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A Positive Peace: Britain and the Creation of the United Nations

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A Positive Peace: Britain and the Creation of the United Nations

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Abstract

This thesis is an archival history using evidence from British wartime planning and policy pursued in the early years (1945-47) of the UN to understand elite UK policymaker expectations of the role of the UN. It challenges the understanding of British policy as an extension of traditional *realpolitik* and argues UK policymakers wanted a general international organisation to deliver what they termed a peace "made positively". This went beyond the suppression of violence to include improved world-wide economic conditions and social justice, both to address the causes of war and as an objective in itself, though defined to meet UK interests as they understood them. Against a background of increased cross-border interdependence, a belief in planning, and acceptance of state responsibility for the welfare of its citizens, UK policymakers wanted the UN to provide broad international governance through which to manage the international system. This required a centralised UN System, coordinated through a strong ECOSOC. This challenges the understanding that Britain favoured a loose and functional UN System. This was, though, an illiberal, not liberal, internationalism, reproducing asymmetries of power between Great and small Powers, undermining sovereign equality, and rejecting harmony of interests and *laissez-faire* in favour of a managed international system in which the UK played a leading role. Positive Peace did not include a commitment for the UN to address individual welfare or rights. It was state-based and intended to strengthen the ability of the state to deliver security and welfare to its own citizens. Both traditionalist *realpolitik* policymakers and committed internationalists agreed that a strategy of multilateral cooperation was necessary for UK interests, enabling an internationalist policy consensus to emerge. By recovering the economic and social purpose of the UN for one of its key creators this thesis enhances our understanding of British policy but also the nature of the UN as envisaged at its creation.

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Introduction

This thesis examines UK policymakers' understanding of the role and nature of the UN in the mid-1940s. Why did they create it and what role was it to perform? It argues UK policymakers wanted a general international organisation to manage the international system rather than a simple security organisation. UK policymakers saw the UN as essential to deliver what they understood to be a Positive Peace. This restores the international governance purpose of the UN and the significance of its economic and social responsibilities for UK policymakers, challenging the literature which focuses on the UN's security functions. It was no liberal internationalist ideal, but neither was it simply an exercise in traditional *realpolitik* as much of the literature suggests. As recent literature has shown there are different internationalisms. Tim Dunne and Matt McDonald (2013) claim that internationalism is incompatible with *raison d'état* but this thesis argues UK policymakers' post-war multilateralism was an internationalist response to realist concerns.

This deepens our understanding of British intentions in creating the UN. This thesis challenges the standard *realpolitik* explanation that British policymakers used the UN instrumentally to create a favourable balance of power and recovers the importance of economic and social responsibilities to UK conceptions of the UN. It also enhances our understanding of the UN by showing that a major founder intended a general international organisation, not just an extended security structure, and emphasises the importance of the UN as a site of international governance. It recovers the understanding of UK policymakers that the international system both should, and could, be managed through the UN. This was not something that emerged in the later years of the UN but was implicit from its founding, reflecting the belief in scientific management, rational planning, and state intervention widespread in the mid-1940s.

Mark Mazower (2012) suggests a gap between the promotion of narrow national interests by the main creators of the UN and the “universal ideals and the rhetoric that emanated from them”.¹ However, reducing British motivation to the projection of power is trite and unilluminating. You don’t need to be a realist to accept that states, and their managers, seek to maximise power in pursuit of what they define as their own interests. The interesting question is why UK policymakers chose a universal multilateral organisation as the most appropriate strategy to achieve this, aligning “narrow national interest” with the apparent idealism of internationalist multilateralism. Similarly, it is banal to ask whether policymakers sought structures to project asymmetric power: power was asymmetric, and the structures reflected this. Most important is the nature of the institutions themselves.

Studying this in historical perspective also enhances our understanding of the post-war rules-based order, which remains contested. By historicising its origins, this thesis contributes to disentangling the UN, created as a universal and multipolar organisation, from the American-led liberal international order (LIO) that emerged out of the beginnings of Cold War from 1947-49, alongside and in some ways competing with the UN. Rather than the heart of the LIO the UN was in many ways a challenger, an alternative.

To acknowledge the post-war order as rules-based is insufficient: it matters what the rules are, who interprets them and who enforces them. As one recent contribution to the contemporary debate on the future of the liberal international order expressed it: “From the perspective of middle powers, liberal internationalism is primarily a rules-based order that serves to provide protection from more powerful states and to tame politics through a framework of procedural liberalism that contains political decisions within agreed-upon rules. From the perspective of many countries in the Global South, however, these rules are not so much liberal as profoundly hierarchical and unequal.”² This thesis helps understand the intent of the

¹ Mazower, *Governing the World*, xiii.

² Abrahamsen, Andersen, and Sending, ‘Introduction: Making Liberal Internationalism Great Again?’, 11.

founders themselves, the Great Powers from whom other states, at the receiving end of those rules, sought protection.

This thesis thus contributes to the history of internationalism and the relationship of internationalism to the state. If the 1940s were the “apogee of internationalism”, paradoxically it was also an age when the power of the state was at its height. It seeks to understand why state managers in the UK regarded internationalist policies as the most appropriate means of satisfying state interests, and the meaning they attached to the UN. It argues that those who managed the affairs of state adopted internationalist policies not to by-pass or supersede the state but to strengthen state power. This included not only political and military security but was intended to enable the state to meet its other responsibilities including provision of welfare for its citizens. Focusing on the economic and social functions of the UN underlines this point.

This chapter introduces the thesis. It first reviews the relevant literature and identifies key themes and gaps. It then describes the scope, methodology and the main evidence used. It ends by outlining the core argument and the structure of the thesis.

[A Review of the Relevant Literature](#)

This thesis is located at the intersection of the history of British foreign policy and the creation and early years of the UN, especially its economic and social responsibilities and the role of ECOSOC as a coordinating organ. There is surprisingly little literature combining the two. The dominant British policy narrative is one of realpolitik and traditional balance of power politics: wider international governance and economic and social issues are largely neglected and the British desire for a general international organisation is underestimated. Literature on the history of the UN sees the organisation variously as a structural response to increasing global interdependence (Akira Iriye, 2002; Craig Murphy 1994); an instrumental strategy to embed either American hegemony into the post war international system (John

Ikenberry, 2001, 2011; Stephen Wertheim, 2020) or to sustain the British imperial project (Mazower, 2009); or as a teleological progressive development of liberal internationalist ideals of global governance (Paul Kennedy, 2006).³ The history of the UN's early economic and social activities, and ECOSOC in particular, has been poorly served in the literature, which focuses on the political work of the UN.⁴ This review first considers accounts of British policy in the formation of the UN. It then addresses the literature on the economic and social functions of the UN and the role of ECOSOC.

The literature on the creation of the UN is American focused. This reflects America's key role, but also that much of the literature is by American scholars specifically examining US policy. It leaves the British role under-researched. British input is dealt with tangentially, when it impacts on American policy, and the literature lacks depth on the British side. Townsend Hoopes and Douglas Brinkley (1997), and Patrick Hearden (2002), use exclusively US primary sources, and the only scholarly work specifically on the San Francisco conference (Stephen Schlesinger, 2003) does not use British archival sources.⁵ Robert Hilderbrand (1990), the best published account of British policy-making in the creation of the UN, uses British archives, but is still primarily concerned with US policy.⁶ The influential accounts of American post-war planning written by two US participants, Ruth Russell (1957) and Harley Notter (1950), used as sources by other historians, have reinforced the impression of American dominance.⁷ Both were published before British archives became available. Russell relies primarily on Winston Churchill's own history of the Second World War, which is unreliable, for accounts of British thinking. This focus on

³ Iriye, *Global Community*; Ikenberry, *After Victory*; Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan*; Wertheim, 'Instrumental Internationalism'; Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*; Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*.

⁴ Spreich Glasse, 'Technical Internationalism and Economic Development at the Founding Moment of the UN System', 25–27.

⁵ Hoopes and Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the UN*; Hearden, 'Architects of Globalism', 2002; Schlesinger, *Act of Creation*.

⁶ Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 41. Hilderbrand's focus on Dumbarton Oaks means he does not take the story further than the lead up to San Francisco. His view that the great power-dominated organisation that emerged from Dumbarton Oaks was a betrayal of earlier hopes for a genuine system of collective security is also open to challenge. See preface, pp ix-x.

⁷ Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*; Notter, *Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation, 1939-45*.

American planning leaves British policymaking with respect to the creation of the UN inadequately served.

Literature by British scholars also has limitations. The key works have been written by the official level participants themselves or derived from their accounts of the process. This presents British policy toward the new world organisation as led by officials, with politicians at best providing support, at worst actively obstructing policymaking. They also claim a more significant role for the British contribution than the American literature allows. Gladwyn Jebb and C.K. Webster, key participants in Foreign Office post-war planning, claim leading roles both for themselves and for the British in the creation of the UN.⁸ Llewellyn Woodward's (1975) official history appears to support this argument.⁹ Sean Greenwood's (2008) biography of Jebb is faithful to its subject's interpretation of events and, though he makes reference to ministerial responsibility, Greenwood argues the politicians' main contribution was to allow officials to get on with the work.¹⁰ The most cited scholarly work on the British role in the creation of the UN, Adam Roberts (2003), relies on the accounts of the participants and does not use archival sources. It repeats the narrative of a process led by officials in which the British play a leading role.¹¹ Two recent theses (David Hall, 2015; Andrew Ehrhardt, 2020) have addressed this archival gap, providing narrative accounts of British policy development through to 1943 (Hall) and 1945 (Ehrhardt).¹² Ehrhardt, in particular, is a significant contribution to the historiography though he focuses on the Foreign Office and has less to say about ministerial influence. He explicitly seeks to restore British agency, though his argument relies on showing how British ideas survived into the Charter rather than evidence of prevailing over US preferences.¹³

⁸ Jensen and Fisher, *The United Kingdom - the United Nations*; Gladwyn, 'The Historian as Diplomat (Book Review)'; Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*; Webster, 'The Making of the Charter of the United Nations', 16.

⁹ Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume V*. Woodward himself worked as a FO official during the war.

¹⁰ Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*. See also Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership*.

¹¹ Roberts, 'Britain and the Creation of the United Nations'.

¹² Hall, 'Shaping the Future of the World'; Ehrhardt, 'The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45'.

¹³ Ehrhardt, 'The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45', 8-9.

Most studies of immediate post-war British foreign policy do not address the UN and are dominated by the Cold War.¹⁴ The UN is only covered when directly involved in Cold War events (e.g., the Iran case 1946) or other themes such as decolonisation. There are copious works on individual UN cases, mainly in a Cold War context, but no history of British policy toward the UN in the early years of its existence that uses archival sources. As Roy Douglas (2004) notes, Geoffrey Goodwin (1957) is the only work dealing with the policies of the Attlee government at the UN and is “badly dated”, though Douglas’ work on the international policy of the Labour Party includes a useful chapter on the UN.¹⁵ Edward Johnson (1990, 1995, 2006) addresses British policy toward the UN, interpreting it as a reaction to Russian aggression and obstruction, though he focuses on security issues.¹⁶ He argues the British were disillusioned with the UN by the end of 1946 due to public disagreements with the Russians.¹⁷ Zulkanain Abdul Rahman’s (2006) thesis usefully highlights Attlee’s internationalism and Bevin’s more ambivalent response to the UN, but focuses on political and security issues.¹⁸ UK policy toward the UN, though, and the meaning of the organisation to UK policymakers, remains under-researched.

Realpolitik, Imperial, or Kantian?

UK policy toward the UN is most often located in a narrative of continuity with established patterns of British foreign policy.¹⁹ The UN is seen as a more efficient form of traditional diplomacy²⁰ or, more frequently, as a means of securing a US

¹⁴ The historiography on Britain and the early Cold War (the ‘First Cold War’) is immense. For an historiographical summary see for instance Weiler, ‘Britain and the First Cold War’; for a useful review of the main arguments of the immediate post-war phase of the Cold War see Deighton, ‘Britain and the Cold War, 1945–1955’.

¹⁵ Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, 13, fn8; Goodwin, *Britain and the United Nations*.

¹⁶ Johnson, ‘British Proposal for a United Nations Force, 1946-48’; Johnson, ‘Britain and the United Nations, 1946’; Johnson, ‘Early Indications of a Freeze’.

¹⁷ Johnson, ‘The Suez Crisis at the United Nations: The Effects for the Foreign Office and British Foreign Policy’, 165.

¹⁸ Rahman, ‘Attlee, Bevin and the Role of the United Nations 1945-1949’.

¹⁹ Watt, *Succeeding John Bull*; Steiner, ‘Power and Stability’; Dockrill and Hopkins, *The Cold War, 1945-1991*; Ovendale, *The English-Speaking Alliance*, 6–7.

²⁰ Goodwin, *Britain and the United Nations*, 446; Hoopes and Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the UN*, 207.

alliance or an extension of the wartime Grand Alliance as part of a balance of power strategy.²¹ Both American and British scholars assume the UN was a continuation of traditional power politics for British policymakers and not a break with tradition. This narrative differentiates realpolitik from idealism, equated with internationalism, which becomes mutually exclusive with realism. Any apparent idealism was to cover the realpolitik.²² Jebb later claimed British policy was a realpolitik strategy and denied the creation of the UN was an idealist project.²³ Hoopes and Brinkley are typical in arguing that the British “...viewed the UN as a useful addition to the range of instruments available to traditional diplomacy, but not as a replacement for them.”²⁴

Accounts of British foreign policy are dominated by the Cold War. Michael Dockrill (2006), Zara Steiner (2003) and D.C. Watt (1984) argue the key objective of British policy at the end of World War Two was to establish a counterweight to Russian power in Europe.²⁵ The British desire for an American commitment is central to this balance of power argument. This traditionalist argument stresses continuity in British foreign policy, with the UN a tactical detour to secure the American commitment before the onset of the Cold War made NATO and a direct American alliance possible.²⁶ It forms part of an Atlanticist Cold War narrative justifying British policy as consistent throughout the 1940s, with NATO as the culmination of a planned strategy to secure a US commitment unavailable in 1945 in a direct form. The UN was the price the reluctant British paid to secure the US commitment. It is an argument encouraged by the UK participants, especially Jebb, who claimed the British were the originators of the UN and tricked the Americans into thinking it was

²¹ Gladwyn, ‘Founding the United Nations: Principles and Objects’; Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume V*; Roberts, ‘Britain and the Creation of the United Nations’; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 40–41; Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*, 162, 169.

²² Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*.

²³ Gladwyn, ‘Founding the United Nations: Principles and Objects’, 25.

²⁴ Hoopes and Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the UN*, 207; See also the similar arguments made by British scholars of the 1970’s, Frankel, *British Foreign Policy, 1945-1973*; Northedge, *Descent from Power*.

²⁵ Dockrill and Hopkins, *The Cold War, 1945-1991*; Watt, *Succeeding John Bull*; Steiner, ‘Power and Stability’.

²⁶ Ovendale, *The Foreign Policy of the British Labour Governments, 1945-1951*, 7.

their own idea.²⁷ Greenwood agrees that “clinching Washington’s active involvement was the central game-plan”.²⁸ Many American scholars agree the British saw the UN as a means to obtain an American commitment, rather than something of value in its own right, though they challenge British claims to authorship.²⁹ As Stanley Meisler (1995) argues: “The United Nations was mainly an American idea...” with the British simply “humouring the Americans they needed desperately as allies”.³⁰

A related argument is that the UN was a deliberate institutionalisation of the concert model of the international system, dominated by the Great Powers, extending the wartime Grand Alliance into peacetime.³¹ Though the UN was “endowed with the trappings of universalism”, as Greenwood (2009) argues this was only cover for the Great Power concert.³² This, again, was in the tradition of British foreign policy. Although Justin Morris (2013) and Georg Schild (1995) argue that by Dumbarton Oaks the original plan for a Great Power directorate had been diluted by concessions to smaller powers, they suggest this was tactical to secure legitimacy for Great Power dominance.³³

There are three problems with this realpolitik literature. Firstly, it reduces British agency in the creation of the UN. Despite the claims of British participants, the UN is

²⁷ Gladwyn, ‘Founding the United Nations: Principles and Objects’; Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume V*; Webster, ‘The Making of the Charter of the United Nations’; Roberts, ‘Britain and the Creation of the United Nations’; Schild, *Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks*, 69; For a recent restatement of this narrative, see Burley and Davies, ‘Early Contributions’.

²⁸ Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*, 169.

²⁹ Hoopes and Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the UN*, 207; Schild, *Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks*, 69; Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership*.

³⁰ Meisler, *First Fifty Years*, 3; Hoopes and Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the UN*, 69–70, 207; Campbell, *Masquerade Peace*, 9–14.

³¹ Luard, *A History of the United Nations, Vol 1*, 19–20, 44. 68; Bosco, *Five to Rule Them All*; Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 26; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 40–41; Gladwyn, ‘Founding the United Nations: Principles and Objects’; Webster, ‘The Making of the Charter of the United Nations’; Roberts, ‘Britain and the Creation of the United Nations’.

³² Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*, 155,167-8.

³³ Morris, ‘From “Peace by Dictation” to International Organisation’; Schild, *Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks*; Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*; Webster, ‘The Making of the Charter of the United Nations’; Gladwyn, ‘Founding the United Nations: Principles and Objects’, 34.

usually seen as a “quintessentially American” initiative³⁴ either as FDR’s personal initiative³⁵ or as part of an American strategy of hegemony in the post war international order.³⁶ In this US-centred account the British simply follow America’s lead.³⁷ This implies a lesser British commitment to the UN. It also suggests policymakers may have accepted a structure they did not support to secure US commitment. The focus on Anglo-American relations also reduces the agency of other participants in the creation of the UN. This includes the Soviet Union, whose involvement was central, and welcome to the British. It further reduces the role of the smaller states and actors outside the Great Powers, including China, whose agency in the creation of the UN is only recently being restored.³⁸

Secondly, it understates British intentions for the UN to become a comprehensive site of international governance. The characterisation of UK policy toward the UN as ‘muscular internationalism’ (Douglas, 2004), ‘realist-internationalism’ (Ehrhardt, 2020) or ‘Hobbesian internationalism’ (Silviya Lechner, 2020) emphasises the political and military functions of the UN and promotes the associated narrative of the UN as a means to secure a traditional military alliance.³⁹ For Douglas (2004), British policy was based on “the military preponderance of the great powers”.⁴⁰ Webster’s assessment of the UN as “an Alliance of the Great Powers embedded in a

³⁴ Howard, ‘The United Nations’, 2; Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 949.

³⁵ Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945*; Divine, *Roosevelt and World War II*; Hoopes and Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the UN*; Glantz, *FDR and the Soviet Union: The President’s Battles Over Foreign Policy*; Costigliola, *Roosevelt’s Lost Alliances*; Butler, *Roosevelt and Stalin*.

³⁶ Hearden, *Architects of Globalism*, 2002; Ikenberry, *After Victory*; Ikenberry, ‘Liberal Internationalism 3.0’; Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan*; Wertheim, *Tomorrow, the World: The Birth of U. S. Global Supremacy*.

³⁷ Williams, *Failed Imagination?*; Hoopes and Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the UN*, 90–91; Hearden, *Architects of Globalism*, 2002.

³⁸ Loke, ‘Conceptualising the Role and Responsibility of Great Power’; Dietrichson and Sator, ‘Women and the UN’; Acharya, ‘“Idea-Shift”: How Ideas from the Rest Are Reshaping Global Order.’, 1157; Weiss and Roy, ‘The UN and the Global South, 1945 and 2015’; The same consideration applies to Bretton Woods. See Helleiner, *Forgotten Foundations of Bretton Woods*, 4–7.

³⁹ Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*; Ehrhardt, ‘The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45’; Lechner, *Hobbesian Internationalism*; For ‘Hobbesian idealism’, an interwar idea associated with Lowes Dickinson, see also Long, ‘Inter-War Idealism, Liberal Internationalism, and Contemporary International Theory’, 312.

⁴⁰ Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, 9; See also Vickers, *The Labour Party and the World. Volume 2. Labour’s Foreign Policy Since 1951*, 11, 185, 201.

universal organisation” has been much quoted, but most scholars emphasise the Great Power alliance over the ‘universal organisation’.⁴¹ However, rather than embed an alliance in a ‘universal organisation’, UK planners began with a four-power alliance and later built a general international organisation around it, as Morris (2013) has shown.⁴² As I will demonstrate in Chapter Two the general international organisation became their preferred end-point.

Thirdly, the focus on political and military security relegates economic, social and cultural issues and underestimates the extent to which the UN had meaning for UK policymakers as a way to manage international interdependence. Woodward (1975) largely ignores social and economic issues and does not mention ECOSOC. Douglas (2004) only mentions ECOSOC in passing.⁴³ Morris (2013) describes the UN as a “general security structure” and does not mention economic and social issues at all. Ehrhardt (2020) acknowledges them but treats them as peripheral.⁴⁴ Mazower (2004) argues the inclusion of responsibilities for issues such as individual human rights were a “necessary evil” to enable the UK to secure US commitment.⁴⁵ This problem is exacerbated by the tendency of the literature to treat Bretton Woods and the UN, misleadingly, as two distinct policy spheres. This leaves the preference for multilateral solutions across a range of governance domains unexplained. It also fails to address why economic and social functions featured so prominently in the Charter, both in the principles and purposes and in the substantive articles.

Mazower's (2009) argument that the UN was a British imperial project, with the UN founded on British imperial conceptions and its apparent American origins an "optical illusion" provides an alternative, though related, narrative.⁴⁶ The UN, he argues, was “the endgame of empire”, designed to protect the British territorial

⁴¹ Webster diary entry June 26, 1945, Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 69; quoted for instance in Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, 7; and Mazower, *Governing the World*, 209.

⁴² Morris, ‘From “Peace by Dictation” to International Organisation’.

⁴³ Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, 128, 150, 156.

⁴⁴ Morris, ‘From “Peace by Dictation” to International Organisation’, 526; Ehrhardt, ‘The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45’.

⁴⁵ Mazower, ‘Strange Triumph of Human Rights’, 387.

⁴⁶ Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, 11.

Empire.⁴⁷ This is a stronger claim than Britain used the UN to project power in a way that may be described as imperial. He agrees the UN was established as a Great Power concert, and the British saw it as a way of committing America to the defence of any post-war settlement, but goes further to suggest it incorporates the same British imperial ideas that underpinned the League of Nations which were then absorbed into the Charter.⁴⁸ Mazower bases his claim partly on the continuity of the UN from the League, widely perceived as protective of colonialism.⁴⁹

Mazower later retreated from the extreme version of his claim.⁵⁰ In later work he lays more emphasis on the projection of power through the UN by both the US and UK, looking not to empire as its model but to the 19th Century European alliance system.⁵¹ A similar point about projection of power is made by Wertheim (2020) with respect to US policy.⁵² This claim is closer to the *realpolitik* narrative, though Mazower also acknowledges the influence of New Deal technocracy (see below).⁵³ While Mazower's claim that the UN represents the dominance of the Great Powers is not controversial the claim of British authorship, via origination of the conceptions underpinning the Charter, has been challenged.⁵⁴ Glenda Sluga (2010) challenges Mazower's narrow view of internationalism, and his focus on imperial elements which represent just one strand of a far more diverse set of ideas.⁵⁵

⁴⁷ Mazower, 14, 30–31.

⁴⁸ Mazower, 14; Mazower, *Governing the World*, chap. 7.

⁴⁹ Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, 14, 190, 194; Pedersen, *The Guardians*; For continuities with the League see Rofe, 'Prewar and Wartime Postwar Planning: Antecedents to the UN Moment in San Francisco, 1945'; Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*; Cottrell, 'Lost in Transition? The League of Nations and the United Nations'; For doubts see Grigorescu, 'Mapping the UN–League of Nations Analogy'.

⁵⁰ Mazower accepted in an academic Round Table that "perhaps I exaggerate the case for seeing empire itself as the template of world order." 'H-Diplo Roundtable Reviews, Vol. XI, No 47 (2010), <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/Roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XI-47.Pdf>', 27.

