/1. Amery to Churchill (27 Sep. 1946), Coudenhove-Kalergi to Amery (29 Sep. 1946), Amery to Coudenhove-Kalergi (1 Oct. 1946). This episode is also discussed in Onslow, *Backbench Debate within the Conservative Party*, p. 16.
- ³⁰ C.P.A., C.R.D., 2/42/5. Macmillan approved this transcript of his words in a note to its author, Brigadier Jasper Blunt of the Conservative Research Department, 18 Jan. 1950.
- ³¹ W. Lipgens, *A History of European Integration, I, The Formation of the European Unity Movement* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 334.
- ³² Macmillan, *Tides of Fortune*, p. 156.
- ³³ Council of Europe: Record of a Meeting of the Conservative Representatives and Substitutes for the Consultative Assembly (20 and 25 July 1950). Harold Macmillan (chairing), David Maxwell Fyfe, Duncan Sandys, David Eccles, Robert Boothby, John Foster, Sir Ronald Ross (Ulster Unionist), Henry Hopkinson, Lady Tweedsmuir, Julian Amery and Lord Birkenhead.

- ³⁴ Churchill Archives Centre, Papers of Julian Amery, 674. [At the time of consultation (2006) many of the Amery files had no piece numbers, thus individual documents have not always been cited precisely.]
- ³⁵ Conservative Research Department Paper, F.A.C. 50 (6), 9 Nov. 1950. (This was one of many research briefings on Europe produced by Ursula Branston.) H. Macmillan, *Tides of Fortune, 1945-1955* (London: Macmillan, 1969), p. 206.
- ³⁶ United Kingdom, Council of Europe, Strasbourg. Report by Lord Layton, Chairman of the Council; Conservative Research Department: Strasbourg 1950, A Monthly Survey of Foreign Affairs, p. 5.
- ³⁷ J. Monnet, *Memoirs* (London: Doubleday, 1978), pp. 325-6; P-H Spaak, *Combats Inachevées, ii, De L'espoir aux Déceptions* (Brussels: Fayard, 1969), p. 41.
- ³⁸ Macmillan diary entry, 6 Aug. 1950, in H. Macmillan, *Tides of Fortune*, p. 203.
- ³⁹ Avon Papers 16/1/250.
- ⁴⁰ C.P.A., C.R.D. 2/42/5.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.* Meeting of the Conservative Delegation to the Council of Europe, House of Commons, 9 April 1951. Also present were David Maxwell Fyfe, Duncan Sandys, Julian Amery, Lady Tweedsmuir, Lord Birkenhead, Henry Hopkinson and Connolly Gage.
- ⁴² Conservative disunity in the European policy debate of the early 1950s is discussed in Onslow, *Backbench Debate within the Conservative Party*, p. 58.
- ⁴³ *Documents on British Policy Overseas, Series II, Vol. I, The Schuman Plan, The Council of Europe and Western European Integration*, ed. R. Bullen and M. E. Pelly (London: HMSO, 1986), no. 393, p. 745.
- ⁴⁴ Papers of Julian Amery, 675. Amery to Macmillan, 12 Nov. 1951; Amery to Sandys, 13 Nov. 1951.
- ⁴⁵ Seldon, *Churchill's Indian Summer*, p. 413.
- ⁴⁶ Yasamee, 'Anthony Eden and Europe, November 1951,' 41.
- ⁴⁷ Young, *Britain and European Unity*, p. 35.
- ⁴⁸ *Documents on British Policy Overseas, Ser. II, Vol. I*, no. 400, p. 759n.
- ⁴⁹ Yasamee, 'Anthony Eden and Europe, November 1951,' 42, 47.
- ⁵⁰ Also present was a group of junior ministers with strong pro-European pedigrees – John Foster (Under Secretary, Commonwealth Relations), Anthony Nutting (Under Secretary, F.O.), David Ormesby-Gore (Junior Minister, F.O.) and Lord Hood. Foster was a Council of Europe member; Nutting wrote in favour of European membership following his 1956 resignation over Suez; Ormesby-Gore (as Lord Harlech) would play a leading role in campaigning for British E.E.C. membership in the 1960s and 1970s.
- ⁵¹ National Archives, CAB 128/23 CC (51) 10; Avon Papers, 20/50/96 A.
- ⁵² Yasamee, 'Anthony Eden and Europe, November 1951,' 42.
- ⁵³ Churchill Archives Centre, Papers of Oliver Lyttelton, CHAN II, 4/6, no. 133.

- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*; A. Bullock, *Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary 1945-1951* (London: Heinemann, 1984), p. 780.
- ⁵⁵ Council of Europe, Consultative Committee, Third Ordinary Session (Second Part), Official Report of Debates, Vol. 4, sittings 18-24, 21st sitting; Yasamee, 'Anthony Eden and Europe, November 1951,' 43.
- ⁵⁶ *Times*, 4 Dec. 1951.
- ⁵⁷ Christian Democrat Union; Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Bundestag, 1949-54; President of the Bundestag, 1954-1969. d. 1986.
- ⁵⁸ Council of Europe, Official Report of Debates, Vol. 4, 21st sitting; Spaak, *Combats Inachevés*, ii, 48.
- ⁵⁹ *Documents on British Policy Overseas, Ser. II, Vol. I*, no. 404, p. 767; Yasamee, 'Anthony Eden and Europe, November 1951,' 44. Rhodes James shares the Foreign Office evaluation of Maxwell-Fyfe's speech, *Anthony Eden*, p. 250.
- ⁶⁰ Avon Papers, 20/50/95A. A further transcript of Eden's comments exists in CHAN II, 4/6, no. 123.
- ⁶¹ Nutting, *Europe Will Not Wait*, p. 40.
- ⁶² *Times*, 29 Nov. 1951.
- ⁶³ *The Macmillan Diaries, The Cabinet Years 1950-1957*, ed. P. Caterall (London: Macmillan, 2003), p. 120 (29 Nov. 1951).
- ⁶⁴ *Documents on British Policy Overseas, Ser. II, Vol. I*, no. 402, p. 765. R. Rhodes James, *Bob Boothby, A Portrait* (London: Hodder, 1991), p. 364.
- ⁶⁵ *Documents on British Policy Overseas, Ser. II, Vol. I*, no. 402, p. 764n. A group of US congressmen was present at Strasbourg as observers. c. 27 November they had met with Boothby to press for British leadership in European integration.
- ⁶⁶ Nutting, *Europe Will Not Wait*, p. 40.
- ⁶⁷ Papers of Julian Amery, 674; *Documents on British Policy Overseas, Ser. II, Vol. I*, no. 406, pp. 769-772; Yasamee, 'Anthony Eden and Europe, November 1951,' 45. Julian Amery, Robert Boothby, David Harden, Christopher Hollis and Charles Mott-Radclyffe, Sir Tufton Beamish and Priscilla, Lady Tweedsmuir, to Churchill, 3 Dec. 1951.
- ⁶⁸ Avon Papers, 20/50/7; National Archives, PREM 11/153. Boothby to Churchill, 12 Dec. 1951 "We seem to be moving into a position of some isolation, and I believe this could have been avoided."; A. Thompson, *The Day Before Yesterday, An Illustrated History of Britain from Attlee to Macmillan* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1971), p. 104.
- ⁶⁹ *Documents on British Foreign Policy Overseas, Ser. II, Vol. I*, no. 408, p. 774.
- ⁷⁰ Crowson, *The Conservative Party and European Integration since 1945*, p. 196.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 189.
- ⁷² Council of Europe, Official Report of Debates, Vol. 4, 21st sitting.