⁵¹ Mazower, *Governing the World*, 213.

⁵² Wertheim, 'Instrumental Internationalism'.

⁵³ Mazower, *Governing the World*, 213.

⁵⁴ Rofe, 'Prewar and Wartime Postwar Planning: Antecedents to the UN Moment in San Francisco, 1945'. See also Helen McCarthy in a History Workshop Online Round Table, at <http://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/roundtable-governing-the-world-by-mark-mazower/>, October 2013, accessed April 14, 2016.

⁵⁵ Sluga, 'Review of No Enchanted Palace'.

The link to empire is reflected in literature regarding the UN as part of the longer-term development of international governance. David Long and Brian Schmidt (2005) link imperialism and internationalism intellectually, and Murphy (2018) connects empire, international institutions, and governance from the perspective of managing an increasingly interdependent global economy.⁵⁶ Taking this argument further, A.G. Hopkins and Peter Cain argue international organisations (including the UN) are an alternative means of ordering the world to replace territorial empires. Writing as historians of empire, they regard empires as structures enabling states to manage, and produce, globalisation. Hopkins (2019) suggests: “Imperialism...was a form of compulsory globalisation undertaken to cure, or at least ease, the strains of transition to the modern world.”⁵⁷ He relates stages of imperialism to stages of globalisation, which he traces back to at least the 17th century, and argues the second half of the 20th century involved a shift to ‘contemporary globalisation’ in which direct territorial control of colonies was no longer acceptable, practical or necessary.⁵⁸ For imperial states, including Britain, international organisations facilitated this change in imperial practice by enabling the projection of indirect power.⁵⁹ In this interpretation, rather than Mazower’s ‘endgame of empire’, the UN becomes the late 20th Century version, adapted to a globalised world. Or Rosenboim (2019) also argues that 1940s globalism in Britain and the US developed as an alternative to empire, a position closer to that of Hopkins than Mazower.⁶⁰ Quinn Slobodian (2018) makes a similar point with respect to a new global economic order.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Murphy, ‘The Emergence of Global Governance’, 25; Long and Schmidt, *Imperialism and Internationalism in the Discipline of International Relations*, 10–15.

⁵⁷ ‘H-Diplo XX-33 2019’, 25.

⁵⁸ Hopkins, ‘Rethinking Decolonization’, 242; Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism, 3rd Ed.*

⁵⁹ Hopkins argues “the means of exercising power in international relations after 1945 had altered radically in response to changes in the character of globalisation.” ‘H-Diplo XX-33 2019’, 25; Hopkins, ‘Back to the Future’; See his similar point about America in Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History*.

⁶⁰ Rosenboim, *The Emergence of Globalism*, 6–7; Hall, *Dilemmas of Decline*; Ashworth, ‘Of Global War and Global Futures. Rereading the 1940s with the Help of Rosenboim and Barkawi’, 4–5.

⁶¹ Slobodian, *Globalists*.

Whether the UN was simply a realpolitik projection of power (as Wertheim (2020) argues for US policy) or was imperial in nature depends on definitions of 'empire'. Defining empire as "when a stronger power subjects a weaker polity to its own preferences" (Naoko Shibusawa, 2021) is too imprecise to be of value analytically.⁶² Alternatively, Hopkins defines empire as direct territorial control and argues projection of power is not inevitably imperial.⁶³ Taking Hopkins' (2008) definition, the absence of territorial control suggests it was not 'imperial'. The UN becomes a means for UK policymakers to organise the international system to cope with globalisation after empire. This is also consistent with the critique of liberal internationalism that considers imperialism as fundamental to its practice and regards the UN as an instrument of post-colonial western global power projection.⁶⁴ That the UN reflects and reproduces asymmetric power, conferring a privileged position on the Great Powers, is widely accepted. Whether this is imperial is a question of definition.

While the realpolitik narrative draws a distinction between realism and supposed idealism, other scholars reconcile realpolitik with idealism and challenge the distinction between the two. Dan Plesch (2008, 2010) and Plesch and Thomas Weiss (2016), argue the UN represented the adoption of internationalism as a realist response to the challenges of the international system.⁶⁵ They disagree with Dunne and McDonald's (2013) declaration that "internationalism is incompatible with a strict logic of *raison d'état*".⁶⁶ They argue the destructiveness of modern warfare and the experience of two world wars meant liberal internationalism became the new realism and reversion to traditional power politics no longer appropriate. Its apparent idealism was, as Plesch and Weiss put it, a Kantian response to realist

⁶² Shibusawa, 'U.S. Empire and Racial Capitalist Modernity', 858; Doyle, *Empires*, 30.

⁶³ Hopkins, 'Rethinking Decolonization', 242; For Hopkins' definition of Empire see Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History*, 21–32. Hopkins suggests the US position after 1945 was 'post-colonial hegemonic'. Ibid.

⁶⁴ Jahn, *Liberal Internationalism: Theory, History, Practice*; Jahn, 'Liberal Internationalism'; Laffey and Nadarajah, 'The Hybridity of Liberal Peace: States, Diasporas and Insecurity'; Richmond, *The Transformation of Peace*.

⁶⁵ Plesch, *America, Hitler and the UN*; Plesch, 'How the United Nations Beat Hitler and Prepared the Peace'; Plesch and Weiss, '1945's Forgotten Insight'.

⁶⁶ Dunne and McDonald, 'The Politics of Liberal Internationalism', 8.

necessity.⁶⁷ As Weiss (2015) expressed it, internationalism was necessary to meet “the classical realist objective of ensuring state survival”.⁶⁸

Plesch (2008, 2010) makes three distinct, but related, claims. First, that the UN was a direct development of the wartime UN coalition against the Axis powers and a formalisation of the multilateral co-operation this coalition embodied, designed to extend into peacetime and to ‘win the peace’ as it had won the war. Although driven by Roosevelt’s America, it was a multilateral endeavour. Second, policymakers saw it as in their own national interest to adopt multilateral solutions to security in the international system. Third, policymakers believed peace and security depended upon social and economic security as well as military power.

Plesch emphasises the “liberal internationalist approach” of the UN, building on the “liberal cooperation” of the wartime UN, while Plesch and Weiss (2015) explicitly highlight the “investment in liberal internationalism to win World War II” by the wartime UN on which the organisation is based.⁶⁹ Ikenberry and Williams also describe the post-war order as liberal internationalist on the grounds it is “open and rules based”.⁷⁰ However, the term ‘liberal internationalist’ is flexible and historically contingent, and the nature of the post-war order and the intentions of its founders remains contested.

The historical literature on UK policy emphasises *realpolitik* over liberal internationalism. Ehrhardt (2020) recognises idealist liberal internationalism in UK policy alongside realism but his description of UK policy as ‘realist-internationalism’ treats realism and internationalism as two different concepts, and British policy a combination of the two, personified in the contrasting views of the ‘realist’ Jebb and

⁶⁷ Plesch and Weiss, ‘1945’s Forgotten Insight’.

⁶⁸ Weiss, ‘The United Nations: Before, During and After 1945’, 1233.

⁶⁹ Plesch, ‘How the United Nations Beat Hitler and Prepared the Peace’, 138; Plesch, *America, Hitler and the UN*, 2; Plesch and Weiss, ‘1945’s Forgotten Insight’, 8.

⁷⁰ Ikenberry, ‘Liberal Internationalism 3.0’, 72; Williams, *Liberalism and War*, 52; Williams, *Failed Imagination?*, 212.

the 'internationalist' Webster.⁷¹ Ehrhardt sees "an inherent tension between national interest and wider universal aspirations."⁷² Plesch, by contrast, argues such universal aspirations were in the national interest. Douglas' 'muscular internationalism' and the idea of 'Hobbesian internationalism' also combines two distinct concepts but emphasise power over internationalism.⁷³

In recent debates over the contemporary 'liberal international order' (LIO) Amitav Acharya (2017) Wertheim (2019) and Adam Tooze (2019) all question the liberalism of the UN System's founding principles.⁷⁴ As Louise Riis Andersen (2019) argues, "the problem is ... liberal amnesia: liberal internationalists have forgotten the pragmatic, even realist, roots of the rules-based world order that has the UN at its centre."⁷⁵ This gives historical study of the intentions of the UN's founders, based on archival sources, added contemporary relevance. However, Acharya and Plesch (2020) distinguish between the American-led LIO that emerged as the Cold War developed after 1948-49 and the universal and multipolar UN created in 1945, with considerable contributions from smaller states.⁷⁶ Ikenberry (2009) also identifies a liberal internationalism 1.5, between the Wilsonian 1.0 and the 2.0 of the post-war LIO, though he identifies this as "FDR's wartime vision of postwar order" rather than a broader international consensus.⁷⁷ Acharya and Plesch, though, argue that the UN order of 1945 was more liberal than it later became, and Ikenberry also regards it as

⁷¹ The realist/internationalist labels are Ehrhardt's. Ehrhardt, 'The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45', 186. Ehrhardt hyphenates the phrase as realist-internationalism, stressing the combination of two distinct ideas, *ibid* 3.

⁷² Ehrhardt, 187.

⁷³ Douglas describes 'muscular internationalism' as "the military predominance of the great powers" and is much closer to balance of power. Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, 9.

⁷⁴ Acharya, 'After Liberal Hegemony'; Wertheim, 'Instrumental Internationalism'; Tooze, 'A New Bretton Woods'; For examples of questioning the liberal nature of the UN's origins as a way of contesting the future of the liberal world order see also Andersen, 'Curb Your Enthusiasm'; Porter, 'A World Imagined: Nostalgia and Liberal Order'.

⁷⁵ Andersen, 'Curb Your Enthusiasm', 48.

⁷⁶ Acharya and Plesch, 'The United Nations: Managing and Reshaping a Changing World Order'; Tourinho, 'The Co-Constitution of Order'; Acharya, "'Idea-Shift": How Ideas from the Rest Are Reshaping Global Order.'

⁷⁷ Ikenberry, 'Liberal Internationalism 3.0', 76.

liberal.⁷⁸ This thesis argues UK visions of the UN in 1945 represented illiberal rather than liberal internationalism. It also accepts the argument that what has become known as the post-war LIO emerged only after 1949 as America chose to create a Western regime alongside the universal UN established in 1945. The period 1944-47 represented an interregnum offering an alternative vision of a multipolar post-war order that offers lessons for the post-Cold War order.

Economic and Social Functions, Bretton Woods and ECOSOC

Plesch's 'Kantian as realism' argument differs from the teleology of Evan Luard (1982) and Kennedy (2006) for whom the UN was a progressive evolution toward world government. Plesch and Weiss regard this as "pragmatic multilateralism", a realist response to the modern world.⁷⁹ Their argument is normative, so differs from the related but descriptive arguments of Murphy (1994), Iriye (2002), and Daniel Gorman (2012) that the growth of international institutions in the 19th and 20th centuries was a response to increased interdependence and changed patterns of economic activity created by technological change. Murphy and Iriye suggest a new way of managing the world emerged, evidenced by the rapid growth in international organisations from the second half of the 19th century, both intergovernmental and non-governmental, including the League of Nations and the UN.⁸⁰ Sluga (2013) argues this 'objective internationalism' in turn engendered a 'subjective internationalism', changes in social and political attitudes and behaviours which influenced the outlook of individuals and governments across the world, including the policymaking elite in Britain.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Acharya, *The End of American World Order*; Acharya and Plesch, 'The United Nations: Managing and Reshaping a Changing World Order'; Ikenberry, 'Liberal Internationalism 3.0', 76. Ikenberry regards both 1.5 and 2.0 as liberal as well as US-led.

⁷⁹ Plesch and Weiss, '1945's Forgotten Insight', 6. The term unconsciously invokes the British tradition of pragmatism in foreign policy. See chapter one below.

⁸⁰ For a summary of the growth of international and transnational organisations in the 19th and early 20th centuries see Iriye, *Global Community*; Reinalda, *Routledge History of International Organizations*; for a non-governmental perspective on the same phenomenon see Gorman, *International Cooperation in the Early Twentieth Century*; See also Murphy, *International Organization and Industrial Change: Global Governance since 1850*.

⁸¹ Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*, pp12-18. Sluga differentiates explicitly between 'objective internationalism' and the resulting change in political and social attitudes and behaviours this created which she views as 'subjective internationalism'; for subjective internationalism see

The liberal narrative of the UN does, though, take economic and social affairs more seriously than the realpolitik literature. It regularly references the New Deal as an American model exported to the global stage by Roosevelt’s administration.⁸² Elizabeth Borgwardt (2005) describes the New Deal as “a synthetic, institution-based, problem-solving approach that American policy-makers projected onto the post-war international arena.”⁸³ Similarly, Michael Barnett (2011) argues American officials “projected the New Deal onto the global stage”.⁸⁴ The UN thus becomes, in Borgwardt’s (2005) phrase, a “New Deal for the World”. As David Ellwood (2012) declares: “The birth of the United Nations represented the greatest triumph of the New Deal in its new globalist expression”, a projection of American values.⁸⁵ Borgwardt (2005) presents this as an American project, with the British position at best neutral. Borgwardt is “surprised” the British War Cabinet supported social welfare, but she fails to connect the presence in the War Cabinet of Labour Ministers such as Attlee and Bevin with the domestic welfare agenda of post-war Britain.⁸⁶ Andrew Williams (2007) and Ikenberry (2001, 2009, 2011) also regard the liberal international post-war order as American.⁸⁷

However, this US-led New Deal for the world has been questioned. Kiran Klaus Patel (2016) argues the New Deal itself borrowed heavily from currents of thought developed around the world in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and its impact on the post-war order built on similar ideas already present elsewhere, including

Steger and James, ‘Levels of Subjective Globalization: Ideologies, Imaginaries, Ontologies.’; for a related account of ‘cultural internationalism’ as distinct from objective internationalism see Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order*; for the increase in transnational and non-governmental internationalism arising from this increased interconnectedness see Gorman, *The Emergence of International Society in the 1920s*.

⁸² Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 2005; Burley, ‘Regulating the World: Multilateralism, International Law, and the Projection of the New Deal Regulatory State’.

⁸³ Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 2007, p61, 77–78; Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan*, p304.

⁸⁴ Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 100.

⁸⁵ Ellwood, *The Shock of America*, 235.

⁸⁶ Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 2005, 55–56; Sherwood, *White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, 450–51.

⁸⁷ For Williams, Britain was America’s ‘First Follower’ Williams, *Failed Imagination?*, 109; Ikenberry describes America as the ‘owner and operator’ of the post-war order Ikenberry, ‘Liberal Internationalism 3.0’, 76.

Britain.⁸⁸ It was thus not imposed by the US but represented broader developments. Jens Steffek and Leonie Holthaus (2018) also question the narrative that the UN's social and economic agenda was a translation of domestic policies of the US New Deal or 1940s British domestic welfarism to an international context. They identify a 'Welfare Internationalism' intended to supersede national welfare provision through international, or supranational, bodies, specifically the UN System. They connect this to Gunnar Myrdals' 1950's calls for a 'welfare world' to supplement the 'welfare state' and argue it was derived (as was the New Deal and British welfare ideas) from 19th century European (including British) social democratic traditions of civic welfare provision for individuals, which was a transnational phenomenon by-passing states. This, they argue inspired 20th Century international organisations, including the ILO, the Bretton Woods institutions and the wider UN System of Specialised Agencies.⁸⁹ They also point to the influence of paternalistic British colonialism.⁹⁰ As with Patel (2016), the New Deal and British welfarism simply reflected longer term trends emphasising state intervention and planning.⁹¹

In a related literature, John Ruggie's influential 'embedded liberalism' argues the post-war institutional framework was designed to support a compromise between liberal international markets and domestic economic intervention to support state provision of welfare and full employment, though unlike Steffek and Holthaus Ruggie

⁸⁸ For accounts placing the New Deal within more global developments, both before and after the 1930s, see Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, pp409-66; and Patel, *The New Deal*; For the influence of the New Deal outside the US see Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*.

⁸⁹ Steffek and Holthaus, 'The Social-Democratic Roots of Global Governance: Welfare Internationalism from the 19th Century to the United Nations'. Steffek and Holthaus credit Suganami (1989, 118-20) with coining the term 'Welfare Internationalism' as part of his domestic analogy argument which sees the UN's social and economic objectives as the translation of domestic concerns to the international sphere. See also Reinisch's 'missionary internationalism' (Reinisch 2011, 269), which she associates with the humanitarian concerns addressed by UNRRA. Steffek and Holthaus place more importance on rational political (Fabian) motivation than Reinisch's emphasis on the imperial paternalism of humanitarian internationalism in bodies such as UNRRA. Steffek and Holthaus argue (2018, 122) that these ideas of international welfare were 'firmly established in transnational elites' before Roosevelt and Keynes, and were not primarily the result of US and UK domestic experiences translated to wider stage.

⁹⁰ Steffek and Holthaus, 111–15. Note the authors do not use British archival sources.

⁹¹ Patel, *The New Deal*; Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, 409–66.

assumes the latter remained a national, not international, responsibility.⁹² Eric Helleiner (2019) argues that the commitment to “active public management of the economy” implicit in Bretton Woods, including not only welfare but state-led development and even central planning, was even stronger than Ruggie suggests.⁹³ Helleiner also identifies more support for international economic intervention through the Bretton Woods institutions than Ruggie, though this was more contested, especially by American financial interests.⁹⁴ Slobodian (2018) has also pointed out that even neo-liberals in the 1940s, including Friedrich Hayek, accepted the need for multilateral organisations to protect the international economic order, though they challenged active intervention.⁹⁵

In these perspectives Bretton Woods is part of a wider UN System. The literature on UK post-war economic planning is vast and comprehensive.⁹⁶ It covers Bretton Woods and the Article VII negotiations, including the ITO/GATT, in what Francine McKenzie (2017) has called the “long Bretton Woods”.⁹⁷ The core narrative is of Anglo-American contestation (often personalised to Keynes versus White) which the Americans win.⁹⁸ I am not challenging this literature except to emphasise that UK policymakers regarded this long Bretton Woods and the UN as a single project. The UN and the Bretton Woods institutions are usually treated as separate policy areas.⁹⁹ The UN literature especially stresses the separation of the Bretton Woods

⁹² Ruggie, ‘International Regimes, Transactions, and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Postwar Economic Order’, 393; Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*.

⁹³ Helleiner, ‘The Life and Times of Embedded Liberalism: Legacies and Innovations Since Bretton Woods’, 1113. Helleiner uses the term ‘active public management’ rather than ‘interventionism’ to strengthen his meaning as even free markets require regulatory ‘intervention’ whereas ‘active management’ implies greater involvement. Ibid 1117, fn5.

⁹⁴ Helleiner, 1116–19.

⁹⁵ Slobodian, *Globalists*; Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, chap. 15; Helleiner, ‘The Life and Times of Embedded Liberalism: Legacies and Innovations Since Bretton Woods’, 1118.

⁹⁶ Tomlinson (1997), p26 called it “the most intensively studied topic in modern economic history”, though the flood of new writing shows no sign of abating. Tomlinson, *Democratic Socialism and Economic Policy*, 26. See for instance; Penrose, *Economic Planning for the Peace*; Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy*; Pressnell, *External Economic Policy Since the War. Volume 1*; Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*; Dormael, *Bretton Woods*; Steil, *The Battle of Bretton Woods*; Zeiler, *Free Trade, Free World*; Rauchway, *The Money Makers*.

⁹⁷ McKenzie, ‘Where Was Trade at Bretton Woods?’, 264.

⁹⁸ Steil, *The Battle of Bretton Woods*; Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy*.

⁹⁹ Exceptions include Schild, *Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks*; Plesch, *America, Hitler and the UN*; and Williams, *Failed Imagination?*

institutions from the UN. The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations (2008) calls them “other actors”, distinct from the UN System, not even “sister institutions” but “more like distant cousins”.¹⁰⁰ Hans Singer (1995), Kennedy (2006) and Peter Wilenski (1993) suggest the IMF and IBRD were deliberately constructed by the founders of the UN to be separate from the rest of the UN System.¹⁰¹ Some (Gert Rosenthal, 2005, 2018; Mahbub ul Haq, 1995; Singer, 1995) argue this separation was engineered to ensure both Agencies could operate under US and British control through weighted voting systems without the interference of the less controllable United Nations.¹⁰² These works do not use UK archival sources but argue back from the subsequent evolution of the UN and the separation of the Bretton Woods institutions from the rest of the UN System.

Similar arguments are made with respect to other Specialised Agencies and related bodies, the histories of which tend to deal with each as separate entities, usually distinct from the UN.¹⁰³ This suggests the UN System was created to be loose and functional.¹⁰⁴ Weiss et al (2010) argue it was designed to be “decentralised”¹⁰⁵ while Leon Gordenker (2018) argues it was less a UN ‘System’ and more “a clan, a loose collection”.¹⁰⁶ This assumption of separation is also evident in literature that uses archival sources, such as Thomas Zeiler (1999) McKenzie (2018) and John Toye and Richard Toye (2004), who address the ITO, Havana and GATT in the context of post-war trade and economic policy rather than as an integral part of a wider UN

¹⁰⁰ Woods, ‘Bretton Woods’, 235.

¹⁰¹ Singer, ‘Bretton Woods and the UN System’; Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 115–17; Wilenski, ‘The Structure of the UN in the Post-Cold War Period’, 459–60.

¹⁰² Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations: An Issues Paper*, 15 : Occasional papers-New York:38; Rosenthal, ‘Economic and Social Council’; Haq, ‘An Economic Security Council’, 22; Singer, ‘Bretton Woods and the UN System’.

¹⁰³ Kapur, Lewis, and Webb, *The World Bank: Its First Half Century*; Mason and Asher, *The World Bank since Bretton Woods*.

¹⁰⁴ Luard, *A History of the United Nations, Vol 1*, 13–14; Dadzie, ‘The UN and the Problem of Economic Development’, 316; Claude, *Swords Into Plowshares*, chap. 17; Burley and Browne, ‘The United Nations and Development: From the Origins to Current Challenges’, 144–48; Gordenker, ‘The UN System’, 225–26.

¹⁰⁵ Weiss, Thakur, and Ruggie, *Global Governance and the UN: An Unfinished Journey*, 157.

¹⁰⁶ Gordenker, ‘The UN System’, 223.

System.¹⁰⁷ Richard Toye (2003) highlights the commitment to multilateralism by the UK and US in the Havana ITO negotiations but does not address the relationship with the wider UN.¹⁰⁸ Amy Staples (2006), using archival sources, identifies the 1940s as the “Birth of Development” and places the World Bank, FAO and WHO within a UN System to be overseen by ECOSOC, but she is critical of the perceived lack of UK (and US) support for internationalism.¹⁰⁹ She argues internationalist ‘expert’ bankers in the World Bank strived to prevent interference from a ‘political’ UN.¹¹⁰

If the UN was to have a centralised economic and social structure, then ECOSOC would be the coordinating body. ECOSOC lacks a clear historical treatment¹¹¹ but is accused of being an irrelevant talking shop, ‘peripheral’ and ‘unimportant’, and intended to be so by the founders of the UN.¹¹² Amy Sayward (2017) is more positive and argues ECOSOC was designed to “oversee” the Specialised Agencies, while Murphy (2018) cautiously describes its role as “light oversight over a system of relatively autonomous UN specialised agencies”.¹¹³ Neither Ruggie (1982, 1998) nor Helleiner (2019) identify a role for ECOSOC and the UN in providing “active public management” of the international economy in the 1940s.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁷ Zeiler, *Free Trade, Free World*; McKenzie, *GATT and Global Order in the Postwar Era*; Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*.

¹⁰⁸ See also Toye, ‘Developing Multilateralism’; Toye, ‘The Attlee Government, the Imperial Preference System and the Creation of the Gatt’; Toye, ‘The Labour Party’s External Economic Policy in the 1940s’.

¹⁰⁹ Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 6–7.

¹¹⁰ Staples, 22–26.

¹¹¹ Speich Chasse, ‘Technical Internationalism and Economic Development at the Founding Moment of the UN System’, 25–27.

¹¹² Nicholas, *The United Nations as a Political Institution*, 138; Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations: An Issues Paper*; Rosenthal, ‘Economic and Social Council’; Simma et al., *The Charter of the United Nations: A Commentary*; Dadzie, ‘The UN and the Problem of Economic Development’, 316; Burley and Browne, ‘The United Nations and Development: From the Origins to Current Challenges’, 146–48.

¹¹³ Sayward, *The United Nations in International History*, chap. 4; Murphy, ‘The Emergence of Global Governance’, 29.

¹¹⁴ Ruggie, ‘International Regimes, Transactions, and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Postwar Economic Order’, 398, fn54; See also Ruggie, ‘Political Structure and Change in the International Economic Order’, 429–30; Helleiner, ‘The Life and Times of Embedded Liberalism: Legacies and Innovations Since Bretton Woods’, 1116–19.

In the 1990's a new literature emerged amongst those seeking UN reform, inspired by the human security turn, who argued the founders of the UN intended a more active and integrated UN System in which social and economic objectives were central to the organisation's purpose.¹¹⁵ Erskine Childers and Brian Urquhart (1994) argue the founders intended ECOSOC to be a powerful 'Economic Security Council' of the UN, though the powers granted it in the Charter have never been used.¹¹⁶ These claims are supported with textual analysis of the Charter provisions but with limited archival evidence. Recent historians of the League also identify continuities from interwar internationalism and agree ECOSOC was expected to play an important role. In her pioneering work on the League's Economic Section, Patricia Clavin (2013) refers to "the often forgotten" ECOSOC, "which was intended to act as the lynchpin in relations between the Bretton Woods institutions and the humanitarian agenda of a new organisation to replace the League...".¹¹⁷ Steffek and Holthaus (2018) also suggest welfare internationalism was to be delivered through the UN System and Weiss et al (2010) identify ECOSOC with notions of "welfare internationalism".¹¹⁸

The British role in this agenda is contested and the role of ECOSOC in British plans for the post-war order is under-researched. The British position is often subsumed into a generic 'Western' position unsupportive of a strong ECOSOC. Where it is singled out the UK is seen as opposing a strong ECOSOC,¹¹⁹ regarding it as an insignificant talking

¹¹⁵ Childers and Urquhart, *Renewing the United Nations System*; Jolly, Emmerij, and Ghai, *UN Contributions to Development Thinking and Practice*, 5–15; Emmerij, Jolly, and Weiss, *Ahead of the Curve?*; Meier and Seers, *Pioneers in Development*; Haq, 'An Economic Security Council', 22; Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*; Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*, 88–89; Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 114–15 though Kennedy argues ECOSOC was a secondary organ; Helleiner, 'Back to the Future?'; for the intention to build economic development into the original objectives of the UN Agencies see also Helleiner, *Forgotten Foundations of Bretton Woods*.

¹¹⁶ Childers and Urquhart, *Renewing the United Nations System*, 57.

¹¹⁷ Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*, 307–8, 356.

¹¹⁸ Steffek and Holthaus, 'The Social-Democratic Roots of Global Governance: Welfare Internationalism from the 19th Century to the United Nations'; Weiss, Thakur, and Ruggie, *Global Governance and the UN: An Unfinished Journey*, 157–58.

¹¹⁹ Kaufmann, 'The Economic and Social Council and The New International Economic Order', 54; Sharp, *The United Nations Economic and Social Council*, 3; Campbell, *Masquerade Peace*, 35; Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*, 25.

shop,¹²⁰ or conspiring to side-line it in favour of the supposedly more malleable Bretton Woods institutions.¹²¹ Goodwin's (1957) comment that ECOSOC "was not regarded by most of those who had been at Bretton Woods as of great importance..." is typical.¹²² The official history of British post-war external economic policy only mentions the UN once, in passing, and ECOSOC not at all.¹²³ Toye and Toye (2004) regard ECOSOC as an American initiative with little British commitment.¹²⁴ However, Helleiner (2013) argues a wider social agenda was supported by UK policymakers and was integral to early Bretton Woods plans, though Britain was "lukewarm and inconsistent" about development and he neglects ECOSOC.¹²⁵ It was also consistent with British post-war plans for a domestic welfare state. The literature presenting Bretton Woods as an Anglo-American tussle suggests the outcome was a compromise between the two. Richard Gardner (1980) and Ikenberry (1992) argue British commitment to full employment and economic management successfully balanced American free trade preferences.¹²⁶ Although Hilderbrand (1990) acknowledges that by Dumbarton Oaks British policymakers viewed economic and social cooperation as integral to the world organisation the role of ECOSOC in British plans for the post-war order is under-researched and the claims for an 'Economic Security Council' remain untested against archival evidence.

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The argument that the apparent idealism of a powerful, interventionist, world organisation was a realist response to the modern world is suggestive but needs to be tested further in the archives. The liberal internationalist literature takes

¹²⁰ Goodwin referred to it as an "irritating international 'busybody'", Goodwin, *Britain and the United Nations*, 17–18; Kennedy (2006) argues British policymakers saw it as a secondary organ Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 114–15.

¹²¹ Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations: An Issues Paper*; Rosenthal, 'Economic and Social Council'.

¹²² Goodwin, *Britain and the United Nations*, 279.

¹²³ Pressnell, *External Economic Policy Since the War. Volume 1*.

¹²⁴ Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*, 25.

¹²⁵ Helleiner, 'Back to the Future?', 300–302; Helleiner, *Forgotten Foundations of Bretton Woods*, chap. 8; Helleiner, 'The Life and Times of Embedded Liberalism: Legacies and Innovations Since Bretton Woods'.

¹²⁶ Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy*; Ikenberry, 'A World Economy Restored'.

¹²⁷ Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 86.

economic and social affairs more seriously than the realpolitik literature but its focus on America and the New Deal narrative obscures the British position and suggests UK policymakers placed a low priority on economic and social cooperation. The literature is also unclear how such intervention was to be managed within the UN System, leaving the Bretton Woods institutions detached from ECOSOC and the UN. The Bretton Woods literature itself, though copious and based on archival evidence, also treats the Bretton Woods institutions as detached from the UN. ECOSOC has been neglected and where it has been addressed the British position is assumed to be antagonistic to a strong ECOSOC. This is exacerbated by the lack of archival sources in much of the UN literature on the nature of the UN System and the role of ECOSOC during the creation and early years of the UN, which relies not on archival research but analysis of the Charter and the later development of the UN.

Literature Review Conclusion

The dominant literature on British foreign policy stresses realpolitik and the UN as a means to secure a US commitment. This neglects UK policymakers' conception of the UN as a broad system of international governance and the significance of economic and social affairs. Also, the historiographical separation of Bretton Woods from the UN obscures their simultaneous creation, largely by the same individuals, and with the same motivations, springing from a shared view of the international system. The literature on UN economic and social functions contains two contrasting arguments. The argument that the founders, including the British, engineered a weak ECOSOC and a loose UN System is inconsistent with claims the founders envisaged ECOSOC as a strong Economic Security Council coordinating economic policy. These competing claims will be tested through examination of the archives.

This thesis will also test the competing claims on the nature of British internationalism. The proliferation of labels for UK policy toward the UN outline three subtly different positions. Douglas' 'muscular internationalism' changes the nature of British internationalism to make it more 'realist'; Plesch's 'Kantian out of realist necessity' changes the nature of realism to make it internationalist; in

Ehrhardt's 'realist-internationalism' the two coexist alongside each other. This leaves the balance of realism and internationalism, or idealism, disputed. If it can be shown that the UN's economic and social responsibilities were significant and UK policymakers sought to create a strong, broad, UN System it will support the argument they saw internationalism as a realist strategy to manage the modern world. The UN would be more than a narrow security system backed by military force. That UK policymakers sought to project power through a world organisation and maximise Britain's position is uncontroversial. The outstanding question is what kind of organisation they believed they were creating and what this implies about the nature of the UN (and potentially the liberal world order) from the perspective of one of its key founders.

Methodology and Scope

This thesis is a work of archival international history with an analytical narrative. It addresses gaps in the literature on British foreign policy and the UN by exploring the meaning the UN held for elite UK state policymakers at the founding and early years of the organisation through analysis of the formulation and execution of policy. It assumes that international society exists "as a contingent construct ... in the minds of actors and observers, rather than some kind of structure, and use[s] official documents and statements, but also memoirs, biographies and interviews and other means of accessing the interpretations that actors have of their actions."¹²⁸ It is not a narrative account of post-war planning or Britain's relationship with the UN. The processes of wartime policymaking have been well-documented and are only addressed where necessary to evidence or contextualise the argument.¹²⁹

It uses primary material from state archives, the UK National Archives, and the private papers and diaries of key participants. The state archives include Cabinet

¹²⁸ Bevir and Hall, 'The English School and the Classical Approach: Between Modernism and Interpretivism', 164.

¹²⁹ Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume V*; Hall, 'Shaping the Future of the World'; Ehrhardt, 'The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45'; See also Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*.

minutes and memoranda, the Prime Minister's office (PREM series material), and departmental records, mainly Foreign Office but also other departments (Board of Trade, Treasury, Ministry of Food) where relevant. This is supplemented by private papers and diaries from key participants, including (but not exclusively) politicians such as Clement Attlee and Ernest Bevin, Philip Noel-Baker, Hugh Dalton, Anthony Eden and Richard Law; plus, officials such as Alec Cadogan, Lionel Robbins, James Meade, David Mitrany, Gladwyn Jebb and Charles Webster. The published diaries of Webster are an especially rich source, well annotated by the editors Philip Reynolds and Emmet Hughes, which have been supplemented with unpublished entries in the LSE archives.¹³⁰ The published wartime Cadogan diaries have been well-mined previously but the unpublished post-1945 diaries provide useful insight into the daily relationship with the UN in New York.¹³¹ Biographies of the key actors provide curated accounts of policymaking, with those for Keynes and Robbins especially useful.¹³² Biographies of Attlee, Bevin and other political figures generally ignore the UN. Lord Bullock's Bevin ascribes a peripheral role to the UN and only deals with the organisation as it impacts specific issues, usually tangentially.¹³³ The published memoirs of participants are not always reliable, but Webster's 1946 account is near contemporary and consistent with his unpublished diaries.¹³⁴

UK sources are supplemented with published archival records from other states (US, Canadian, Australian) to triangulate the British record with that of other national actors. Two conferences of Dominion Prime Ministers in May 1944 (before Dumbarton Oaks) and April 1945 (before San Francisco) provide special insight to UK policymaker thinking at critical moments.¹³⁵ In addition, this thesis uses records of the proceedings of UN meetings and conferences, such as Bretton Woods, San

¹³⁰ Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*.

¹³¹ Dilks, *Cadogan Diaries*.

¹³² Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*; Howson, *Lionel Robbins*.

¹³³ Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.2, Minister of Labour, 1940-1945*; Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.3, Foreign Secretary, 1945-1951*.

¹³⁴ Webster, 'The Making of the Charter of the United Nations'.

¹³⁵ Detailed verbatim records are in CAB 99/28 (May 1944) and CAB 99/30 (April 1945).

Francisco (the United Nations Conference on International Organisation, or UNCIO) and meetings of UN organs.

This is a history of policy, not an intellectual history. There have been multiple works of intellectual history on the development of internationalism and its relationship to nationalism and the state but few that have gone further to understand how this impacted on policymakers and ultimately policy.¹³⁶ Although this thesis seeks to understand the link between ideas and policy, it emphasises policy. Whilst discourse is significant, praxis reveals underlying priorities. It uses policy discourse as evidence but places greater weight on policy documents shared with other states (especially the British Dumbarton Oaks proposals) which make explicit or implicit commitments; and arguments made in international fora, such as UN conferences, conferences with other states (US, Russia, the Dominions), the Security Council, ECOSOC, General Assembly etc. It places most value on actions taken rather than statements made and it especially values costs incurred (financial, military, political capital) and commitments made and implemented, including formal rules of operation in international institutions and formal votes made in those institutions. This is most evident in 1945-47, when policy moved from planning to daily operations.

This thesis does not address economic policy, except where relevant to understand decisions made about the political management of economic and social issues through multilateral cooperation. It regards Bretton Woods and the UN as elements of what was intended to be a single system of international governance and treats political and economic post-war international planning as elements of a single process, addressing the historiographical separation of Bretton Woods from the UN. However, it does not attempt to add to the extensive Bretton Woods literature except to understand the connection between the institutions and the wider UN System. By restoring the connection between Bretton Woods and the UN it contributes to a better understanding of the UN and the wider UN System.

¹³⁶ Navari, *Internationalism and the State in the Twentieth Century*; Hall, *Dilemmas of Decline*; Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*; Rosenboim, *The Emergence of Globalism*.

The term 'international governance' is used throughout since 'global governance' is anachronistic in the context of British post-war planning. The term 'governance' was occasionally used by policymakers, as in September 1942, when the Foreign Office Legal Adviser William Malkin spoke explicitly of the "schemes such as are now under consideration for the better governance of the world in future."¹³⁷ Accepting Thomas Weiss and Rorden Wilkinson's (2014) definition of global governance as attempts to address problems beyond the capabilities of individual states through cooperative problem-solving arrangements short of world government, then the UN System had meaning as a site of governance in this sense for policymakers.¹³⁸ However, the UN System as conceived by UK policymakers in the 1940s was state-led, and therefore intergovernmental, and it lacked the transnational dimension usually associated today with 'global governance'. For this reason, the thesis follows Volker Rittberger (2002) and uses the term 'international governance' as better reflecting the state-based nature of the governance structure they sought to build.¹³⁹

For reasons of space, I say little on colonial policy and the Trusteeship Council, except where it sheds light on UK policymaker understanding of the UN. UK policymakers avoided discussion of colonial issues where possible, and the Trusteeship provisions of the Charter were a price it was deemed necessary to pay to secure agreement on the Charter.¹⁴⁰ The Trusteeship Council did not meet until 1947, and decolonisation became a pressing issue in the UN only after the period covered by this thesis. Rather than address questions of the imperial nature of British policy and the UN directly I focus on whether UK policymakers were looking

¹³⁷ September 17, 1942, minute by Malkin on Coulson paper August 1942 on approaches to disarmament. Malkin was arguing in favour of large-scale disarmament after the war. FO371/31514 U636/27/70.

¹³⁸ Weiss and Wilkinson, 'Rethinking Global Governance'.

¹³⁹ Rittberger, *Global Governance and the United Nations System*, 2.

¹⁴⁰ For Trusteeship see Louis, *Imperialism at Bay, 1941-1945*; Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, chap. 6; For differences over Trusteeship between Attlee and Bevin see Rahman, 'Attlee, Bevin and the Role of the United Nations 1945-1949', chap. 3 though note Rahman's belief the UN was designed to encourage decolonisation leads him to misinterpret Bevin's support for the British Empire as opposition to the UN in principle.

to restore a 19th Century vision of world order or whether their frame of reference was governance in an increasingly interdependent and globalised world.

This thesis covers the period from the beginning of UK post-war planning, in 1941-42, to 1947, after the UN had commenced operations. The 1940s were a period of rapid change, which David Reynolds describes as “the most dramatic and decisive” decade of the 20th century.¹⁴¹ For Sluga (2013) this was the “apogee of internationalism”, while Borgwardt (2005) writes of “the heady multilateralist zeitgeist of 1945”.¹⁴² The period before 1947 predates the irretrievable breakdown of relations between the Soviet Union and the Western powers and is a time when the cooperation of the Great Powers, upon which the security provisions of the Charter were predicated, remained possible. It regards the mid-1940s as an interregnum, a period of possible internationalist futures, reflecting Acharya and Plesch’s argument of a UN separate from the later LIO and Ikenberry’s identification of a liberal internationalism 1.5 in this period.¹⁴³

This perspective reduces the analytical distraction of the Cold War. The UN was created with the cooperation of the Soviets: an outstanding feature of both Dumbarton Oaks and San Francisco (UNCIO) is the extent of agreement reached between the major powers in such a short time. At UNCIO the greatest divisions were between the Great Power sponsors and the smaller states.¹⁴⁴ The UK, US and Soviet Union maintained a united front cooperating against incessant pressure from other states, and even the dispute over the veto was over a relatively small detail.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War*, 1.

¹⁴² Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*, 79; Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 2005, 250.

¹⁴³ Acharya and Plesch, ‘The United Nations: Managing and Reshaping a Changing World Order’; Ikenberry, ‘Liberal Internationalism 3.0’, 76.

¹⁴⁴ This thesis uses the term ‘small states’ to mean those states that were not the Great Powers of the US, UK and Russia. It denotes ‘less powerful’ rather than geographically small, though it encompasses a large range of states with different capabilities and situations. This approach is justified by the common positions frequently taken by these states during the creation and early years of the UN. China also adopted positions common amongst ‘small states’ despite their nominal Great Power status, reflecting China’s recent historical experience.

¹⁴⁵ The debate was over whether parties to a dispute could vote. This had moral authority implications but not practical. The use of proxies meant that a party to a dispute did not cast a veto until October

All three agreed with the principle of the veto. British policy within the UN was predicated on continued Great Power cooperation.

The thesis thus straddles the supposed break point of 1945. Much of the literature treats 1945 as a 'year zero'. Accounts of the origins of the UN end in 1945 (Ehrhardt, 2020; Hoopes & Brinkley, 1997; Harden, 2002; Russell, 1957) while histories of the UN typically only sketch a wartime pre-history. This has been challenged, especially by the literature stressing continuity with the League, and by the *longue durée* perspective of scholars such as Murphy and Iriye.¹⁴⁶ The mid-20th century has been described as a 'trans-war' period and, as Lucian Ashworth (2020) points out, taking a wider view turns 1945 from a 'pivot point' and places it in a wider 'pivot period' of rapid change.¹⁴⁷ The lived experience of UK policymakers was one of continuity, especially as many remained in office throughout this period. Encompassing both wartime planning and the early years of the UN enables this thesis to address the counter-argument that professions of internationalism, especially economic and social, were wartime political rhetoric, to be ditched as soon as the UN began operations.

This thesis focuses on elite policymakers in the British state. Britain's central role in the creation of the UN, its position as a permanent member of the Security Council and leading position in the Bretton Woods institutions makes the British state especially significant for the UN. The thesis seeks to understand why national policymakers adopted internationalist strategies. Sluga and Clavin (2016) are critical of the "prison-house of national norms" in state-based accounts of encounters with internationalism, but one cannot be understood without the other.¹⁴⁸ As Sunil

1956 (SR 749), when Britain and France cast vetoes over Suez. Moldaver, 'Repertoire of the Veto in the Security Council, 1946-1956'.

¹⁴⁶ Jackson and O'Malley, 'Rocking on Its Hinges? The League of Nations, the United Nations and the New History of Internationalism in the Twentieth Century', 3-4.

¹⁴⁷ Ashworth, 'Of Global War and Global Futures. Rereading the 1940s with the Help of Rosenboim and Barkawi'.

¹⁴⁸ Sluga and Clavin, 'Rethinking the History of Internationalism', 7; See also Sluga, 'Turning International: Foundations of Modern International Thought and New Paradigms for Intellectual History', 104.

Amrith and Glenda Sluga (2008) acknowledged: “The tension between nationalism and internationalism ... is at the very heart of the UN's intellectual history.”¹⁴⁹ The UN was created as a state-centred institution, by states for states. Arguably the mid-1940s, at the end of a total war in which the state commanded resources in ways never previously seen, represents the peak of state power. Iriye (2014) notes that the UN and related bodies are intergovernmental not transnational: “They belong properly in the discussion of international affairs rather than of transnational history...”.¹⁵⁰ With the transnational turn in international history in the past twenty years Weiss (2015) argues that the “analytical pendulum has swung too far” toward non-state actors and calls for a research agenda that includes case studies of national responses to the UN, and even historians of the transnational acknowledge the continued centrality of the state.¹⁵¹ As Clavin (2011) says, you cannot avoid the state.¹⁵² More pointedly, Iriye (2008) suggests: “The key to understanding the development of global history, particularly in the contemporary era, would be to see how transnational forces and national sovereignties intersect one another.”¹⁵³ It is at the nexus of state and international organisation where power is most critically deployed. This thesis examines this from the perspective of UK elite policymakers.

The focus is on elite policymakers within the state rather than the state as an essential actor. For convenience this thesis refers to ‘British’, ‘UK’ and ‘Britain’, but only to summarise a policy agreed or pursued by policymakers and is not meant to imply an essentialised state as an autonomous actor. State policy arises from the social interaction of individuals operating within an institutional structure. Although there was little debate whether a world organisation was needed the shape and nature of the organisation was contested. In the creation of the UN, debates within national policymaking structures were as contested as those between states. The

¹⁴⁹ Amrith and Sluga, ‘New Histories of the United Nations’, 273.

¹⁵⁰ Iriye, *Global Interdependence: The World after 1945*, 722.

¹⁵¹ Iriye, ‘The Transnational Turn’; Weiss, ‘The United Nations: Before, During and After 1945’, 1234; Parmar, *Think Tanks and Power in Foreign Policy*, 219. Reinisch points to the risk the state “falls out of focus completely,” Reinisch, ‘Introduction: Agents of Internationalism’, 199–200.

¹⁵² Clavin, ‘Interwar Internationalism’, 11; Rietzler, ‘Interwar Internationalism: Conceptualising Transnational Thought and Action, 1919-1939’.

¹⁵³ Iriye, ‘Environmental History and International History’, 644.

intersectional character of individual policymakers, especially through epistemic communities of academics and those with direct experience of the League and its associated agencies, meant policymakers operated beyond the narrow boundaries of state decision-making processes. Nor does the thesis suggest the UN is a mere epiphenomenon of states.¹⁵⁴ The UN becomes an actor, with its own agency, and the British state develops a relationship with the UN, though this is beyond my current scope.

Policymakers

This thesis defines policymaking elite as those individuals with direct influence over the policy of the British state. It focuses on those with direct responsibility for the formulation and implementation of British government policy with respect to the UN, who can commit state resources and political capital. This includes Ministers, civil servants (especially Foreign Office but also Treasury, Board of Trade and other departments), plus others (e.g. COS) where directly relevant to policy formulation.¹⁵⁵ I pay more attention to Ministers than Ehrhardt's focus on the "marzipan layer" of Foreign Office officials.¹⁵⁶ As Reynolds and Hughes (1976) observe, although officials like Webster, Jebb and Cadogan played leading roles in post-war planning, the "overriding authority of Ministers" was maintained by the conventions of policy formulation in the British civil service.¹⁵⁷ Some of those Ministers remained in the 1945 Labour government to implement the post-war plans they approved. Non-governmental and individual British responses to the UN are excluded from scope except where they directly influence policy formulation within government. Public opinion is also excluded, except where it impacts on the views and policies of policymakers themselves.

¹⁵⁴ Mearsheimer, 'The False Promise of International Institutions'.

¹⁵⁵ For a classic description see of the British foreign policy elite see Watt, *Personalities and Policies*, 1–15.

¹⁵⁶ Ehrhardt, 'The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45', 9.

¹⁵⁷ Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 90–91.

This thesis refers to ‘traditionalists’ and ‘internationalists’ amongst policymakers. It does not suggest there were formal or informal groups of policymakers or that there were coherent policy positions corresponding to these terms. It reflects a distinction between policymakers steeped in a long tradition of British foreign policy that stressed balance of power and realpolitik (‘traditionalists’) and those who were more ideologically committed to policies of internationalism and multilateralism (‘internationalists’). The most significant of the latter were Labour (and Liberal) Ministers, but the influx of academics into government service during the war also increased support for internationalist policies and reflected broader support for internationalism during this ‘apogee of internationalism’.