- ⁷³ Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 260; Onslow, *Conservative Backbench Debate*, p. 79; Papers of Julian Amery, 674. Churchill to Amery, 15 Dec. 1951.
- ⁷⁴ Papers of Julian Amery, 675. Maxwell Fyfe to Amery, 2 Jan. 1952.
- ⁷⁵ D. Maxwell Fyfe, *Political Adventure, The Memoirs of the Earl of Kilmuir* (London: Weidenfeld, 1964), p. 187.
- ⁷⁶ *The Macmillan Diaries*, ed. P. Caterall, p. 122 (7 Dec. 1951).
- ⁷⁷ National Archives, CAB, 128/24 CC (51) 14.
- ⁷⁸ For a summary of this period see Crowson, *The Conservative Party and European Integration Since 1945*, pp. 22-4.
- ⁷⁹ A. Horne, *Macmillan, 1894-1956* (London: Macmillan, 1988), p. 350.
- ⁸⁰ Macmillan, *Tides of Fortune*, pp. 464-6.
- ⁸¹ Papers of Julian Amery, 674, Macmillan to Eden, 21 Dec. 1951.
- ⁸² National Archives, CAB 128/24 CC (52) 30; Macmillan, *Tides of Fortune*, pp. 469-472; Young, 'Churchill's "No" to Europe,' 934.
- ⁸³ Mollet - Socialist, Minister of State to the Council of Europe 1950-1951, President of France, 1956-1957; Bardoux – Independent Republican, Senator and Deputy for Puy-de-Dôme, 1938-1956, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Assemblée Nationale, 1950-1953. While Mollet hoped to save the E.D.C. with its existing signatories, Bardoux would not contemplate French ratification without British membership.
- ⁸⁴ Papers of Julian Amery 674/4. Mollet to Amery, 29 Jan. 1952.
- ⁸⁵ Assemblée Nationale Francaise, Ordre du Jour, 19 Feb. 1952; Papers of Julian Amery, 674/4, Mollet to Amery, 22 Feb. 1952.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 674/4, Amery to Eden, 28 Feb. 1952, Mollet to Amery, 5 March 1952; Eden to Amery, 11 March 1952.
- ⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 674/1, Boothby to Amery, 20 Dec. 1951.
- ⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 674/4, Amery to Eden, 26 March 1952.
- ⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, Eden to Amery, 22 April 1952.
- ⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, Amery to Mollet, undated.
- ⁹¹ Young, *Britain and European Unity*, p. 37.
- ⁹² Papers of Julian Amery, 674/4.
- ⁹³ *Ibid.*, 675. Amery to Nutting, 4 Dec. 1952, Nutting to Amery, 29 Dec. 1952.
- ⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 329/4, Boothby to Amery, 17 Feb. 1952.
- ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 675, Boothby to Amery, undated.
- ⁹⁶ C.P.A., C.R.D. 2/42/4. Quoting Ursula Branston, Secretary to the Conservative Delegation at Strasbourg.
- ⁹⁷ Agreement Concerning the Relations Between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Coal and Steel Community, Command 9346 (London: HMSO, Dec. 1954).

⁹⁸ Thorpe, *Eden*, p. 413.

⁹⁹ Macmillan, *Tides of Fortune*, pp. 482-3; Young, *Britain and European Unity*, p. 39.

¹⁰⁰ For a recent appraisal, see S. Onslow, 'Unreconstructed Nationalists and a minor gunboat operation: Julian Amery, Neil McLean and the Suez Crisis,' *Contemporary British History*, 20 (1) (2006), 73-99.

¹⁰¹ For summaries of the policy shift towards application, see H. Macmillan, *At the End of the Day, 1961-1963* (London: Macmillan, 1973), chapter one; Young, *Britain and European Unity*, chapter three; *Britain and European Integration, A Documentary History, 1945-1998*, ed. D. Gowland and A. Turner (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 100-101. For continuing opposition within the Conservatives to European involvement, see A. Forster, *Eurocepticism in Contemporary British Politics*, pp. 21-2; Crowson, *The Conservative Party and European Integration Since 1945*, pp. 29-32.

¹⁰² Yasamee, 'Anthony Eden and Europe, November 1951,' 47.

¹⁰³ R. Boothby, *Boothby, Recollections of a Rebel* (London: Hutchinson, 1978).

¹⁰⁴ For Nutting's views see Nutting, *Europe Will Not Wait*, pp. 40-44.

¹⁰⁵ Onslow, *Backbench Debate within the Conservative Party*, pp. 26, 91-2; Dutton, *Anthony Eden, A Life and Reputation*, p. 294.

¹⁰⁶ Papers of Julian Amery 392/4.