The realpolitik tradition of British foreign policy was dominant in the Foreign Office.¹⁵⁸ The emphasis on balance of power by Gladwyn Jebb, who led post-war planning as head of the Reconstruction Department, was typical.¹⁵⁹ However, wartime Permanent Under-Secretary Alexander Cadogan, who headed the Foreign Office’s League of Nations desk between the wars and became the UK’s first Permanent Representative at the UN, was more open to multilateralism.¹⁶⁰ At ministerial level, both Foreign Secretary Eden and Minister of State Richard Law were sympathetic to internationalism and the model of the League.¹⁶¹ Eden was seen as closer in attitude to Labour Ministers and supportive of their internationalism.¹⁶² Law, who led the UK delegation at several UN conferences during the war, including Hot Springs, and oversaw UK preparations for Dumbarton Oaks, was also regarded as out of step with the Conservative Party. Beaverbrook accused him of not being sufficiently Conservative and in April 1944 Churchill warned

¹⁵⁸ Reynolds and Hughes, 91.

¹⁵⁹ Gladwyn, ‘Founding the United Nations: Principles and Objects’, 23; Ehrhardt, ‘The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45’, 51–54; Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*, 167–68.

¹⁶⁰ McKercher, ‘Old Diplomacy and New: The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1919–1939’, 105; Webster diary entry, June 26, 1945 Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 70–71; Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*, 200.

¹⁶¹ Comments by Eden FO meeting, May 12, 1943, FO371/35396 U2196/402/70; War Cabinet meeting, April 27, 1944, CAB 65/42/16 WM(44)58.

¹⁶² Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance, 1937-41*, 255; Charmley, *Churchill, The End of Glory*, 485–86; Harvey, *The War Diaries of Oliver Harvey, 1941-1945*, 90–92.

US Assistant Secretary of State Stettinius that Law was “flirting with the Left” and not “to put too much weight on any part that Law might play.”¹⁶³ Law had also been active in Federal Union.¹⁶⁴ Detailed planning, though, was left to officials who were steeped in the tradition of the Foreign Office.¹⁶⁵

It was similar in other Ministries. John Maynard Keynes dominated Treasury policymaking and his multilateralism, albeit a version favouring British interests, prevailed. It was only after Keynes’ death in April 1946 that Treasury officials seriously challenged multilateralism. The Permanent Under-Secretary Richard Hopkins was heavily influenced by Keynes¹⁶⁶ and while Wilfrid Eady, Head of Finance from 1942, who attended Bretton Woods, was imperial-minded and distrusted internationalism, such was Keynes’ dominance his impact was limited.¹⁶⁷ More serious opposition came from another seconded academic, Hubert Henderson, who rejected laissez-faire but favoured national planning over international.¹⁶⁸ There was also opposition at the Bank of England, with Directors and officials wary of international bodies that could undermine the Bank’s autonomy, though Lord Catto, Governor from 1944, was an ally for Keynes. The Bank, though, had little impact on policy.¹⁶⁹ At the Board of Trade Hugh Dalton’s wartime Presidency ensured a favourable hearing for internationalist economic planning, despite personal differences with Keynes, and his appointment to the Treasury in 1945 provided policy continuity.¹⁷⁰ The Economic Section of the Cabinet Office, first under Lionel

¹⁶³ For Beaverbrook see CKW diaries (unpublished) vol 11, April 24, 1944, Webster Papers, LSE Archives; for Churchill see Stettinius diary, April 28, 1944, Stettinius, *Stettinius Diaries*, 67.

¹⁶⁴ Letter, Law to Jebb, June 19, 1943, Gladwyn Papers, GLAD 1/4/1, Churchill Archives.

¹⁶⁵ Hall, ‘Shaping the Future of the World’, 192–95.

¹⁶⁶ Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 144–47.

¹⁶⁷ Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 29; Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 147, 326; Howson, *Lionel Robbins*, 426–27.

¹⁶⁸ Penrose, *Economic Planning for the Peace*, 17–18; Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 200–201; Waley, ‘The Treasury During World War II’.

¹⁶⁹ Pressnell, *External Economic Policy Since the War. Volume 1*, 69, 74; Pimlott, *The Second World War Diary of Hugh Dalton 1940-45*, 707; Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 144.

¹⁷⁰ Pimlott, *Hugh Dalton*, 395–97; Zeiler, *Free Trade, Free World*, 23; Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 144.

Robbins then post-war under James Meade, also played a significant and internationalist role.¹⁷¹

Other functional departments also adopted internationalist approaches. The Ministry of Food prepared plans for an International Food Office in 1942, well before Roosevelt convened the UN Food Conference in 1943.¹⁷² The Ministry of Health supported an international health organisation, while the Home Office were keen to continue the League's successful cooperation over issues such as the drugs trade and the trafficking of women.¹⁷³ Each of these departments were represented at UNCIO and in post-war bodies for the coordination of policy with respect to international organisations.

The drafting of academics into wartime government service brought key individuals with internationalist sympathies into policymaking. Keynes was the most prominent, but Lionel Robbins and James Meade at the Cabinet Office were also significant and others such as John Redcliffe-Maud (Ministry of Food), Roy Harrod and Dennis Robertson (Treasury) contributed an internationalist perspective to policymaking. Special mention should also be made of C.K. Webster who played an important role supporting policymaking on the UN. Webster joined FRPS in 1939 and was seconded to the Foreign Office from early 1943 to support Jebb in the Reconstruction Department.¹⁷⁴ His contribution to policy development has been widely noted, and

¹⁷¹ Cairncross and Watts, *The Economic Section 1939-61*; Meade, a professional economist, had experience working in an international setting. He had worked for the Economic Intelligence Service of the League of Nations in Geneva from 1937 until the fall of France, before joining the Cabinet Office Central Economic Information Service, subsequently the Economic Section of the Cabinet Office, in 1940. He was sympathetic to the principle of world government, Howson and Moggridge, *Wartime Diaries of Robbins and Meade*, 96.

¹⁷² Ministry of Food Paper: 'International Planning of Food', March 25, 1943, CAB 78/6 Gen 8/6.

¹⁷³ For health see Webster diary (unpublished) entry November 2, 1944, vol 12, Webster Papers, LSE Archives; memo by Law, November 4, 1944, and HJ Willink (Ministry of Health), 'International Health Organisation', November 4, 1944, APW(44)109 CAB 87/68. For the Home Office see letter Harris (Home Office) to Ronald (FO), March 20, 1945, FO371/50691 U2294/12/70.

¹⁷⁴ Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 16–17. The secondment was made permanent in January 1944. Ibid, 26. Hall, 'The Art and Practice of a Diplomatic Historian: Sir Charles Webster, 1886–1961', 475.

his diaries (published and unpublished) are an essential primary source.¹⁷⁵ Although Jebb described him as a “great power man” Webster’s sympathies were internationalist and he is credited with changing Jebb’s views in an internationalist direction, not least by Webster himself.¹⁷⁶ As Indarjeet Parmar (2004) and Katharina Rietzler (2011) have shown, connections within the global academic community, including many in the US but also other countries, strengthened international epistemic communities sharing ideas, assumptions and a common, often internationalist, outlook.¹⁷⁷

The internationalism of multilaterally minded policymakers in the 1940s differed from the liberal internationalism of a previous generation who helped create the League. Acceptance of the role of power in the international system and acknowledgement that Great Powers had special responsibilities and therefore deserved special privileges (see Chapter Two) set them apart from this earlier generation. The older generation (Robert Cecil, Gilbert Murray, Lord Lytton, David Astor, Lionel Curtis) no longer played a direct role in policy. Even those in formal roles were peripheral. Ehrhardt (2020) describes Arnold Toynbee, Director of FRPS, and Alfred Zimmern as “marginal”.¹⁷⁸ Outside policy circles, liberal internationalists were distinctly ambivalent about the Charter and criticised its compromises.¹⁷⁹ They opposed key aspects of the UN, especially the veto, but were ignored.¹⁸⁰ The exception was Philip Noel-Baker, who played a significant post-war role in the Labour Government, but even he was excluded from wartime policymaking. Noel-Baker’s

¹⁷⁵ Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*; Parmar, *Think Tanks and Power in Foreign Policy*, 103; Hall, *Dilemmas of Decline*, 72–73; Ehrhardt, ‘The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941–45’.

¹⁷⁶ Gladwyn, *The Memoirs of Lord Gladwyn*, 120; Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 39, 71; Ehrhardt, ‘The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941–45’, 21–22; Hall, ‘The Art and Practice of a Diplomatic Historian: Sir Charles Webster, 1886–1961’, 485–86.

¹⁷⁷ Parmar, *Special Interests, the State and the Anglo-American Alliance, 1939–1945*; Parmar, *Think Tanks and Power in Foreign Policy*; Rietzler, ‘Experts for Peace: Structures and Motivations of Philanthropic Internationalism in the Interwar Years’; Williams, *Liberalism and War*. See chapter 3 below.

¹⁷⁸ Ehrhardt, ‘The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941–45’, 49.

¹⁷⁹ Hall, *Dilemmas of Decline*, 73–74.

¹⁸⁰ Cecil to Eden, December 22, 1944, cited in Lynch, *Beyond Appeasement*, 201; meeting Eden with LNU executive, March 13, 1945, CAB 123/237.

removal from UN affairs in late 1946 consolidated the shift from older ideas of internationalism (Chapter Six).¹⁸¹

Special mention needs to be made of Winston Churchill. Churchill dominates much of the general historiography on UK wartime policy, but he features little in this thesis, partly because of his lack of interest in post-war planning but primarily because of his surprising inability to affect policy. Churchill's reluctance to engage in post-war planning, which angered even his own Foreign Secretary, is well-documented.¹⁸² Less remarked is that on major issues of policy Churchill was repeatedly not only in the minority but on the losing side. In 1942 he opposed the original draft of the Four Power Plan, which became the basis of UK policy.¹⁸³ In May 1944 the Dominions Prime Ministers, supported by his own Foreign Office, inflicted a major policy defeat on Churchill over his ideas for a regional structure for the world organisation.¹⁸⁴ During policymaking his positions were rejected on regionalism, an International Air Force, and the veto. His opposition to social and economic responsibilities for the UN, as well as misgivings about Bretton Woods, were ignored, as was his opposition to treating China as a Great Power. He often sided with the Soviet position, as on an International Air Force and the veto, the exclusion of social and economic issues, and his sympathy to Soviet claims for multiple Soviet Republics to become UN members. He was also the subject of ridicule from UK planners who lampooned his views.¹⁸⁵ Churchill was therefore not representative of UK

¹⁸¹ A recent PhD thesis by Perry argues that elements of liberal internationalist thought did persist in Britain post-1945, but that it had minimal influence on policy, Perry, 'Chatham House, The United Nations Association and the Politics of Foreign Policy, C1945-1975'.

¹⁸² See for instance the exchange between Churchill and Eden in October 1942, PREM 4/100/7. For secondary sources highlighting Churchill's disinterest in post-war planning see Hughes, 'Winston Churchill and the Formation of the United Nations Organization', 183, 190; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 38–39; Charmley, *Churchill, The End of Glory*, 467–68; McNeill, *America, Britain, & Russia: Their Co-Operation and Conflict, 1941-1946*, 322; For Eden's personal frustration with Churchill on this see Hall, 'Shaping the Future of the World'.

¹⁸³ Minute by Eden to Jebb, December 6, 1942, FO371/3515 U1547/27/70.

¹⁸⁴ Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume V*, 116–26; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 51–55; Ehrhardt, 'The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45', 209–13.

¹⁸⁵ See Jebb's parody of Churchill's January 1943 'Morning Thoughts', circulated within the FO as 'Early Morning Thoughts', September 10, 1943, Gladwyn Papers, GLAD 1/4/1, Churchill Archives; Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*, 160; Gladwyn, *The Memoirs of Lord Gladwyn.*, 130–31;

policymakers on the UN, and this has misled scholars unfamiliar with the UK archives.

Argument

This thesis challenges the dominant realpolitik explanation that British policymakers used the UN instrumentally to create a favourable balance of power. Most viewed a balance of power strategy as outdated and dangerously unstable. Policymakers wanted a continuation of the wartime Grand Alliance and a US commitment to the post-war order, but this is insufficient to explain UK policy. Security was important, but policymakers defined security broadly to include economic and social affairs. This, though, went beyond the belief that conflict has economic and social causes. The UN was necessary to 'win the peace' and UK policymakers looked to the UN to deliver what they termed a 'Positive Peace'. The economic and social responsibilities of the UN were therefore more important to British understanding of the UN than the historiography allows. This Positive Peace was very much state-based, and the intention was to strengthen the state and its ability to deliver security and welfare to its own citizens.

Traditionalist policymakers, in the Foreign Office and other government departments, accepted internationalist policies as the most appropriate to meet the British national interest as they defined it. This differs from Ehrhardt (2020) who argues that two policy approaches co-existed, in what he terms 'realist-internationalism'. It also differs from variations of 'muscular' or 'Hobbesian' internationalism, which stress military force and a narrow definition of security, by arguing that UK policymakers sought to create a broad system of international governance including economic, social, and cultural affairs.

Policymakers recognised a need to manage increased interdependence and shared a belief in the necessity of planning, both at a national and international level. This

Rothwell, *Britain and the Cold War, 1941-1947*, 32, 406–7; For Webster criticisms of Churchill see Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 28, 31.

required active international management through the multilateral cooperation of states. It is consistent with Ruggie's embedded liberalism, but this thesis argues UK policymakers envisaged a more interventionist approach at the international level coordinated through the UN and is therefore more aligned with Helleiner (2019). UK policymakers believed a general international organisation was necessary to provide international governance to manage the modern world, and therefore included economic and social management as a central UN responsibility. In this sense the UN was not Mazower's "endgame of empire", but an attempt to manage globalisation. The policymakers most supportive of Empire were the most active opponents of a universal world organisation, supporting Rosenboim's (2019) argument that globalism was an alternative to Empire.¹⁸⁶

UK policymakers wanted a UN System to manage the international system with a strong ECOSOC to provide centralised coordination. This fell short of an Economic Security Council, as argued by Childers and Urquhart (1994), but is greater than the historiography allows and challenges the view that UK policymakers wanted a loose functional structure. Ministers were disappointed and frustrated when ECOSOC failed to meet expectations, but continued to support a strong coordinating role, against the opposition of Agencies such as the IMF and IBRD.

This was internationalist, understood as a predisposition to multilateral and cooperative strategies and structures to address cross-border issues. Recent work has demonstrated there are many types of internationalism beyond liberal internationalism, including socialist, feminist, religious and even fascist manifestations.¹⁸⁷ For reasons of space discussion of these variants of internationalism is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, internationalism is regularly associated with progressive, even idealistic or utopian, values, but Dunne and McDonald's (2013) claim that internationalism is incompatible with *raison d'état*

¹⁸⁶ Rosenboim, *The Emergence of Globalism*, 6–7.

¹⁸⁷ Sluga and Clavin, *Internationalisms*; Steffek, 'Fascist Internationalism'; Reinisch, 'Introduction: Agents of Internationalism'.

is problematic.¹⁸⁸ Rather than incompatible with *raison d'état*, this thesis argues that, for many UK policymakers, multilateralism and international cooperation were the most appropriate policies to protect the interests of the British state, as defined by policymakers themselves. Whilst this was an internationalist strategy it was not liberal internationalism. Policymakers opted for a centralised, hierarchical and interventionist structure that was more illiberal internationalism. If the wartime UN formed the inspiration for the world organisation it was the model of the Combined Boards, with their close Anglo-American cooperation and executive direction, that provided the model.

Structure

After briefly describing the policy process, the first chapter discusses relevant policymaker assumptions about British foreign policy and the role of Britain as a world power. It argues that British policymakers assumed centralised management of an interdependent international system was both necessary and possible through planning and the application of modern science to enable states to meet their responsibilities, not as an idealist enterprise but as a realist response to the modern world.

The second chapter argues UK policymakers rejected a military alliance of the Great Powers in favour of what they termed a 'general international organisation' aiming to strengthen international society, as a 'community of states'. However, this was a hierarchical society, with the Great Powers at the apex, and represents a form of illiberal internationalism that reproduced asymmetric power relations. The following chapter, *Positive Peace*, presents the central argument of the thesis. It develops the idea of a general international organisation and shows the significance in British thinking of economic and social functions alongside traditional security responsibilities for the world organisation. It uses British planning for Dumbarton

¹⁸⁸ Dunne and McDonald, 'The Politics of Liberal Internationalism', 8. Dunne and McDonald equate 'internationalism' with liberal internationalism and regard 'illiberal internationalism' as an 'oxymoron', *ibid*, 5.

Oaks to argue that the British conception of 'peace' was more than an absence of war: security meant more than military security, and the UN was intended as a site of governance for broader international affairs. It uses the objectives of full employment and human rights to illustrate these themes.

The following chapters show how this translated into policy, using the development of the UN System and creation of ECOSOC to argue that UK policymakers planned a centralised and coordinated system of international governance through the UN. This challenges the view that the UK supported a loose, decentralised, functionalist structure of autonomous international Agencies. First, Chapter Four argues that UK policymakers wanted an active ECOSOC at the heart of an integrated UN System. Chapter Five then uses UK policy with respect to the relationship between ECOSOC and the Specialised Agencies in 1945-47 to evidence their genuine support for an active, co-ordinating ECOSOC, even though this was unsuccessful. Chapter Six extends this to examine ministerial responses to the performance of ECOSOC in the UN System in 1946-47, arguing that Ministers remained committed to a strong UN in economic and social affairs through to 1947 despite disappointment that ECOSOC did not act as the centralised coordinator they wanted. A final Chapter Seven then uses the FAO as a case study to illustrate British internationalist policy and policymaker expectations of the Agencies and the UN System.

1 Chapter One: Background to Policy

"...[A]fter the experiences of the second world war, there can be no doubt that a more considerable body of opinion than ever before was prepared to believe that selfish motives and idealism in the sphere of international relations were not necessarily incompatible...It was certainly no longer necessary to be an unrealistic dreamer in order to be willing to give this international organisation a trial and to attempt to make its work a success."

Sir Alexander Cadogan, 1946 UN Review, March 27, 1947.¹

Policy was made against a background of policymaker assumptions and beliefs. This chapter contextualises the argument of this thesis by describing relevant aspects of the strategic culture amongst policymakers and their key assumptions about British foreign policy and the role of Britain as a world power. It argues that British policymakers assumed centralised management of an interdependent international system was both necessary and possible through planning and the application of modern science, to enable states to meet their responsibilities, not as an idealist enterprise but as a realist response to the modern world.

It engages with the argument of Plesch and Weiss (2015) that realist policymakers accepted supposedly idealist policies as the most appropriate for mid-20th century states. It also challenges the historiography of bipartisan foreign policy and argues

¹ Cadogan, Summary of the UN 1946, March 27, 1947, *DBPO Ser 1, Vol VII*, 346.

that despite shared assumptions about Britain's world role, policy was contested, though within relatively narrow parameters. Most policymakers, Ministers and officials, were in the British *realpolitik* tradition but these 'traditionalists' were leavened during wartime by the entry of Labour, and Liberal, Ministers into the wartime Coalition government which increased ministerial support for internationalism, and the influx into government service of many academics whose sympathies were more internationalist. These 'internationalists' were fewer in number but influential, particularly at ministerial level. The advent of the 1945 Labour Government consolidated internationalist influence, but it was evident in the wartime Coalition. Policy consensus was achieved because traditionalist policymakers understood the need for international cooperation to manage the modern interdependent international system, an understanding strengthened by a shared belief in the ability, and responsibility, of states to actively manage that system.

This chapter first summarises the policy process and highlights the limited debate over the need for a form of international governance. It argues the presence of Labour Ministers in the Coalition increased support for internationalism and that the only meaningful opposition to a universal world organisation came from the most vocal supporters of Empire. It then shows how policymaker understandings of the international system reflected awareness of increased interdependence and a belief in the necessity for planning and state intervention to manage that system. This chapter therefore helps bridge the gap between the macro-level accounts of Murphy (1994) and Gorman (2017), that international cooperation was a response to increased interdependence, and policymaking at the national level. It ends by arguing that realist policymakers adopted internationalist policies by redefining them as realist and pragmatic responses to policy challenges.

1.1 The Policy Process

Post-war policymaking during the war has been well-documented, and I only describe this where necessary to evidence my argument.² It is helpful, though, to contextualise the argument by outlining the process and key documents and events.

Post-war political planning was led by the Foreign Office and serious planning began in the middle of 1942. A series of War Cabinet papers were produced in late 1942 and 1943, starting with the power-oriented Four Power Plan, drafted by Gladwyn Jebb, which supported a Great Power directorate and was circulated to the War Cabinet in November 1942.³ It was to provide the basis on which debates over the post-war order amongst UK policymakers were conducted. The War Cabinet papers 'United Nations Plan' (January 1943) and the 'United Nations Plan for Organising Peace' (July 1943) developed British thinking by elaborating themes introduced in the Four Power Plan.⁴

Formal ministerial discussion was limited. After ministerial debate on the Four Power Plan in November and December 1942 a short-lived War Cabinet Committee was created in summer 1943, under Attlee's chairmanship, to examine the UN Plan for Organising Peace, alongside the Armistice Terms for ex-enemy territories. However, this committee only met four times between August 5 and August 25, 1943, before it was overtaken by other events.⁵ It was not until April 1944 that a newly constituted

² Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume V*; Hall, 'Shaping the Future of the World'; Ehrhardt, 'The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45'; See also Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*.

³ There are two key versions of the Four Power Plan: a long version dated October 20, 1942, with detailed argument, found in FO371/31525 U742/742/70, and a summary version circulated to the War Cabinet November 4, 1942, in CAB 66/30/46 WP(42)512.

⁴ The 'United Nations Plan' was circulated to the War Cabinet under Eden's name January 16, 1943, CAB 66/33/31 WP(43)31; the 'United Nations Plan for Organising Peace' was dated July 7, 1943, CAB 66/38/50 WP(43)300. For a detailed narrative account of the production of these papers see Hall, 'Shaping the Future of the World'; Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume V*; and Ehrhardt, 'The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45', chaps 2-3.

⁵ War Cabinet meeting, July 29, 1943, CAB 65/35/17 WM(43)107; War Cabinet paper, August 4, 1943, CAB 66/39/50 WP(43)350. Although this committee made no decisions it is significant for debates held, and particularly an exchange of papers on the relationship of the proposed World Organisation to the economic and social agencies envisaged. It was therefore an excellent window onto thought about the extent of a UN System. It also introduced the idea of a Combined Chiefs of Staff for the

Armistice and Post-War (APW) Committee, again under Attlee's chairmanship, gave serious ministerial attention to plans developed for the Dumbarton Oaks conference of August and September 1944.⁶ Detailed plans were prepared by an interdepartmental team of officials under the coordination of the Foreign Office through a committee chaired by Minister of State, Richard Law.⁷ This produced five memoranda for circulation to the Americans, Russians and Chinese as a statement of the UK position on the proposed new world organisation and is a key document in the evolution of UK policy.⁸ Only minor changes to policy positions were made after this point, with preparation for San Francisco primarily based on the agreed text of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals, although there were fierce debates over outstanding issues such as the veto and trusteeship.

In parallel, a separate but related planning process for post-war economic policy was driven by the demands of negotiating with the Americans through both informal contacts, beginning in 1941, and more formal conferences at Washington (September/October 1943) and Bretton Woods (June 1944). Planning was led by the Treasury and the Board of Trade, with input from the Economic Section of the Cabinet Office (Lionel Robbins, James Meade) and regular involvement of the Bank of England. Interdepartmental consultation took place on most issues, as was established practice within the British Civil Service. The Foreign Office were represented at the Washington Talks by Nigel Ronald and at Bretton Woods by Nigel

UNO, which evolved into the Military Staff Committee. It was chaired by Attlee and membership included senior cabinet members of all parties, which increases its significance. The minutes of its four meetings and copies of its 13 papers are in CAB 87/65.

⁶ The records of the APW Committee are in CAB 87/66, 67 and 68 (1944), CAB 87/69 (1945). 'NA' For the APW Committee see; Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume V*, 62; Burrige, *Clement Attlee*, 175–76; Kent, *British Imperial Strategy*, 12.

⁷ This committee met regularly in 1944 after its creation in February and then more spasmodically in 1945 through to San Francisco. No formal structure of minutes and papers was put in place. Minutes and notes of meetings are scattered in the National Archives files, most accessibly in general FO371 files.

⁸ The final version of the five memoranda, known as Memoranda A-E, were signed off by the War Cabinet in July and August 1944. The first drafts are in the War Cabinet Paper by Attlee, April 22, 1944, CAB 66/49/20 WP(44)220; revised versions of Memos A and B were circulated by Eden as 'Future World Organisation', July 3, 1944, CAB 66/52/20 WP(44)370; final revises are in 'Future World Organisation' circulated by Attlee, July 24, 1944, CAB 66/53/6 WP(44)406. The War Cabinet agreed the policy positions at meetings on July 7, 1944, CAB 65/43/4 WM(44)88, and August 4, 1944, CAB 65/43/17 WM(44)101.

Ronald and Eric Beckett (Foreign Office Legal Adviser). Ministerial involvement was mainly through the Jowitt Reconstruction Committee or ad hoc War Cabinet Committees, such as the Overton Committee on Post-War Commercial Policy (November 1942-January 1943)⁹ the Commercial Policy Committee (1944),¹⁰ or the Committee on External Economic Policy.¹¹ Relevant papers were taken by the War Cabinet when required. However, Churchill's reluctance to confront the political differences within the Coalition over trade policy delayed progress until after the Labour Government took power in July 1945.

Planning for other multilateral projects, such as relief (UNRRA), the Food Conference and preparations for FAO, intellectual and education cooperation (UNESCO) and international law (International Court) was conducted through interdepartmental official level consultation, though there was more formal ministerial consideration of civil aviation (ICAO).¹² There was therefore a context of multilateral planning from late 1942 onwards which permeates British thinking about, and preparation for, the post-war world.

After July 1945 policy with respect to the United Nations was more likely than previously to be addressed at Cabinet level, reflecting the greater interest in internationalism by Labour Ministers, but detailed policy formulation continued to be conducted at official level. Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin guarded his control of foreign policy assiduously, but there were international dimensions for many domestic issues and contact with the UN System formed part of the work of many government departments, beyond the Foreign Office. The need for policy coordination across departments was quickly recognised. The system of policy coordination through an interdepartmental Minister of State committee continued

⁹ Records are in the Treasury file T230/171. Pressnell, *External Economic Policy Since the War. Volume 1*, 101–6; Toye, 'The Labour Party's External Economic Policy in the 1940s', 200.

¹⁰ Minutes and papers are in CAB 87/97. Pressnell, *External Economic Policy Since the War. Volume 1*, 137, 194–99.

¹¹ Pressnell, 131–32.

¹² Records of meetings and papers of the 1944 Special Civil Aviation Committee are in CAB 78/28. See also relevant papers in CAB 87/61 & 62, plus 85-88.

into the first half of 1946, now under Philip Noel-Baker, until it was replaced by a more robust official level International Organisation Committee.¹³ This was chaired by a Foreign Office official but included representatives of many Whitehall departments, reflecting the extent to which multilateral international cooperation affected wider UK governance. This will be discussed in Chapter Six, below.

1.2 Policymaker Understandings

The literature commonly suggests there was a bipartisan approach to foreign policy within the wartime Coalition, and that the 1945 Labour government continued the same policy set by the Coalition. Accounts suggest variously that this was because policy was developed collaboratively by Coalition Ministers across parties¹⁴ or because there were no substantive policy differences between the parties,¹⁵ or because Labour Ministers had assimilated the dominant elite *realpolitik*.¹⁶ However, Jonathan Schneer (2015), John Charmley (1993) and Robert Crowcroft (2011) have demonstrated clear ideological differences between Labour and Conservative Ministers in both domestic and foreign policy.¹⁷ Labour Ministers pushed the Coalition, and Churchill in particular, to take planning for the post-war international order more seriously and argued for more internationalist policies.¹⁸ The differences between Labour and Conservative members of the Coalition over post-war planning were noted by outside observers. When John Foster Dulles visited London in June and July 1942, he commented on the lack of serious thinking on post-war planning and the Atlantic Charter “except among the Labour Ministers Cripps, Bevin and Attlee”. Lord Cranborne and Eden appeared more concerned with justifying the

¹³ The records of the IOC for 1946 and 1947 are in CAB 134/377-384. The IOC itself continued until 1964, evidence of its utility for Whitehall.

¹⁴ Burrige, *Clement Attlee*, 164, 167; Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.3, Foreign Secretary, 1945-1951*, 65–66; Watt, *Succeeding John Bull*, 105–7.

¹⁵ Reynolds, *Britannia Overruled*, 148; Adamthwaite, ‘Britain and the World, 1945-9’, 225.

¹⁶ Vickers, *The Labour Party and the World, Volume 1, 1900-1951*, 5–6; Saville, *The Politics of Continuity*, chap. 3, esp 92–5; Curtis, *The Ambiguities of Power*; Callaghan, *Labour Party and Foreign Policy*, 153, 163.

¹⁷ Schneer, *Ministers at War*; Charmley, *Churchill, The End of Glory*, 434–35, 468, 351; Crowcroft, *Attlee’s War*, 69–70.

¹⁸ Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, 98; Williams, *Failed Imagination?*, 96–97; Charmley, *Churchill, The End of Glory*; Crowcroft, *Attlee’s War*, 108, 215.

Empire.¹⁹ One reason for Churchill's reluctance was to avoid contention with the internationalist Labour members in his politically fragile War Cabinet, an indication of the lack of bipartisanship over post-war policy.²⁰ Churchill told Roosevelt he anticipated problems from the "extreme internationalists" in the UK if the Atlantic Charter did not mention a new international organisation.²¹ This thesis argues that Labour (and Liberal) Ministers consistently encouraged more internationalist policies, especially in economic and social affairs, and policy was the result of consensus between the internationalist and traditionalist influences amongst UK policymakers.

Despite these differences amongst policymakers there were fundamental assumptions on which they did agree. All agreed explicitly that Britain was, and should remain, a Great Power²² and even Labour Ministers accepted the continuation of the territorial colonial Empire.²³ The terms 'world' and 'Great' power were used interchangeably though 'world' was most used. Britain was a world Empire with global commitments. Any new world order needed to operate on a global basis to be of value in serving the needs of the British state, hence wide support for a universal, not regional, organisation. Policymakers also shared an understanding of Britain's relative material weakness. The 1942 Four Power Plan acknowledged that, unaided, Britain could not remain a Great Power: "we can only hope to play our part either as a European Power or as a world Power if we ourselves form part of a wider organisation."²⁴ Keynes rammed home the message

¹⁹ Williams, *Failed Imagination?*, 96–97.

²⁰ Schneer, *Ministers at War*; Crowcroft, *Attlee's War*, 69–70.

²¹ Meetings between Churchill and FDR and Welles and Cadogan, both August 11, 1941, US Department of State, *FRUS 1941, Vol I*, 363–64. Cadogan suggested to Welles Churchill had exaggerated, but Cadogan did not have to manage the political dynamics of the Coalition War Cabinet.

²² The Four Power Plan of 1942 assumed that "the aim of British policy must be, first, that we should continue to exercise the functions and to bear the responsibilities of a world Power". This was not challenged. CAB 66/30/46, WP(42)516, November 8th, 1942. Gladwyn, 'Founding the United Nations: Principles and Objects', 25–26; Rothwell, *Britain and the Cold War, 1941-1947*, 2–3.

²³ Saville, *The Politics of Continuity*, 20–26; Hopkins, 'Rethinking Decolonization', 217; Hopkins, 'Back to the Future', 214; Gupta, *Imperialism and the British Labour Movement, 1914-1964*; Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, chap. 6.

²⁴ War Cabinet Paper by Eden, November 8, 1942, CAB 66/30/46 WP(42)512, para 4. Gladwyn, 'Founding the United Nations: Principles and Objects', 25–26.

to the new Labour government in August 1945 in a paper circulated to the Cabinet by Dalton warning of a “financial Dunkirk”.²⁵ This was understood as not simply a temporary condition imposed by the war but a long-term predicament requiring a long-term solution.

UK policymakers also self-identified with a British tradition that was avowedly ‘pragmatic’ and ‘non-ideological’. This applied to politicians and officials alike, who took pride in their pragmatism. As Nigel Ronald of the Foreign Office wrote to Richard Law, who chaired the interdepartmental co-ordinating committee responsible for preparing British plans for Dumbarton Oaks: “Let our approach be essentially empirical and pragmatic, and do not let us bother our heads too much about theoretical correctitude.”²⁶ The terms ‘pragmatic’, ‘practical’ and ‘non-ideological’ were used to judge others, with departures from these values regarded as evidence of moral failings. Britain’s self-perceived role within the international system therefore becomes one of moderation and balance; as Jebb wrote in October 1942: “...we shall be a realistic and temperate force capable of toning down the conflicting world ideologies possessed by other nations.”²⁷ They exhibited no self-awareness of the ideological nature of their own attachment to ‘pragmatism’.

Many policymakers did see the UN instrumentally, to formalise an American commitment. This needs to be seen in the context of relative material decline, which left the UK dependent on US support. For some, especially in the Foreign Office and COS, an American alliance was the priority.²⁸ However, internationalists wanted the US commitment, and maintenance of the wartime Grand Alliance including Russia, to strengthen a world organisation, with the UN as a site of international governance. As Chapter Two argues, UK policymakers prioritised a general international organisation over an alliance.

²⁵ Cabinet Paper, ‘Our Overseas Financial Prospects’, August 14, 1945, CAB 129/1/12 CP(45)112; Cairncross, *The British Economy Since 1945*, 57.

²⁶ Minute by Ronald, January 19, 1944, FO371/40686 U2293/180/70.

²⁷ Minute by Jebb, October 8, 1942, FO371/31514 U841/27/70.

²⁸ Gladwyn, ‘Founding the United Nations: Principles and Objects’, 27–28; Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*, 169; Lewis, *Changing Direction*, 66–69.

1.3 Support for a World Organisation

A striking feature of British wartime planning was the almost universal acceptance that a world organisation was necessary, despite the apparent failure of collective security under the League of Nations. This consensus existed across the British policymaking elite, both officials and politicians, and across political divides despite their differences. Supranationality was rejected at an early stage in favour of intergovernmental structures but only the COS questioned a world organisation, and their objections failed to alter policy. Acceptance of the need for a world organisation was evident across political, security, economic and social policy areas, suggesting widespread recognition of the need for international governance across intergovernmental domains, even if the nature of the organisation was contested.

This was apparent as early as the 1940 War Aims Committee.²⁹ More clearly, at the Atlantic Conference of August 1941 the British attempted to include a reference to “an effective international organisation” in the Atlantic Charter, despite Roosevelt’s firm opposition. The persistence with which the British continued to argue for reference to an ‘organisation’, before proposing the alternative phrase “a wider and permanent system of general security”, accepted by Roosevelt, suggests a strong attachment to the idea by August 1941 even though no formal decisions had been taken on post-war structures.³⁰ While the War Cabinet were disappointed at the “woolly” wording of the Declaration there was no Cabinet opposition to references

²⁹ Draft Statement of War Aims, by Foreign Secretary (Lord Halifax), December 13, 1940, WA(40)14, CAB 87/90. See also ‘A Note on Post-War Reconstruction’, October 29, 1940, WA(40)7, CAB 87/90; comments from Halifax, Draft minutes of meeting of War Aims Committee, October 4th, 1940, CAB 21/1582; Wood, WA(40)3rd meeting, November 26, 1940, CAB 87/90; and Bevin, who stressed “our willingness to co-operate in international labour and economic organisation”. Ibid.

³⁰ Robert E Sherwood, *White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins: An Intimate History* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1948), 360–61; David Reynolds, ‘The Atlantic ‘Flop’: British Foreign Policy and the Churchill-Roosevelt Meeting of August 1941’ in Douglas Brinkley and David R Facey-Crowther, *The Atlantic Charter* (Basingstoke, England: Macmillan, 1994), pp143ff. The British telegrams and meeting notes are contained in Churchill’s report to the War Cabinet on his return. See War Cabinet papers by Churchill, August 20, 1941, CAB 66/18/25 WP(41)202; and August 18, 1941, CAB 66/18/26 WP(41)203.

to an international organisation and the War Cabinet endorsed the Declaration.³¹ However, one Foreign Office critic complained the Declaration was “...full of all the old clichés of the League of Nations period...” and suggested that “It will go down well in...Liberal and Labour circles here”, referencing underlying ideological differences within the Coalition over the post-war order.³²

The November 1942 Four Power Plan assumed a formalised structure for the international system³³ and the January 1943 ‘United Nations Plan’ even included a structure chart showing the relations of the different bodies envisaged in the new world organisation.³⁴ After January 1943 the need for a new world organisation, with a formal “machinery of international co-operation” was not seriously challenged, even if the form of that organisation remained to be agreed.³⁵

The assumption of a new world organisation, or a system of linked multilateral institutions, was even more marked in post-war international economic planning. Keynes saw his proposals as part of a co-ordinated multilateral world order, linking management of the world economy to political and social internationalism.³⁶ Multilateralist ideas also underpinned proposals in trade policy and commodity trading, civil aviation and other transport services, and issues such as food, nutrition, and health. James Meade especially, who worked in the Economic Section of the Cabinet Office but was seconded to the Board of Trade, promoted multilateral ideas on global trade to address the risk of renewed economic nationalism.³⁷

³¹ For Cabinet sign-off of the Atlantic Declaration see the two War Cabinet meetings on August 12, 1941, in CAB 65/19/16 WM(41)80th meeting, and CAB 65/19/17 WM(41) 81st meeting.

³² Harvey, *The War Diaries of Oliver Harvey, 1941-1945*, 31, entry for August 12, 1941. Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance, 1937-41*, 258–59 suggests there were misgivings in the Cabinet about the Declaration but not about the commitment to an international organisation. Gilbert, *Finest Hour*, 1150–68.

³³ War Cabinet Paper by Eden, 'The Four Power Plan', November 8, 1942, CAB 66/30/46 WP(42)512, paragraph 4.

³⁴ War Cabinet Paper by Eden, 'The United Nations Plan', January 16, 1943, CAB 66/33/31 WP(43)31.

³⁵ *Ibid*, paragraph 4.

³⁶ For Keynes' wartime role in the Treasury see Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, especially chapter 5.

³⁷ For Meade as the prime mover behind post-war multilateral trade see Howson, *The Collected Papers of James Meade. Vol. 3, International Economics*; McKenzie, *GATT and Global Order in the Postwar Era*.

Outright opposition to a world organisation was rare. The only open opponents were the COS, who wanted a continuation of the wartime Anglo-US Combined COS and rejected Russian membership of this as “almost inconceivable”.³⁸ However, they had little impact on policy. The most serious opposition to a universal world organisation, and to Bretton Woods, came from supporters of Empire. They favoured regional structures, with the Empire considered a non-contiguous region. This would legitimise the Empire and support continuation of Imperial Preference. Regionalism thus became a proxy argument against a universal world organisation, with Leo Amery the most vocal in the War Cabinet.³⁹ Amery supported planning but on a national basis, as did other Tory Ministers sceptical of the UN such as Ralph Assheton (First Secretary to the Treasury) and Robert Hudson (Minister of Agriculture).⁴⁰ They opposed the multilateral approach of the Article VII negotiations with the US, alongside Ministers such as Beaverbrook.⁴¹ The same policymakers argued for a more functional international governance structure, with such international agencies that were needed being autonomous technical bodies without central coordination, and opposed a central location for a world organisation.⁴² The greatest supporters of the British colonial Empire were also the biggest opponents of the UN.

³⁸ Minute by Jebb, February 19, 1944, FO371/40740 U1751/748/70; Lewis, *Changing Direction*, lix–lx, 68–70, 119–43; Ryan, *The Vision of Anglo-America: The US-UK Alliance and the Emerging Cold War, 1943-1946*, 42–43; Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership*, 264–70.

³⁹ War Cabinet Papers by Amery, November 12, 1942, CAB 66/31/4 WP(42)524; January 25, 1943, CAB 66/33/39 WP(43)39.

⁴⁰ Paper by Amery, ‘Planning and Internationalism’, February 12, 1943, CAB 87/3 RP(43)16; War Cabinet Paper by Hudson, ‘Commercial Policy’, April 13, 1944, CAB 66/48/50 WP(44)200; Penrose, *Economic Planning for the Peace*, 73–74, 88.

⁴¹ Cabinet paper by Amery, Post War Commercial Policy, April 7, 1943, WP(43)143; Law to Eden, December 21, 1943, Law Papers, FO800/431, doc 43/37; Note Assheton to Eden, April 21, 1944, Law Papers, Law Papers, FO800/431 doc 44/67; Law wrote to Eden of Assheton that ‘This is simply an argument against international co-operation as such. And that is Ralph’s [Assheton] trouble. He hates the idea of international cooperation.’ May 2, 1944, Law Papers, FO800/431 doc 44/67; see also comments by Assheton, War Cabinet Meeting November 2, 1944, that “he did not himself believe that the multilateral approach was the right one”, WM(44)153 CAB 65/44/24; Beaverbrook told Keynes he opposed multilateral agreement on trade because: ‘I am at variance with the underlying doctrine because it is fundamentally international and free trade, and because my own beliefs are neither one nor the other.’ Quoted in Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 332–33, see also 326–7; McKenzie, *Redefining the Bonds of Commonwealth*, 43.

⁴² Paper by Assheton, ‘Proposal for a Central Economic Council’, August 30, 1943, CAB 87/65 PS(43)7. See Chapter Four below.

1.4 Objective Internationalism

UK policymakers understood that cross-border interdependence, which they associated with scientific and technological advancement, was a feature of modern governance. Policymakers were of a generation that had grown up at the end of the 19th and early 20th century in an era of globalisation.⁴³ Technological developments over the previous century had changed the world, dramatically increased the international exchange of people, goods and ideas, and made cross-border interdependence an unavoidable reality of international politics.⁴⁴ As Iriye (2002) and Gorman (2012) have argued, this prompted institutional responses that had become embedded in the outlook of individuals and governments. Increased interdependence required a new way of managing the world and international cooperation was evidenced by the rapid growth in international organisations from the second half of the 19th century, both intergovernmental and non-governmental.⁴⁵

What Sluga (2013) calls the “objective facts” of internationalism increased the interdependence of communities around the world and changed the outlook of many people. This objective internationalism had also spawned an increase in internationalist sentiment, a more subjective internationalism with sociological and psychological dimensions, both amongst decision-making elites and many other

⁴³ 14 of the 20 members of Attlee’s first administration were born in the 1880’s, including Attlee (1884), Bevin (1881), Morrison (1888), Cripps (1889) and Dalton (1887). The same was true in the Foreign Office, for instance Cadogan (1884), Sargent (1884), Malkin (1883); and the Treasury, with Waley (1887), Hopkins (1880), Eady (1880). Keynes was also born in 1880. Other academics drafted into wartime policymaking service included CK Webster (1886), Mitrany (1888) and Toynbee (1889).

⁴⁴ For a thematic survey of the development of global interdependence in the 75 years before 1945 see Rosenberg, *A World Connecting*; for an account of increased international connectedness in the 19th Century see Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*; and Osterhammel and Petersson, *Globalization: A Short History*; see also Gorman, *International Cooperation in the Early Twentieth Century*; For an older account, making the link between economic interdependence and planning, see Briggs, ‘The World Economy’.

⁴⁵ For a summary of the growth of international and transnational organisations in the 19th and early 20th centuries see Iriye, *Global Community*; Reinalda, *Routledge History of International Organizations*; for a non-governmental perspective on the same phenomenon see Gorman, *International Cooperation in the Early Twentieth Century*; See also Murphy, *International Organization and Industrial Change: Global Governance since 1850*.

groups in societies across the world.⁴⁶ UK policymakers operated in this wider context. Wm Roger Louis (1977) described the word interdependence as “a catchword of the Second World War era”.⁴⁷ It informed post-war planning both for traditionalists who ‘pragmatically’ regarded it as a feature of the world that needed managing, and the internationalists who saw it as evidence of the progressive evolution of world society.

Interdependence was especially evident in international economic affairs and was acknowledged both by committed internationalists and by those more sceptical of a world organisation. International trade had diminished in the 1930’s but the damage caused, and the accompanying economic nationalism, only made policymakers more aware of the need to manage interdependence.⁴⁸ Economic nationalism was perceived to have intensified the Great Depression and contributed to the breakdown of the international order, eventually leading to war, and was condemned by policymakers.⁴⁹ Even the Bank of England recognised the dangers of economic nationalism. In November 1941 Lord Catto, a UK Treasury adviser soon to become Governor of the Bank of England, responding to the first draft of the Keynes plan for an International Clearing Union acknowledged that, in the interwar period: “Each country acted as it thought best in its own interests without any general plan or any consideration of the wider principles...[A]ll countries were at fault in greater or lesser degree and all merely went on the principle of ‘grab and devil take the hindmost’. The end was political, economic and financial chaos – and war!”⁵⁰

The need to address international anarchy to manage economic interdependence was acknowledged even by Ministers more sceptical of a world organisation. In his

⁴⁶ Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*, pp12-18. Sluga differentiates explicitly between ‘objective internationalism’ and the resulting change in political and social attitudes and behaviours this created which she views as ‘subjective internationalism’; for a related account of ‘cultural internationalism’ as distinct from objective internationalism see Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order*; for the increase in transnational and non-governmental internationalism arising from this increased interconnectedness see Gorman, *The Emergence of International Society in the 1920s*.

⁴⁷ Louis, *Imperialism at Bay, 1941-1945*, 110.

⁴⁸ Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*.

⁴⁹ Williams, *Failed Imagination?*, 221–25.

⁵⁰ Letter Catto to Keynes, November 29, 1941, T247/116. ‘NA’.

October 1940 contribution to the War Aims Committee Amery argued that economic interdependence was rendering political anarchy anachronistic and dangerous: "...while the ideals and forces in the political sphere are continuously driving towards national integration and increasing State control, and thereby accelerating the anarchy in international relations, as well as diminishing individual liberty, all the technical developments of our age are increasingly emphasising the absurdity of that anarchy..."⁵¹ It was a point made regularly by the academics in FRPS.⁵²

Policymakers believed the failure of interwar attempts at multilateral economic cooperation, including the collapse of the 1933 Global Economic Conference, contributed directly to war. This lesson was carried into post-war planning. Economic nationalism needed to be countered by active management of the international economic system, by states acting multilaterally.⁵³ Management of the international economy required multilateral co-operation to encourage expansionist policies and support government intervention.⁵⁴ The first draft statement of War Aims agreed by Ministers in December 1940 declared: "We know that the economic policy of every country reacts on every other country in the world, and we are ready to take part in plans to promote economic co-operation on a world-wide scale."⁵⁵ Academics turned planners such as Keynes and Meade demanded multilateral approaches to post-war international economic planning. In October 1941, after seeing the first draft of Keynes' ICU paper, Meade was explicit on the dangers of not following a

⁵¹ 'A Note on Post-War Reconstruction' by Amery, October 29, 1940, CAB87/90 WA(40)7 'NA'.

⁵² Paper by Toynbee, July 26, 1941, 'The Oceanic versus the Continental Road to World Organisation'. FRPS ref: RR I/42/iv, in CAB 117/79; paper by Zimmern, April 10, 1941, 'Processes of Political Integration', FRPS ref RB I/2/i, CAB 117/79; paper by Brierly, July 3, 1942, FRPS ref R.R. I/74/ii, in Mitrany Papers, file 20, LSE Archives. For the argument that Toynbee's FRPS was influential in post-war planning see Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, 106-7.

⁵³ Clavin, *The Failure of Economic Diplomacy*, pp160-1; McKenzie, *GATT and Global Order in the Postwar Era*, 30-33; Patel, *The New Deal*; Clavin, *Securing the World Economy* Clavin demonstrates how the League of Nations sought to bring rational planning to international economic management in the interwar years, and with sufficient success to prove the value of the effort despite the League's evident failure to prevent war.

⁵⁴ For an account of economic policy in the 1930s and 1940s highlighting Keynesian policies which it is claimed brought the US, and the world economy, out of Depression see Rauchway, *The Money Makers*.

⁵⁵ 'Draft Statement on War Aims', December 13, 1940, WA(40)14, CAB 87/90. See also Toynbee's contribution to the Committee, October 22, 1940, CAB87/90 WAC(40)6.

multilateral policy: “If we maintain bilateral trading agreements and exchange restrictions on trading and other current transactions indefinitely after the war, there is a grave danger of international economic conflict.”⁵⁶ Some officials in the Treasury and the Bank of England were sceptical of multilateralism but still acknowledged the risks of economic nationalism.⁵⁷

The resulting global turn to international organisation was not simply an attempt to institutionalise political cooperation but was also directed at the practical management of this new interconnected, interdependent world.⁵⁸ Clavin (2013) has shown that the League of Nations was highly valued for the work of its social, economic and technical agencies, which provided both a response to greater shared interest in cross-border co-operation and played a significant role in producing it.⁵⁹ This positive view of the League was shared by British policymakers who recognised the value of its technical agencies. Together with the Dominions, Britain financially sustained the rump of the League during the Second World War to enable “the essential framework to be maintained and the technical services of the League to be carried on as effectively as war conditions permit”, and to help preserve its valuable technical agencies for potential use after the conflict.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ 'Proposals for Anglo-American Post-War Economic Co-operation', note of October 15, 1941, FO371/28907 W12556/426/49. See also Meade's 'Note on Post-War Anglo-American Economic Relations', which argued that bilateralism increased political competition and led to conflict, August 18, 1941, FO371/28907 W12556/426/49.

⁵⁷ November 29, 1941 paper by Catto, Financial Adviser to the Treasury, though Catto's paper was broadly supportive of Keynes' plan, National Archives UKT247/116; September 22, 1941, Note by Waley, 'Queries on Mr Keynes' proposals for an International Currency Union', UKT247/116. Robert Brand, a British banker based in Washington during the war as Head of the British Food Mission and a long time friend of Keynes, also expressed concern at the internationalist elements of the Keynes plan and the impact on national sovereignty it implied. Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 215.

⁵⁸ Murphy, *International Organization and Industrial Change: Global Governance since 1850*.

⁵⁹ Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*.

⁶⁰ Foreign Office brief on 'His Majesty's Government Policy Towards the League of Nations', undated but apparently February 1943, FO371/34513 C3672/480/98; Bosco, *Five to Rule Them All*, 12; Walters, *A History of the League of Nations*, 810; For recent work on the efforts of the United States to provide support for these agencies during the war see Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*; Ekbladh, 'American Asylum: The United States and the Campaign to Transplant the Technical League, 1939-1940.'

UK policymakers understood that international cooperation was not idealism but necessity in an interdependent world. Some interpreted this as a progressive evolution of the international system toward world government. Before the war Attlee called internationalism “the next stage in political evolution, after nationalism” and in July 1944 Bevin told the House of Commons that interdependence made international cooperation inevitable: “It is not a question of sentiment or of someone's predilections. It is invention, it is development.”⁶¹ International cooperation was not idealism but necessity.⁶² As Eden expressed it in August 1945, “...to-day, with all the developments of science...every stage of our modern life makes it inevitable that we must have some form of world organisation, if we are to deal with the problems as they now arise, at the pace at which they now arise... Nobody now supposes that one country can be prosperous in isolation, or by itself. The prosperity of one nation reacts on the prosperity of all, and either the world is prosperous together or impoverished together. These matters were true, but I think were never understood to be true, in comparatively recent times. For all these reasons, we must have the organisation which we now have.”⁶³

1.5 Management Through Planning

Whilst there was broad acceptance across the policymaking elite that multilateralism through international organisation was the favoured strategy for the post-war world order there were two other linked beliefs that influenced the nature of this new order for which there was greater contestation amongst policymakers. These were acceptance of the necessity for active planning at an international, as well as national, level as part of a belief in scientific rationality; and the acknowledgement that the state had a responsibility for the welfare of its citizens which required international cooperation to deliver. For some this responsibility translated to the international level.

⁶¹ Attlee, letter to his brother Tom, February 15, 1933, cited in Bew, *Citizen Clem*, 177. Speech by Bevin, July 26, 1944, House of Commons, 5s vol 402, col 851.

⁶² For the argument that ‘industrial modernisation’ encouraged internationalist thinkers of the first half of the 20th century to view progress toward world government as inevitable, and that this apparent ‘idealism’ was realism, see Osiander, ‘Rereading Early Twentieth-Century IR Theory’.

⁶³ Eden speech on UN Charter, August 22, 1945. HoC, 5s, vol 413, col 672-4.

The acceptance of both ideas encouraged an active, interventionist approach across a wide scope of activities, including economic, social, and cultural issues as well as political and military security. A combination of committed internationalists and pragmatist officials who saw planning and state intervention as a means of extending state capabilities, overcame reservations from those who were more wary of a strong, active, and centralised world organisation. As a result, the institutional structure proposed by UK planners was wider in scope, and more interventionist. This was contested. Many internationalists saw the UN as an exemplar of modernity and progress, while pragmatists regarded it a tool of effective governance. For others the implication of such control was less welcome.

1.5.1 Planning as a Concept

Many UK policymakers believed it both necessary and possible to manage this interdependent international system. Confidence in the ability of human beings to control their environment, social, economic, and political as well as material, was exemplified in the idea of planning. Although some feared the totalitarian implications of planning,⁶⁴ UK policymakers sought to create a planned system of state intervention and a managed international economy to eliminate the anarchy of the international system, prevent international conflict and construct a better world.

The belief the international system could be managed through the application of scientific planning principles, and that this was a state responsibility, had been widespread since the early years of the 20th century.⁶⁵ Mazower has described “the early 20th century faith in the rational powers of the human mind as the ultimate

⁶⁴ See for instance Sargent’s concerns, below page 72. In the late 1930s and early 1940s the Economic Section (EFO) of the League, whilst greatly attracted by the principles of planning, was reluctant to use the term because of its totalitarian associations. Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*, 4, 272.

⁶⁵ Murphy (1994) traces the idea that ‘scientific observation and systematic administration’ could be applied to the affairs of state to Comte, and argues this influenced Wilson, and Keynes and his ‘much wider circle’. Murphy, *International Organization and Industrial Change: Global Governance since 1850*, 17; For the intellectual foundation of ideas of human agency, and ‘reconstructing reality’ by human beings through ‘rational planning’, see Pemberton, *Global Metaphors*, 4; see also Williams, *Liberalism and War*, 42, 58.

underpinning of the world community".⁶⁶ Ideas of 'international rationalisation' and scientific management were widely held and applied both to the domestic and international spheres in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s, and informed post-war planning in Britain.⁶⁷ These ideas were current in internationalist circles between the wars and, as Clavin (2013) and Jo-Anne Pemberton (2001) have shown, were discussed extensively in League of Nations and related fora, such as the World Economic Conference of 1927.⁶⁸ Pemberton (2001) writes of "the intertwined cults of science and internationalism" in this period.⁶⁹ In Britain in the 1930s, think tanks such as the PEP Group promoted concepts of planning for domestic political and social issues, while government-led initiatives such as William Beveridge's Welfare State proposals sprang from a similar source.⁷⁰ There were public calls to apply this approach to the international sphere in post-war planning.⁷¹ Keynes' proposal to link the proposed ICU with other international bodies was intended to create a planning framework for the international economy.⁷²

Just as economic nationalism was rejected so was laissez-faire economics. Rather than free markets, policymakers responded to fears of economic nationalism by supporting economic management. Laissez-faire was regarded as a failed 19th century policy which should be remedied by planning. The economist Hubert

⁶⁶ 'H-Diplo Roundtable Reviews, Vol. XI, No 47 (2010), [Http://Www.h-Net.Org/~diplo/Roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XI-47.Pdf](http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/Roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XI-47.Pdf), 27.

⁶⁷ Addison, *The Road to 1945*, pp181-9 Addison argues that in Britain this was a bipartisan phenomenon, based upon the contributions of the (Liberals) Beveridge and Keynes; also Barnett, *The Audit of War*, pp11-37; Williams, *Failed Imagination?*, 124-26; For an account of the use of concepts and discourses of modernity and technological advance in the construction of the global world order and the UNO, see Pemberton, *Global Metaphors*. Internationally the term 'rationalisation' was used in the same sense as the word 'planning' though the term planning was more common in Britain. The term 'planning' had largely replaced 'rationalisation' by the mid-1930's.

⁶⁸ Pemberton, 'Towards a New World Order'.

⁶⁹ Pemberton, *Global Metaphors*, 86.

⁷⁰ For an account of the development of the domestic planning consensus, and the influence of PEP and other group advocating planning in Britain in the 1930s, see Ritschel, *The Politics of Planning*.

⁷¹ See for instance the October 30, 1942 Times leader calling for a plan of action to make good on the Atlantic Charter's calls for Freedom from Want for all the peoples of the world: "Governments are at work on plans for their own people, and so they should be. But more than that is needed: an international plan is indispensable." 'A Legacy from the League', 5.

⁷² Keynes argued that associating the ICU with other Agencies "...allows us to put up a scheme which may seem in its entirety to make the beginning of an entirely new stage in the economic organisation of the world." Letter Keynes to Hopkins (Treasury), January 22, 1942 Keynes, Johnson, and Moggridge, *Collected Writings Volume 25*, p103.

Henderson, working in the Treasury, declared in December 1943 that “The old international order of the 19th century was based on *laissez [sic] faire* and has broken down for good. Nothing but failure, futility and frustration can come from the attempt to set it up again.”⁷³ Multilateral economic planning was seen as essential to ensure a stable and expansionary international economy and to prevent conflict. Bevin typified policymakers’ antipathy to *laissez-faire* when he told the ILO Governing Council in December 1943 that: “*Laissez [sic] faire* will not do, nor must vested interests stand in the way...The needs of the present age cannot be met with nineteenth century economics.”⁷⁴ Attlee argued in the War Cabinet in April 1943 that they should “Disabuse Hull of idea tht you can still work on self-adjusting econ mechanism of 19th Century.”⁷⁵ The belief in the link between economic nationalism and conflict, and the rejection of principles of economic *laissez-faire* in favour of planning, was also widely held by those who regarded themselves as realists. A 1940 leading article in the Times, written by EH Carr, was typical: “...the anarchic tendencies of *laissez-faire* are as obsolete internationally as they are in domestic politics. Some measure of pooled resources and centralized control is necessary for the survival of European civilization.”⁷⁶

This attitude in turn led to an interventionist bias that was to be reflected in the economic bodies created as part of the UN System, including the World Bank and IMF, and in planning for Commodity Control and the FAO, as well the British position on the ITO. The economic world order was to be rules-based but the rules were to be defined and actively managed by states and their representatives. As Slobodian (2018) argues, even Hayek advocated a variant of internationalism, albeit with less

⁷³ Paper on the economic history of the interwar years, December 3, 1943, copy in Law Papers, FO800/431 doc 43/35.

⁷⁴ Bevin address to the ILO Governing Council meeting, December 16, 1943 cited in Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.2, Minister of Labour, 1940-1945*, 283.

⁷⁵ War Cabinet meeting, April 8, 1943, Cabinet Notebooks CAB 195/2/46 ‘NA’.

⁷⁶ Leading article ‘The New Europe’, p5; Carr also saw the extension of economic planning to the international level as the solution: Carr, *Nationalism and After*, 46–47; Carr, *Conditions of Peace*, 71, 259.

intrusive rules, accepting that markets were politically constituted.⁷⁷ Policymakers like Lionel Robbins, who fundamentally favoured free markets, advocated an interventionist approach during wartime planning and supported Keynes' ideas on commodity controls.⁷⁸

1.5.2 Contention over Planning

These understandings were contested amongst UK policymakers, however, and differences over the principle of planning influenced attitudes toward the nature of a world organisation. Planning in Britain, especially economic planning, was most closely associated with the political left and the Labour Party. Labour ministers in the Coalition were more ideologically committed to planning as an ideal, initially domestic but also international.⁷⁹ Crowcroft (2011) argues Attlee enshrined the concept of state planning in the conduct of the war such that it became the “lodestar of government.”⁸⁰ This ideological commitment invested the world organisation, and the UN System, with meaning as an instrument of international planning. As we'll see in Chapter Four, internationalist policymakers advocated a single integrated system of international governance formalising the relationship between the political and security bodies and the economic and social agencies. This was not simply an attempt to create a Great Power 'Concert' but represented an ideological commitment to multilateral solutions to international issues. Cooperation of the Great Powers was essential to the effectiveness of the structures not simply an end in itself.

Labour was committed to the principle of economic planning and its extension from the domestic to the international field. As Evan Durbin, an economist and Labour

⁷⁷ For Hayek see Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, chap. 15; Slobodian, *Globalists* For Labour criticism of Hayek see Attlee, speech June 5, 1945, reported in 'Labour Case For Socialism.' Times, 6 June 1945, p. 2. The Times Digital Archive, Accessed 9 Oct. 2020.

⁷⁸ Robbins, whose free market credentials were underlined by involvement in the Mont Pellerin group after the war, even told CK Webster he favoured coal nationalisation in the UK, at least as a regional experiment. CKW Diaries, entry for July 6, 1945, vol 14, LSE Archives. For Robbins see Howson, *Lionel Robbins*; Rosenboim, *The Emergence of Globalism*, 132–42.

⁷⁹ Toye, *Labour Party and the Planned Economy*, especially chapter 7 for international planning; Also Vickers, *The Labour Party and the World, Volume 1, 1900-1951*, p7, p147.

⁸⁰ Crowcroft, *Attlee's War*, 41, 215.

politician close to Dalton who acted as Attlee's Personal Assistant from 1942-45, declared in 1935: "we are all planners now".⁸¹ This was not simply planning on a domestic basis, but international as well.⁸² Attlee's articulation of 'Labour's Aims in War and Peace' in 1939 explicitly called for "economic planning on a world scale".⁸³ In 1942, Dalton was quoted by one US official as declaring "I believe neither in free trade nor in protection but in planning."⁸⁴ By 1944, in a pamphlet largely drafted by Dalton, the Labour Party declared: "Socialists believe in the planning of imports and exports and the present apparatus of control - foreign exchange control, import programmes, allocation of scarce materials for the export trade - should remain in existence."⁸⁵ International co-operation was seen as complementary to domestic economic planning, and domestic and international policy as constituent parts of a single strategy to deliver social justice at home and abroad.⁸⁶

Bevin was an especially strong advocate of international economic planning, and the need for economic security and co-operation to maintain the peace. In 1940 Bevin argued that British war aims should include a statement on "economic co-operation"⁸⁷ and that: "A phrase should be included recording our willingness to co-operate in international labour and economic organisation."⁸⁸ In 1939 he blamed the failure of the League of Nations on a lack machinery for economic governance: "The trouble with the League of Nations had been that it had been given a political head,

⁸¹ Evan Durbin, 'The Importance of Planning' in Durbin and Mottram, *Problems of Economic Planning*.

⁸² Toye, 'The Labour Party's External Economic Policy in the 1940s'; Toye, *Labour Party and the Planned Economy*, chapter 7.

⁸³ Attlee, *Labour's Peace Aims*; See also Crowcroft (2011) for further examples of Attlee's promotion of the principle of planning in 1939-40: Crowcroft, *Attlee's War*, 41.

⁸⁴ In Zeiler, *Free Trade, Free World*, 23; cites 'Addendum to note for Ambassador Winant', [1942], box 2, Pasvolsky Papers, US National Archives.

⁸⁵ Labour Party, *Full Employment and Financial Policy*, 6-7 quoted in; Toye, 'The Labour Party's External Economic Policy in the 1940s', 204 This was eventually adopted by the Labour Party Conference in December 1944. For the link between international economic planning and a world organisation see also Dalton's Labour Party, *The International Post-War Settlement*; Grantham, 'Hugh Dalton and The International Post-War Settlement'; Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, 61-67.

⁸⁶ Vickers, *The Labour Party and the World, Volume 1, 1900-1951*, 7; for an account of international planning to support welfare in the 1940s see Macdonald, 'The Shape of Things to Come: Global Order and Democracy in 1940s International Thought'.

⁸⁷ CAB 87/90, WA(40)2nd meeting, October 31, 1940.

⁸⁸ CAB 87/90, WA(40)3rd meeting, November 26, 1940.

a Labour tail, but no economic body." He argued for an "economic conference" like the ILO, within the League of Nations system.⁸⁹ Bevin's key statement of support for international economic cooperation was his written response to the Four Power Plan in December 1942, which he titled 'The Economic Basis of International Organisation'. He argued that plans for international organisation should focus on providing the "common services", which he listed as "feeding, transport, currency, economic rehabilitation and customs".⁹⁰ Bevin also reiterated his support for the ILO.⁹¹ His interventions on the Four Power Plan led directly to the addition of references to economic and social responsibilities for the world organisation in future iterations of the UN Plan.

Differences between Labour and Conservative attitudes to economic planning were evident in the War Cabinet, sometimes in overtly ideological ways. In the 1940 debates over War Aims Tories like Amery, Duff Cooper and Lord Halifax were disgruntled at Labour attempts to include international economic and social issues, with Bevin a special target.⁹² Conservatives acknowledged the modern world demanded economic management but expressed greater mistrust of the concept of planning, uneasy at the implications for individual liberty. In 1940 Lord Cranborne, commenting on PEP Group proposals for post-war planning forwarded by Julian Huxley, wrote: "'Planned Liberty' sounds very nice. But the two words are not beyond a certain point compatible. By the time our lives have been completely planned according to the ideas of him and his friends, we shall have no liberty left at all."⁹³ In a fractious War Cabinet meeting on July 9, 1942, in a discussion on UNRRA, Bevin contrasted wartime planning, which had provided the working population of

⁸⁹ Curtis, 'World Order', 318.

⁹⁰ Bevin to Eden, December 8, 1942, FO371/31525 U1798/742/70; Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.2, Minister of Labour, 1940-1945*, 204–5; Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, 118.

⁹¹ Ibid. Bevin's support for the ILO has been extensively reported. See for instance Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.2, Minister of Labour, 1940-1945*, 97, 199, 202–4, 282-3,323-4; Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*, 344.

⁹² Letter, Halifax to Duff Cooper, July 30, 1940 in FO371/25207 W9281/8805/49; diary entry July 29, 1940 Barnes and Nicholson, *Amery Diaries Vol 2*, 637; see also May 1940, Tom Jones diary, cited in Toye, 'The Labour Party's External Economic Policy in the 1940s', 194.

⁹³ Letter Cranborne to Ronald (FO), September 10, 1940, FO371/25207 W9699/8805/49. The main target of Cranborne's concerns was Stalin's Russia rather than Hitler's Germany.

Britain with enough to eat, with the pre-war “chaos” of an unplanned economy. Responding to Churchill’s reluctance to begin planning for post-war relief Bevin asked: “How will you get order when the chaos is on us unless we begin to plan now.” To which Churchill responded: ‘What you call Chaos we call freedom’.⁹⁴ This exchange reveals party differences over international cooperation but also philosophical differences between liberal notions of individual freedom and a belief in planning.

Disagreements between Labour and Tory ministers in the War Cabinet also arose over plans for multilateral economic institutions. In April 1943 Dalton and Attlee combined to push through a multilateral approach to Commercial Policy against Conservative opposition.⁹⁵ Robert Skidelsky (2000) has identified a group of Imperial minded Conservative ministers, centred on Beaverbrook, Amery, Cranborne and Hudson who were “the chief Cabinet opponents of Keynes’ internationalist post-war plans”.⁹⁶ These Ministers were also the most significant challengers of a universal world security organisation in the War Cabinet (though Cranborne often sided with the internationalists).

There was contention within the Labour Party about the nature of the rules in a rules-based order. Some left-wing economists, like Thomas Balogh, wanted more direct national planning and criticised Keynesianism and Bretton Woods as an amelioration of, rather than alternative to, the capitalist system. However, the influence of the Left on policy was limited.⁹⁷ Bevin, though, challenged Keynes’ ICU plans and had doubts about Bretton Woods but he criticised the nature of the proposed rules in a rules-based order rather than the principle of international

⁹⁴ Cabinet Notebook of meeting WM(42)90, July 9, 1942, CAB 195/1/19; Dalton Diary, July 9, 1942, Pimlott, *The Second World War Diary of Hugh Dalton 1940-45*, 465–66.

⁹⁵ War Cabinet Paper by Dalton and Attlee, ‘Post-War Commercial Policy’, April 5, 1943, CAB 66/35/36 WP(43)136; War Cabinet Paper by Amery, ‘Post-War Commercial Policy’, April 7, 1943, CAB 66/35/43 WP(43)143; War Cabinet Meeting, April 8, 1943, CAB 65/34/4 WM(43)50; Dalton Diary, entries for April 2, 3, and 8, 1943 Pimlott, 572–73, 576–79; Toye, ‘The Labour Party’s External Economic Policy in the 1940s’, 200–201.

⁹⁶ Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 137.

⁹⁷ Ritschel, *The Politics of Planning*.

planning.⁹⁸ He feared Keynes' proposals restored the centrality of gold to the system and would be deflationary in times of crisis, rather than expansionary as Keynes insisted. He was concerned Bretton Woods would potentially damage Britain's post-war economic position but did not oppose international economic management in principle.⁹⁹

Amongst Whitehall officials, support for the principle of planning was strongest in the finance and related ministries (Treasury, Board of Trade) where Keynes' influence was at its strongest. Economists drafted into government service from academia, including Henderson (Treasury), Robbins (Cabinet Office) and Meade (Cabinet Office, Board of Trade) provided strong support for ideas of economic planning. Henderson wrote to Keynes in August 1941 that: "I am profoundly convinced that the new wine of planning and Socialism that we shall increasingly have to drink cannot be put in the old bottles of the gold standard, Free Trade, the most-favoured-nation clause, and the open-door; and I have the gravest misgivings as to the wisdom of giving assurances that the refurbishing of these old bottles will be our aim and purpose."¹⁰⁰ Henderson, though, opposed Keynes' multilateralism in favour of national planning.¹⁰¹ Meade, working at the Cabinet Office and the Board of Trade, was a firm advocate of international economic planning. He produced a multilateral and interventionist Commercial Policy for international trade that was eventually accepted as British policy in 1943 with the strong support of his minister Hugh Dalton.¹⁰² As we've seen above, Lionel Robbins, although an advocate of open

⁹⁸ Keynes, Johnson, and Moggridge, *Collected Writings Volume 25*, p142; Dalton Diary, March 31, 1942 Pimlott, *The Second World War Diary of Hugh Dalton 1940-45*, p406; Burridge, *British Labour and Hitler's War*, p147-8; Toye, 'The Labour Party's External Economic Policy in the 1940s', pp196-7, 207.

⁹⁹ Toye, 'The Labour Party's External Economic Policy in the 1940s', 196-97, 207; Pressnell, *External Economic Policy Since the War. Volume 1*, 73-74; Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.2, Minister of Labour, 1940-1945*, 350-51, 386; Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 326-27; Callaghan, *Labour Party and Foreign Policy*, 153.

¹⁰⁰ Henderson to Keynes, August 12, 1941, UK Treasury T160/1105/F17660/02/1; Henderson was a strong proponent of planning, but mainly on a national, not international, basis. Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 200-201.

¹⁰¹ For Henderson see Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy*, 30; Waley, 'The Treasury During World War II'.

¹⁰² For Meade's July 1942 initial draft of his proposal on post-war Commercial Policy see Howson, *The Collected Papers of James Meade. Vol. 3, International Economics*, pp27-35; For an account of its

markets in a rules-based internationalist order, supported the interventionism of Keynes and Meade.

In the Foreign Office, although there was wide support for the principle of planning some had deep misgivings in principle. The most significant was Orme Sargent, who became Permanent Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office in 1946. An exchange of correspondence between Sargent, Rex Leeper and Harold Nicolson reveals the lines of argument over planning and liberalism within elite circles in 1940. Sargent opposed planning on philosophical grounds as fundamentally illiberal, arguing that it represented the “tyranny of the State”.¹⁰³ This philosophical opposition to planning is consistent with the views of Conservative Ministers noted above. Both Leeper and Nicolson teased Sargent for his views, Leeper accusing him of “sheer Victorianism”, and Nicolson telling him: “it is practically impossible to revert to nineteenth century liberalism.”¹⁰⁴ The nature of their criticism suggests they were confident theirs was the dominant view within that circle of officials. Sargent disliked both international and national planning. In a minute on a paper advocating a planned approach to reconstruction sent to the Foreign Office by Julian Huxley on behalf of the PEP Group in summer 1940 he complained that “not only the individual but also the State is to be deprived of liberty by the imposition of international planning and regimentation.”¹⁰⁵ Sargent remained deeply sceptical of the UN throughout post-war planning and after the war as Permanent Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office.

Concerns over sovereignty, especially control of interest rates and monopoly of trading in sterling, led to reservations over Keynes’ internationalist proposals in the Treasury and the Bank of England. The Bank of England especially preferred bilateral approaches (or trilateral, as with the UK, US, and France in the 1930’s), though

acceptance as the basis for negotiations with the Americans in August 1943 see Toye, ‘The Labour Party’s External Economic Policy in the 1940s’, pp199-203.

¹⁰³ Letter Sargent to Nicolson, July 12, 1940, FO371/25207 W8805/8805/49. In July 1940, Leeper was Head of the Political Intelligence Department in the Ministry of Economic Warfare, Nicolson a Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Information, while Sargent was Deputy Under-Secretary on the Foreign Office.

¹⁰⁴ Nicolson to Sargent, July 14, 1940, Leeper to Sargent, July 15, 1940, *ibid*.

¹⁰⁵ Minute by Sargent, August 10, 1940, FO371/25207 W9699/8805/49.

during the war this was a minority view. Hubert Henderson, though a strong supporter of economic planning and sceptic on free trade, took a very nation-centric approach and argued against international machinery.¹⁰⁶ An unsuccessful attempt to resist a multilateral approach was made by the Treasury on the eve of the 1943 Washington Talks on the post-war economic order.¹⁰⁷ Elements in the Bank of England were also sceptical about multilateral approaches. In September 1943, on the journey to the Washington Talks, a Bank of England official, Thompson-McCausland, told James Meade that “an international monetary arrangement was probably not needed. We could get on very well with an informal arrangement on the lines of the Tripartite Agreement.”¹⁰⁸ After the Washington Talks the Bank of England resumed their opposition to economic multilateralism, claiming it would cede control to the Americans. In February 1944, after a Cabinet Committee meeting to discuss the outcome of the Washington Talks attended by Basil Catterns and Cameron Cobbold of the Bank of England, Dalton noted in his diary: “They obviously hated the very idea of any kind of international bank...It would all, they thought, be under the influence of foreigners.”¹⁰⁹ It was mainly Keynes’ influence over the Treasury and the Bank that prevented greater contention during the war, but this weakened after his death in early 1946 and the Treasury and, especially, the Bank of England subsequently became far more sceptical of internationalist solutions.

Leopold Amery, Secretary of State for India in Churchill’s wartime cabinet, shared Henderson’s doubts whether planning at the international and national level were reconcilable. One of the strongest supporters of the principle of planning, Amery was also the most consistent critic of plans for a new world organisation in the Coalition.

¹⁰⁶ Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, pp200-1; Penrose, *Economic Planning for the Peace*, 17–18.

¹⁰⁷ ‘War Cabinet Paper’, ‘Currency Talks at Washington’, by Anderson, October 2, 1943, CAB 66/41/28 WP(43)428; ‘War Cabinet Meeting’, October 4, 1943, CAB 65/36/1 WM(43)133; Pimlott, *The Second World War Diary of Hugh Dalton 1940-45*, entry October 4, 1943, pp647-9; Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, p315.

¹⁰⁸ Howson and Moggridge, *Wartime Diaries of Robbins and Meade*, p92. Thompson-McCausland was a Bank of England official seconded to the Treasury for the talks. The Tripartite Agreement was an arrangement to manage exchange rates between the US, Britain and France during the 1930s that was largely discredited by 1943. See Clavin, *The Failure of Economic Diplomacy*.

¹⁰⁹ Pimlott, *The Second World War Diary of Hugh Dalton 1940-45*, entry for February 16, 1944, pp706-8.

In 1940 he argued against “free market individualism” as a “backward looking” 19th century phenomenon, “...while the ideals and forces in the political sphere are continuously driving towards national integration and increasing State control”.¹¹⁰ However, this did not mean international planning. In a February 1943 paper to the Reconstruction Committee entitled 'Planning and Internationalism' he argued that planning and internationalism were incompatible. Amery argued for a planned economy within the Empire as an economic unit but believed this was incompatible with international planning since states (he singled out the US in this respect) would not submit to the necessary supranational planning authority: "So long as there is no world government the trend towards planning is of necessity a trend away from internationalism."¹¹¹ In his response to Eden’s United Nations Plan in January 1943 Amery argued: “The idea that the nations are prepared to hand over their economic independence to such bodies as a World Economic Council, to an International Investment Board or a Commodity Control [sic], or that there will be any agreement among the major Powers to establish such institutions on a permanent basis, as apart from measures of immediate post-war relief, is just sheer illusionism.” The trend was toward economic nationalism not open markets: “It is a trend that cannot be directly reversed by trying to set the Humpty-Dumpty of the individualist *laissez-faire* internationalism of the 19th century on his wall again under Anglo-American auspices.”¹¹²

This apparent incompatibility between planning at a national and at an international level has been dubbed the ‘Planning Paradox’ by Richard Toye (2003). Toye argues that Labour’s commitment to both domestic and international economic planning in the 1940s was incompatible, that international planning undermines domestic planning as it implies a loss of sovereignty over domestic affairs which renders effective domestic planning impossible. He argues that Labour was unaware of this

¹¹⁰ Amery Paper for the 1940 War Aims Committee, ‘A Note on Post-War Reconstruction’, October 29, 1940, WA(40)7 CAB 87/90.

¹¹¹ Paper by Amery, ‘Planning and Internationalism’, February 12, 1943, Reconstruction Committee RP(43)16, CAB 87/3.

¹¹² ‘War Cabinet Paper’, by Amery, ‘The United Nations Plan’, January 25, 1943, CAB 66/33/39 WP(43)39.

in the 1940s.¹¹³ There is little evidence of reservations amongst the key Labour figures in the Coalition as to the compatibility of planning at a national and international level.¹¹⁴ As we have seen, Attlee and Bevin were explicit in their support of economic planning internationally, and Dalton was also an active advocate of multilateral approaches to economic management. In the 1930s Dalton expressed doubts as to the compatibility of free trade with national planning, and by the 1940s had decided in favour of planning. In October 1941 he wrote: “The ultimate goal must, I think, be a kind of supreme International Economic Planning Body, which would attempt to co-ordinate the various Agreements between Governments and producers, and would all the time be suggesting ways of improving agreements so as to secure a more sensible distribution of resources.”¹¹⁵ International planning was thus co-ordination of national plans. In contrast to some of the Conservative members of the Coalition, and elements of the Treasury and the Bank of England, the senior Labour figures in the Coalition looked to international co-operation to actively manage the world economy.

Attitudes to planning at an international level were significant for their impact on the meaning of the UN. For those ideologically committed to international planning, and multilateral management of the economy and the international system, the UN System represented modernity and progress. For those who believed in national (or

¹¹³ Toye, *Labour Party and the Planned Economy*, p156; It is not true that all of those sympathetic to the Left were unaware of any potential conflict. Mitrany also raised concerns about the incompatibility of domestic and international planning, but drew the opposite conclusion from Amery, arguing that competing national plans would lead to international competition and potential conflict. His solution was more international planning. In 1945 he wrote to Brailsford that: ‘The more we have of national planning the more we must have international planning.’ Mitrany to Brailsford 1945, quoted in Rosenboim, *The Emergence of Globalism*, pp35-6; Similarly, E.H. Carr wrote in 1945 that: ‘The answer to the socially and internationally disruptive tendencies inherent in the juxtaposition of a multitude of planned national economies is not an abandonment of planning, but a reinforcement of national by multi-national and international planning.’ Carr, *Nationalism and After*, 47. This did not translate into support for Bretton Woods, however, which Carr condemned as “returning to the universalism of an idealized past” which didn’t exist. Ibid, p46.

¹¹⁴ Pemberton (2001) suggests Labour prioritised national over international planning during the war, though she does not claim they opposed international planning. She cites Crossman (1940), a relatively minor figure in 1940, but no senior Labour Ministers. Pemberton, *Global Metaphors*, 116–17.

¹¹⁵ Note by Dalton, ‘Notes on international economic policy in the post-war world’, RDR 4, October 1941, Labour Party Archives, Manchester, cited in Toye, ‘The Labour Party’s External Economic Policy in the 1940s’.

Imperial) level planning, or free markets, the UN System was a more ambiguous idea. While support for planning did not necessarily equate to support for multilateral internationalism, opposition to the principle of planning was more often associated with a distrust of a universal world organisation. As we'll see in Chapter Four, proponents of planning tended to support a more centralised and integrated UN System whereas non-planners and nationalists argued for a looser structure.

1.6 State Responsibility and Intervention

Planning was assumed to be state planning, with state intervention justified by the extension of the responsibilities of the state into many new areas of society.¹¹⁶ This process was accelerated by the dramatic, and apparently successful, extension of the state during wartime, leading to greater demand for state involvement in, for example, issues like nutrition and food supply, which was to influence UK attitudes toward the FAO.¹¹⁷ The belief it was the responsibility of the state to provide welfare and social security for citizens as well as physical security was reflected on the international as well as national level and this in turn led to support for an interventionist world organisation. Ruggie (1992), defining embedded liberalism, argues that Bretton Woods represented states “assuming much more direct responsibility for domestic social security and economic stability”, though Helleiner (2019) extends this to international intervention.¹¹⁸ In an interdependent world, where security depended on forces beyond the state's physical borders, this translated into the desire to create the capability to act internationally. This belief in the wide responsibility of the state was a feature not just in the UK but across the

¹¹⁶ Patel, *The New Deal*, pp116-7.

¹¹⁷ Penrose (1953), writing as a participant in wartime planning, as a British economist working for the Americans, saw the UK's wartime performance on food supply as a triumph of state sponsorship: “No other democracy and no communist country has yet come nearly so close as Great Britain has to a distribution of food according to need. This was an achievement of planning and not of ‘free enterprise’. Under free enterprise the nutritional advances made in Great Britain in spite of a reduction in the national food supply might well have taken half a century or longer to achieve.” Penrose, *Economic Planning for the Peace*, 123; see also Carr, *Conditions of Peace*, 71, 76, 259.

¹¹⁸ Ruggie, ‘International Regimes, Transactions, and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Postwar Economic Order’, 388; Helleiner, ‘The Life and Times of Embedded Liberalism: Legacies and Innovations Since Bretton Woods’.

post-war world.¹¹⁹ This supported a wide scope for the UN, including economic, cultural, and social issues as well as those of peace and security, integrated into a UN System.

Labour members of the Coalition took the lead in adding ideas of 'social security' to the international agenda in post-war planning, causing further friction between Labour and Conservative members of the Coalition. In a speech of September 1942 Attlee invoked the Atlantic Charter, claiming "...there were many Conservatives who could not have accepted the necessary interdependence of peace and social justice" which was implicit in the Atlantic Charter.¹²⁰ Though there were differences, the extension of the responsibility of the state was accepted by Conservative as well as Labour and Liberal Ministers. Writing in 1940, the Conservative Amery noted that "the ideals and forces in the political sphere are continuously driving towards national integration and increasing State control"¹²¹ and in 1941 he argued that the extension of state responsibility meant that economics had become a vital part of political activity: "The underlying economic conception of the last century was that politics and economics were two entirely separate spheres...Over most of the world that conception has been increasingly out of date. It is not only for purposes of defence, but no less for those of social welfare and economic stability, that economics have become an essential part, the major part indeed, of politics." He did, though, stress this was a national, not international, responsibility: "We need not be totalitarians, or even socialists, to hold that the essential economic unit is the nation, and that individual economic activities, whether within the nation or across its borders, must always be subordinated to and controlled with reference to the general national interest. International economic relations are bound, increasingly, to be the relations of nations, or groups of nations, and not of individuals within an

¹¹⁹ Judt, *Postwar*, 69. Note that Judt argues there was little real state 'planning' done in the UK: policymakers' concern was more about state 'control'. Pemberton, *Global Metaphors*, 106; see also Macdonald, 'The Shape of Things to Come: Global Order and Democracy in 1940s International Thought', 166–79.

¹²⁰ Quoted in Williams, *Failed Imagination?*, 122.

¹²¹ Paper by Amery, 'A Note on Post-War Reconstruction', October 29, 1940, WA(40)7, CAB87/90.

international system."¹²² Amery returned to the theme in February 1943, justifying his support for planning on the grounds that Governments are now being asked to do more: "...our whole conception of social obligations now sets the security of the worker and of his family above the freedom of the purchaser or of the investor. The imperative demand is for planned security, defensive and social."¹²³

While Amery stressed national responsibility for social welfare, the extension of state responsibility was seen to have international as well as national consequences and was increasingly seen to have implications for international governance by those involved in British post-war planning. E.F. Penrose (1953), writing of British economic planning during the war, argued British officials made the connection between domestic and international action: "...in Whitehall the experienced civil servants, both permanent and temporary, were well aware of the inseparable relations between domestic and international affairs and threw their energies into the formation of plans for both parts of the work."¹²⁴

This was to have implications for the scope of the international structures at the heart of the new world order. Writing for the FRPS in 1942 J.L. Brierly argued that: "The traditional system of sovereign states, living side by side with a minimum of restraints on their independence and of co-ordination between their activities, arose and persisted in times when governments did not attempt to control more than a small part of life...A defective international structure works [sic] much more havoc to-day when governments are rapidly extending their control in spheres that were formerly left to private enterprise."¹²⁵ Keynes had written about 'social security' as

¹²² Paper by Amery, December 1941, FO371/28813 W15335/37/49. This paper was drafted as part of the internal debate on the Consideration demanded by the US for Lend-Lease, which Amery opposed, and highlights his preference for a national, as opposed to international, perspective.

¹²³ Paper by Amery, 'Planning and Internationalism', February 12, 1943, Reconstruction Committee RP(43)16, CAB 87/3. Some policymakers saw such views as potentially totalitarian with Jebb describing Amery's paper as the "British Fascist ticket". Minute by Jebb, February 23, 1943, FO371/35363 U791/320/70.

¹²⁴ Penrose, *Economic Planning for the Peace*, 35.

¹²⁵ Paper by Brierly, 'Possible Forms of the Post-War International Structure', July 3, 1942, FRPS Ref RR/1/74/ii, in Mitrany Papers, File 20, LSE Archives.

an international, not just national, priority in December 1940¹²⁶ but for UK policymakers welfare provision was a state responsibility, not the responsibility of international organisations, as suggested by the Welfare Internationalism of Steffek and Holthaus (2018).¹²⁷ It reflected Ruggie's embedded liberalism in which the international system was to be constructed to support domestic welfare provision.¹²⁸ For UK policymakers international cooperation was necessary to support welfare provision for their citizens, but welfare remained the responsibility of the national state.

1.7 Idealism as Realism

Policymakers' respect for pragmatism was evident in their aversion to accusations of 'idealism' in policy discussions. A 'great debate' between idealists, or utopians, and realists in the interwar years has been challenged to the point where it is widely accepted as a myth.¹²⁹ However, the terms 'idealist' and 'utopian' remained politically toxic in the wartime policy discourse and were regularly used by policymakers to discredit policies they opposed.¹³⁰ Jebb's longer Four Power Plan complained at the "facile idealisms of the H.G. Wells or Clarence Streit variety", and though Webster found Jebb's realism "foolishly crude" he was also careful to stress the pragmatism of his own proposals.¹³¹

Internationalist policymakers were therefore careful to present their ideas as 'realistic', or 'practical' and 'pragmatic'. Cripps denied his ideas were 'idealistic' and Dalton felt it necessary to add 'realistic ballast' to the Labour Party's post-war

¹²⁶ Keynes, *The Collected Writings of John Maynard Keynes. Vol.23, Activities 1940-1943, External War Finance*, pp103-113.

¹²⁷ Steffek and Holthaus, 'The Social-Democratic Roots of Global Governance: Welfare Internationalism from the 19th Century to the United Nations'.

¹²⁸ Ruggie, 'International Regimes, Transactions, and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Postwar Economic Order'.

¹²⁹ Ashworth, 'Where Are the Idealists in Interwar International Relations?'; Wilson, 'The Myth of the "First Great Debate"'; Williams, *Liberalism and War*.

¹³⁰ Minute by T North Whitehead, July 29, 1940, FO371/25207 W9280/8805/49; paper by Amery to WAC, October 29, 1940, WAC(40)7, CAB87/90, p12; For the use of the terms idealist and realist from the mid-1930s see Hall, *Dilemmas of Decline*, 31-32.

¹³¹ Four Power Plan, October 20, 1942, FO371/31525 U742/742/70, para 43; Webster diary entry August 28, 1944 Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 45.

international policy statement.¹³² The same consideration applied to economic planning and Bretton Woods. In the first draft of his Clearing Union proposal Keynes felt it necessary to justify its potential 'Utopianism'.¹³³ Robbins defended the 1943 Washington Proposals against criticism that its multilateralism was idealistic: "In recent discussion that project has often been referred to as if it were the product of high-faluting doctrinaire internationalism – the fantasy of armchair economists. But this is not so. That project did not rest on such abstract foundations; it rested upon serious and solid considerations of a national self-interest."¹³⁴

Realism did have negative associations. EH Carr's influential 1939 *Twenty Years Crisis* was in part a defence of appeasement as a realist policy against the utopian reliance on the League's illusory collective security system.¹³⁵ The shadow of appeasement hung over post-war planning, which was partly a discourse with the lessons of the interwar years. One FRPS paper felt it necessary to refute the allegedly false idea that "the purpose of international organisation is to secure for the strong the peaceful acquisition of what they would otherwise seize by force, or in other words to institutionalise 'appeasement' or 'Munichism'." Morality was just as important as power: "The purpose of an international system should be to secure justice among citizens. If this purpose is forgotten, the fabric of the international system (or the State) will be shaken, and the moral beliefs on which it rests will be undermined. It is a very great error to suppose, on so-called realistic grounds, that moral beliefs are not of very great influence in practical affairs."¹³⁶ The need to position power in the new world organisation within a framework of principles was evident in the British Dumbarton Oaks proposals. As Eden wrote to Churchill in May 1944, "...it will not be accepted by public opinion if it is merely based on the possession of power. It should

¹³² War Cabinet paper by Cripps, November 19, 1942, WP(42)532 CAB 66/31/12; Dalton on his draft of 'Post War Settlement'. Grantham, 'Hugh Dalton and The International Post-War Settlement', 718, cites Dalton Diary Jan 18, 1944.

¹³³ Keynes, Johnson, and Moggridge, *Collected Writings Volume 25*, 21–40.

¹³⁴ Note by Robbins, Law Papers, FO800/431, 44/95 'NA'.

¹³⁵ Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis*; Ashworth, 'Where Are the Idealists in Interwar International Relations?', 305.

¹³⁶ FRPS paper by Paton on 'The Presuppositions of International Organisation', RR I/79/I, July 29, 1942, in Mitrany Papers, Mitrany 20, LSE Archives. Paton was secretary of the church's Peace Aims Group. Copeland (2006), chapter 3.

be based, therefore, on certain principles and objects which have already been accepted by the United Nations..."¹³⁷ As we'll see in Chapter Three, though, the preference for 'principles' could also conveniently limit the ability of the rule of law to restrict the freedom of the Great Powers to act as they saw fit.

Traditionalists supported internationalist policies but called them 'realist'. This was not realism alongside idealism, as in Ehrhardt's (2020) 'realist-internationalism', this was idealism as realism, expressed in terms of power to conform to accepted discourse. Churchill hailed the Atlantic Charter's call for an international system for its "realism".¹³⁸ When Amery suggested the United Nations Plan, drafted by Jebb, ignored "stubborn realities" Jebb was mortified, claiming it was based on the "fundamental realities of power". Jebb's July 1945 'Reflections on San Francisco' welcomed the UN for its basis in Great Power responsibility, and for the limitations it placed on American and Russian power.¹³⁹ Years later Jebb still felt it necessary to defend himself against accusations of idealism. In his own account of the creation of the UN he claimed "we were not utopians or even internationalists. Throughout hard-headed British self-interest was paramount."¹⁴⁰

Internationalists, though, were more explicit that true realism required ostensibly idealist policies. The war showed that developments in military technology undermined the ability of states to insulate themselves geographically from conflict, simultaneously increasing their interdependence whilst increasing the impact of war on nations. As Attlee argued in July 1944, "...events have shown that those who advocated collective security were right, and that the emergence of the new method of attack by long-range bombardment is conclusive."¹⁴¹ In April 1945 he told the

¹³⁷ Eden to Churchill, May 1944, FO371/40691 U3872/180/70.

¹³⁸ Reporting to the War Cabinet, Churchill specifically praised 'the realism of the last paragraph' of the Atlantic Charter which 'is most remarkable for its realism'. War Cabinet paper August 20, 1941, CAB 66/18/25 WP(41)202, p4; Churchill to Attlee, August 11, 1941, in CAB 66/18/26 WP(41)203.

¹³⁹ War Cabinet paper by Amery, January 25, 1943, CAB 66/33/39 WP(43)39, 3-4; Jebb minute Feb 4, 1943, FO371/35396 U867/402/70. Paper by Jebb, 'Reflections on San Francisco', July 25, 1945, FO371/50732 U5998/12/70.

¹⁴⁰ Gladwyn, 'Founding the United Nations: Principles and Objects', 25.

¹⁴¹ War Cabinet Paper by Attlee, 'Foreign Policy and the Flying Bomb', July 26, 1944, CAB 66/53/14 WP(44)414. Even Amery argued that the technology of modern warfare made national insularity

Commons that: "Unless we combine with other nations the alternative is the continued menace of war, indeed the probability of a devastating war which will destroy much of our civilisation..."¹⁴² He explicitly identified idealism with realism. Defending the UN in Parliament and at the Labour Party Conference, Attlee declared that "idealists can be realists" and "we idealists are realists".¹⁴³ J.L. Brierly, a professor of international law who worked in FRPS during the war, best captured the sentiment in an assessment of the Charter in 1946, concluding that: "The only realist to-day is the man who knows that somehow we have got to use it [the UN] to create a more civilized international order, and that probably we may not have very long in which to do it."¹⁴⁴ Atomic weapons had increased the risk but it was already acknowledged.

It was Alexander Cadogan, though, a Foreign Office official with an appreciation of internationalism, who best described the effect of the war on shifting understandings of idealism and realism in the 1940s. He wrote in his annual report on the UN in March 1947 that: "...[A]fter the experiences of the second world war, there can be no doubt that a more considerable body of opinion than ever before was prepared to believe that selfish motives and idealism in the sphere of international relations were not necessarily incompatible." Cadogan continued by directly linking security to economic and social affairs: "Thus the instinct of self-preservation and the desire to raise the national standard of living...might well be found to be best satisfied by the establishment of a workable organisation for the maintenance of international peace and security and the solution of international economic and social problems. It was certainly no longer necessary to be an unrealistic dreamer in order to be willing to give this international organisation a trial

illusory. Amery paper for the War Aims Committee, October 29, 1940, 'A Note on Post-War Reconstruction', CAB87/90 WA(40)7.

¹⁴² Speech by Attlee, House of Commons, April 17, 1945, as reported in *The Times*, Wednesday, April 18, 1945; pg. 2.

¹⁴³ Speech by Attlee, House of Commons, April 17, 1945, as reported in *The Times*, Wednesday, April 18, 1945; pg. 2; see also similar comments made to the Labour Party Conference, May 23, 1945, as reported in *The Times*, May 24, 1945, p2.

¹⁴⁴ Brierly, 'The Covenant and the Charter', 94.

and to attempt to make its work a success."¹⁴⁵ This went beyond policy consensus. Traditionalists and internationalists alike agreed that internationalism was the favoured policy. Plesch and Weiss' contention that realism demanded idealist solutions was explicitly recognised.

1.8 Conclusion

The need for a world organisation, still less the principle of multilateral cooperation, was not seriously challenged in wartime policymaking, though there were differences in approach between internationalists and those with a more traditional foreign policy orientation. Policy consensus was reached, however, underpinned by common understandings of the international system and the role of planning and the state in the provision of security to citizens. Traditionalists were reconciled to internationalism as a pragmatic strategy to meet state interests: as Plesch and Weiss (2015) suggest, idealism had become realism. The next chapter shows how, as a result, policymakers prioritised a general international organisation with broad responsibilities over a more limited security organisation or alliance of the Great Powers. The insistence on planning and intervention, though, and an assumption of the projection of British power resulted in a distinctly illiberal internationalism.

¹⁴⁵ Cadogan, Summary of the UN 1946, March 27, 1947, *DBPO Ser 1, Vol VII*, 346. Cadogan was presenting an argument commonly made, but he did not dissent.

2 Chapter Two: A General International Organisation

*"The real choice, as I see it, that presents itself to us lies between a Four- or Five-Power Alliance dominating a World Organisation, and a 'democratic' universalist Organisation to deal with all eventualities. The latter is what we are, or were, aiming at."*¹

Minute by Cadogan, October 2, 1944.

UK policy with respect to the creation of the UN has been characterised as instrumentalist, either to create a more efficient form of traditional diplomacy,² or as a means of securing a US alliance, or an extension of the wartime Grand Alliance, as part of a balance of power strategy.³ This chapter argues that, while a US commitment and continuing cooperation with the Soviet Union were central objectives of British policy, policymakers explicitly preferred a general international organisation over an alliance of the Great Powers. In doing so, it challenges the argument that UK policymakers simply followed the US and only accepted a world organization to appease the Americans. A wider UN System, including Bretton Woods and the Specialised Agencies, was to form the basis of a stable world order, not out of idealism but as a strategy to manage the international system and strengthen international society. However, their internationalism rejected several key liberal internationalist principles, with implications for the nature of the UN and its meaning for UK policymakers.

¹ Minute by Cadogan, October 2, 1944, FO371/40719 U7664/180/70.

² Goodwin, *Britain and the United Nations*, 446; Hoopes and Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the UN*, 207.

³ Gladwyn, 'Founding the United Nations: Principles and Objects'; Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume V*; Roberts, 'Britain and the Creation of the United Nations'; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 40–41; Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*, 162, 169.

The evolution of what was described as the ‘conception of the United Nations’ in British post-war planning from a simple Great Power alliance in early 1942 to a general international organisation by Dumbarton Oaks in August 1944, has been described in the literature and I do not challenge this narrative.⁴ However, the emphasis has been on a core Great Power alliance. This is problematic in two ways. Firstly, it understates British intentions for the UN to become a comprehensive site of international governance. The characterisation of UK policy with respect to the UN as ‘muscular internationalism’ (Douglas, 2004), ‘realist-internationalism’ (Ehrhardt, 2020) or ‘Hobbesian internationalism’ (Lechner, 2020) exaggerates the political and military functions of the UN and promotes the narrative of the UN as a means for the UK to secure a traditional military alliance.⁵ Secondly, it understates the importance of economic, social and cultural international governance and the UN as a means to manage international interdependence. Morris (2013) describes the world organisation as a “general security structure” and ignores economic and social issues. Ehrhardt (2020) recognises them but treats them as peripheral.⁶ This problem is exacerbated by the tendency of the literature to treat Bretton Woods and the UN, misleadingly, as two distinct policy spheres.⁷ This chapter addresses the first issue; the second issue is addressed in Chapter Three.

Framing UK policy toward the UN simply in terms of collective security through a Great Power alliance is misleading. UK policymakers opted for what Cadogan termed a “general international organisation” over an alliance because they preferred a broader system of international governance.⁸ Cadogan meant by this a structure

⁴ Morris, ‘From “Peace by Dictation” to International Organisation’; Ehrhardt, ‘The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45’; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 3. For older accounts see; Goodwin, *Britain and the United Nations*; Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*; Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume V*.

⁵ Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*; Ehrhardt, ‘The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45’; Lechner, *Hobbesian Internationalism*.

⁶ Morris, ‘From “Peace by Dictation” to International Organisation’, 526; Ehrhardt, ‘The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45’.

⁷ Woodward (1976) does not cover economic and social issues at all. Exceptions include Schild, *Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks*; and Williams, *Failed Imagination?*

⁸ Minute by Cadogan, October 2, 1944, FO371/40719 U7664/180/70.

encompassing Great and smaller powers, as described in the October 1943 Moscow Declaration (Article 4), but extending beyond political and military security to include broad economic and social responsibilities to “promote betterment of world-wide economic conditions and the removal of social wrongs”.⁹

The first section of this chapter traces the evolution of UK policy in the creation of the UN from a four-power directorate to a general international organisation, acknowledging Great Power leadership but rejecting the option of a simple alliance of the Great Powers. When there seemed to be an opportunity to secure the American commitment through a simple Great Power alliance, in late 1944 and early 1945, UK policymakers reconfirmed their preference for a general international organisation. The second section places this in the context of a belief in international society and a community of states, and the resulting need to legitimise the new world order. However, the third section argues this was still a Great Power dominated organisation, based on a wartime command and control model, and can be described as a form of illiberal internationalism rather than the liberal internationalism of UN mythology. The final section uses UK policymakers’ prioritisation of order over justice in the Charter to demonstrate how their understanding of the rule of law reflected power as much as principle. The UN represented an attempt to construct a general structure of governance and management of the post-war international system not simply a means to police the world but sought to reproduce the power of the Great Powers, and the centre over the periphery, both in its structure and its approach to the rule of law.

2.1 General International Organisation, not Alliance

Whilst an American commitment was a key policy objective UK policymakers preferred a general international organisation over a Great Power, or American, alliance. Internationalist policymakers regarded an effective world organisation as necessary for a stable international system. They recognised the importance of the

⁹ War Cabinet Paper, ‘Future World Organisation’, Memo A, para 9, July 3, 1944, WP(44)370 CAB 66/52/20.

Great Powers to the success of any future world organisation and accepted Great Power centrality, but as a means of securing an effective world organisation rather than a balance of power strategy. They believed America's rejection of membership had undermined the League and acknowledged the need for American involvement in the new world organisation. However, they stressed the involvement of all the Great Powers, not just the US. More traditionalist policymakers prioritised an American commitment but accepted this was only possible in a world organisation. This has obscured differences in policy motivation amongst policymakers.

2.1.1 From Four Power Plan to General International Organisation

Webster's assessment of the UN as "an Alliance of the Great Powers embedded in a universal organisation" has been much quoted, but most emphasise the Great Power alliance over the 'universal organisation'.¹⁰ Scholars highlight a Concert of the Great Powers at the heart of the UN,¹¹ and argue the British accepted the UN as the price to secure a US alliance.¹² However, rather than embed an alliance in a universal organisation, the alliance pre-dated the universal organisation, which was a later addition. UK planners began with a four-power alliance and then built a general international organisation around it.

This evolution of UK policy from four-power directorate to general organisation has been described in the literature.¹³ By the Dumbarton Oaks talks in summer 1944 British thinking had evolved from the 1942/43 Four Power Plan and United Nations Plan, in which there was not even a General Assembly to give smaller nations a voice and the World Council comprised simply of the four Great Powers, to a new world

¹⁰ Webster diary entry June 26, 1945, Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 69; quoted for instance in Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, 7.

¹¹ Luard, *A History of the United Nations, Vol 1*, 19–20, 44, 68; Bosco, *Five to Rule Them All*; Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 26; Morris, 'From "Peace by Dictation" to International Organisation'.

¹² Schild, *Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks*, 69; Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*, 169.

¹³ Morris, 'From "Peace by Dictation" to International Organisation'; Ehrhardt, 'The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45'; See also Hall, 'Shaping the Future of the World'; For older accounts see Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume V*; Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*.

organisation resembling the League of Nations.¹⁴ The sovereign equality of states was to be acknowledged through membership of a World Assembly of all members “meeting together on a footing of equality...at least once a year”, but “it is not suggested that this body should have all the powers that were possessed by the Assembly of the League.”¹⁵ To maintain the difference between Great and small Powers the powers of the proposed Assembly were to be limited. Shortly before Dumbarton Oaks Ministers finally agreed the World Council, on which the four Great Powers would be permanent members, should consist of 9 to 12 members, with a preference for 11. This was definitive rejection of the four power Council in favour of what Cadogan described as “a 'democratic' universalist Organisation.”¹⁶ UK policymakers consciously sought to create a structure of governance to manage the international system legitimised through inclusion and consent rather than coercion.

2.1.2 British Preference, not American Imposition

As Morris (2013) shows, the shift from a Great Power directorate toward a general international organisation occurred across all three Great Powers. Those who argue the UK regarded the UN as a tactic to secure an American commitment suggest UK policymakers simply followed America’s lead and accepted a general international organisation as the price of an American commitment, implying they would have preferred a simple alliance if it was on offer.¹⁷ This is incorrect. UK policymakers preferred a general organisation and, when presented with the opportunity for an American commitment via an alliance in early 1945 opted decisively for a broader organisation.

¹⁴ ‘The Four Power Plan’, paper by Eden, November 8, 1942, CAB 66/30/46 WP(42)516. The January 1943 United Nations Plan, a revision of the Four Power Plan, included no Assembly, except possibly “wider assemblies...on a world basis or on regional lines” to handle “economic affairs”. ‘The United Nations Plan’, January 16, 1943, CAB 66/33/31 WP(43)31, especially paragraphs 8 and 15.

¹⁵ ‘Ibid’, paragraphs 22 and 23.

¹⁶ APW(44)10th meeting, July 20, 1944, CAB 87/66; APW(44)45 Paper, ‘Future World Organisation: Points for Decision’, CAB 87/67; Minute by Cadogan, October 2, 1944, FO371/40719 U7664/180/70.

¹⁷ Meisler, *First Fifty Years*, 3; Schild, *Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks*, 69.

This thesis acknowledges an American commitment was a central objective of British policy.¹⁸ A Foreign Office paper of February 1942 stated the case for an American commitment to the post-war order, making explicit the connection between the political, security and economic aspects. This included efforts to secure full employment, which as we'll see in Chapter Three, was a key British objective: "Expansion of demand, or anyhow its direction and control, will be essential to the operation of the full employment expansionist policy which both we and America recognise as one of our aims...All attempts at combating unemployment have hitherto been on a national basis: international collaboration is, however, essential, particularly on the part of America." Britain therefore needed to secure an American commitment to the post-war international order.¹⁹ Eden was in "complete agreement" with the paper.²⁰ Jebb quoted from it as the epigraph to his October 1942 Four Power Plan, the basis for British planning for the post-war order.²¹ This preoccupation continued throughout British post-war planning.

UK policymakers believed the demands of American domestic politics meant the US would only make such a commitment if it was presented as part of a universal organisation. The Four Power Plan explicitly rejected an Anglo-American condominium, partly because of the reaction of the Russians and the European Allies, but principally because they did not expect the Americans to agree.²² As Eden wrote to Duff Cooper in July 1944, "...the fact remains that only by encouraging the formation of some World Organisation are we likely to induce the Americans - and this means the American Senate - to agree to accept any European commitments designed to range America, in case of need, against a hostile Germany or against any

¹⁸ Ryan, *The Vision of Anglo-America: The US-UK Alliance and the Emerging Cold War, 1943-1946*; Reynolds, *Britannia Overruled*.

¹⁹ Foreign Office paper, drafted by Ronald and Whitehead, on 'Co-Operation Between Great Britain and the United States', February 19, 1942, FO371/30685 A1684/1684/45. This paper was printed and circulated through the Foreign Office. Note that this statement also underlines the direct link between international cooperation and domestic political policy aims.

²⁰ Minute by Eden, February 28, 1942, *ibid*.

²¹ Four Power Plan, October 20, 1942, FO371/31525 U724/724/70

²² 'The Four Power Plan', paper by Eden, November 8, 1942, CAB 66/30/46 WP(42)516, para 6.

European breaker of the peace."²³ It was understood that Roosevelt favoured some form of post-war commitment, and the British were prepared to follow his lead in managing his domestic audience, even, as Jebb argued, to the point of accepting any world organisation supported by Roosevelt.²⁴

However, the argument the British only accepted a general international organisation to please the Americans is incorrect. Some scholars have been misled by Churchill's antipathy to a world organisation, erroneously believing his views represented UK policy toward the world organisation.²⁵ However, as we've seen in the introductory chapter, his influence was marginal and his views unrepresentative of UK policy. Scholars using US archives and the accounts of US participants such as Notter (1950) and Russell (1957) assume the similarity between US planning documents and the final Charter demonstrate it was an American creation, with the British contribution reduced to that of a reluctant follower. As Meisler (1995) asserts, "The United Nations was mainly an American idea..." with the British simply "humouring the Americans they needed desperately as allies".²⁶ Michael Howard (1998), calls the UN "quintessentially American".²⁷ Some barely mention a British contribution or incorrectly claim that UK planning was minimal.²⁸

Ehrhardt (2020) challenges this narrative and restores British agency in UN creation.²⁹ Extensive interdepartmental UK post-war planning occurred from 1942

²³ July 25, 1944, in WP(44)409 CAB 66/53/9. Note, though, that Eden's motivation here was to present arguments against separate European alliances. See also Foreign Office memo on 'Co-Operation Between Great Britain and the United States', February 19, 1942, FO371/30685 A1684/1684/45; Parmar, *Think Tanks and Power in Foreign Policy*, 94.

²⁴ Minute by Strang, April 30, 1943, FO371/35396 U1823/402/70; minute by Jebb, March 28, 1943. FO371/35366 U1535/320/70; Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*, 162. Greenwood argues that for Jebb "Clinching Washington's active involvement was the central game-plan." Ibid, 169.

²⁵ Meisler, *First Fifty Years*, 3; Hoopes and Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the UN*, 69–70, 207; Campbell, *Masquerade Peace*, 9–14, though Campbell acknowledges differences between Churchill and Eden.

²⁶ Meisler, *First Fifty Years*, 3; Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 949; Hoopes and Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the UN*, 90–91; Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945*; Divine, *Second Chance*, 139; Luard, *A History of the United Nations, Vol 1*, 25.

²⁷ Howard, 'The United Nations', 2; Williams, *Failed Imagination?*; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 48.

²⁸ Schlesinger, *Act of Creation*, 47; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 44, 71.

²⁹ Ehrhardt, 'The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45', 194; see also Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*, 169, 175, 197.

onwards, conducted independently from direct US influence. There were no formal Anglo-American exchanges of plans for the security organisation before Dumbarton Oaks though there was frequent Anglo-US contact at both ministerial and, especially, official level. Eden, Law and Jebb visited the US to discuss post-war planning during 1942/43, and there were regular informal exchanges through the UK embassy in Washington. The British repeatedly tried to engage the Americans but US planners were wary of being seen to be working too closely with Britain to the exclusion of other allies, partly for domestic political reasons.³⁰ As late as April 1944, when Assistant Secretary of State Stettinius visited the UK before Dumbarton Oaks, the US delegation was instructed to share no documents.³¹ Even though by Stettinius' visit the British were hopeful their plans were along similar lines³² their understanding of US thinking was incomplete and what knowledge they had suggested the Americans still favoured a Great Power directorate based on Roosevelt's 'Four Policemen'.³³ In May 1944 the military planners claimed they "have no knowledge of any American Post-Hostility Organisation though...some such organisation may exist unknown to us."³⁴ UK policymakers were pleasantly surprised when they received the American Dumbarton Oaks proposals, which they regarded as "simply a reformed Covenant".³⁵

The British participants themselves, both at the time and later, believed the UN was a British creation, a narrative echoed by historians relying on the accounts of British

³⁰ Cull, 'Selling Peace', 21; Greenwood, *Titan at the Foreign Office*, 161–62, 171–72.

³¹ Campbell, *Masquerade Peace*, 9–10.

³² Statement by Law to APW Committee, April 22, 1944, APW(44)1st meeting, CAB 87/66; Webster diary, May 2 and May 5, 1944, Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 32–33.

³³ As late as the Conferences in Moscow (October 1943) and Tehran (November 1943) the Americans still proposed a four-power security council, even though the public Moscow declaration spoke of a 'general international organisation'. US Department of State, *FRUS 1943, Vol I*, 756; Divine, *Second Chance*, 98; Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 785–86; It was not until February 1944, as part of preparations for Dumbarton Oaks, that Roosevelt finally accepted the advice of his officials and agreed the structure that eventually emerged in the Charter but that did not become clear to the British until they received the American Dumbarton Oaks proposals in July 1944. Notter, *Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation, 1939-45*, 256; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 34–35; Morris, 'From "Peace by Dictation" to International Organisation', 253.

³⁴ Note by Colonel Cornwall-Jones, May 10, 1944, FO371/40692 U4287/180/70.

³⁵ See also minutes by Jebb, July 24, 1944, and Cadogan, July 26, 1944, FO371/40700 U6519/180/70; and note on the US plan by Jebb, July 28, 1944, and minute by Eden, August 1, 1944, in FO371/40703 U6775/180/70; Webster diary entry, July 21, 1944, in Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, p38.

participants and the British archives.³⁶ UK policymakers believed they persuaded the Americans to their own positions whilst, in a typical example of British condescension, allowing the gullible Americans to believe it was all their own work in a calculated attempt to increase US commitment to the world organisation. Jebb claimed British ideas on the UN had been “imparted by devious means” to America and Russia.³⁷ Forty years later Jebb still believed his Four Power Plan was crucial in setting the policy agenda not only for the UK but also the US, claiming that “...not only did it have a great effect on the U.S. negotiators but it also served as an essential basis for the discussions at Dumbarton Oaks, out of which emerged - largely unscathed - the eventual Charter of the United Nations.” He claimed the January 1943 UN Plan also “had a very considerable effect on American opinion”.³⁸ This claim to authorship extended to other parts of the UN System, with the British claiming Agencies such as the FAO, for instance, were a British creation.³⁹ Whether policymakers were correct in this assessment is immaterial: policymakers themselves believed they had not accepted an organisation they did not want to secure US participation.⁴⁰

Economic and social planning, primarily Bretton Woods but also the Food Conference, UNRRA, and Civil Aviation, were more openly collaborative at an earlier stage. Bretton Woods was American-led, despite the prominence of Keynes.⁴¹ British

³⁶ Gladwyn, ‘Founding the United Nations: Principles and Objects’; Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume V*; Webster, ‘The Making of the Charter of the United Nations’; Roberts, ‘Britain and the Creation of the United Nations’; Schild, *Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks*, 69; For a recent restatement of this narrative, see Burley and Davies, ‘Early Contributions’.

³⁷ Webster diary entry, June 26, 1945, Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 70; Memo by Jebb, ‘Reflections on San Francisco’, July 25, 1945 FO371/50732 U5998/12/70.

³⁸ Letters, Lord Gladwyn to Hugh Thomas, October 1 and November 27, 1985, Gladwyn Papers, GLAD 1/4/14, Churchill Archives. This conveniently ignored the fact that his original Four Power Plan was a critique of Roosevelt’s idea of the Four Policemen and not a proposal generated in Britain. Thomas was Gladwyn’s son in law and Gladwyn was commenting on drafts of Thomas’ book ‘Armed Truce’.

³⁹ Speech by Noel-Baker speech to FAO Conference, October 20, 1945, Noel-Baker Papers, NBKR 4/725, Churchill Archives; Bevin to Attlee, April 10, 1946, PREM 8/198; Hammond, *Food, Vol 1*, 361; Penrose, *Economic Planning for the Peace*, 123.

⁴⁰ The exception was Trusteeship, which they preferred not to include but understood the US would insist.

⁴¹ Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*, 18.

plans were designed to appeal to the Americans as well as meet UK needs.⁴² On Commodity Policy, as with the Four Power Plan, the British examined US ideas and concluded they would be acceptable to UK interests.⁴³ British policymakers had more difficulty accepting the outcome of the economic negotiations, but, as we'll see in Chapter Four, they still claimed credit for creating an integrated UN System in which social and economic issues were central.

An alternative perspective regards post-war world order building as a transnational collaboration, with neither the UK nor US leading. Parmar (1995, 2004) highlights the close informal connections between the official level policy making elite in the US and Britain both before America's entry into the war and after, especially through influential think tanks, which created a shared view of the international system and the type of new world order to be desired.⁴⁴ Similarly, epistemic communities of academics and civil servants co-operated transnationally.⁴⁵ Academic communities overlapped with international civil servants, who in turn overlapped with national policymakers. It was especially evident amongst economists. As Clavin (2013) has shown, international economic policymaking built on the work of the League and the ILO, producing a set of shared assumptions, objectives and methodologies carried into Bretton Woods and other post-war planning forums⁴⁶ Keynes was a global figure and Keynes and Robbins had also taught many international economists who passed through Cambridge and London. There are many references in Robbins' diary to encounters with former students at Hot Springs and Bretton Woods, members of

⁴² Pressnell, *External Economic Policy Since the War. Volume 1*, 74–76; Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy*.

⁴³ Preliminary Note by the Commodity Policy Section, Board of Trade, March 31, 1943, CAB 78/6 Gen 8/9.

⁴⁴ Parmar, *Special Interests, the State and the Anglo-American Alliance, 1939-1945*; Parmar, *Think Tanks and Power in Foreign Policy*; Williams, *Failed Imagination?*; Rofe, 'Prewar and Wartime Postwar Planning: Antecedents to the UN Moment in San Francisco, 1945'; Watt, 'Chatham House and British Foreign Policy, 1919-1945. The Royal Institute of International Affairs during the Inter-War Period, Foreword', iv, says the CFR and Chatham House formed an 'international clerisy'.

⁴⁵ Rietzler argues American foundations, such as Carnegie and Rockefeller, deliberately used bodies such as the Council for Foreign Relations and the RIIA, and funding of academics, to foster both support for a stable and liberal world order, and to create a common transnational body of knowledge and expert policy makers. Rietzler, 'Experts for Peace: Structures and Motivations of Philanthropic Internationalism in the Interwar Years'.

⁴⁶ Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*.

“the ‘*internationale*’ of economists” as he put it.⁴⁷ There was a real sense that attendees at wartime UN conferences, including national policymakers, were engaged on a common project of post-war order building, which smoothed international policy debates.⁴⁸

The similarity of UK and US plans resulted more from a shared understanding of the international system amongst policymakers than formal collaboration during planning. This does not corroborate Mazower’s argument that the UN was created on British imperial intellectual foundations, but it does provide a mechanism through which this could be achieved. Policymakers faced similar challenges as managers of modern industrial states in an interdependent world, which they felt the obligation to manage. This encouraged shared understandings both in terms of analysis and strategy. The growth in international institutions, with similar intergovernmental structures, reflected common pressures in a period in which expectations of state responsibility were growing. The differences within national policymaking in both the US and UK were often greater than those between the two sets of national policymakers. Officials of each shared views that were at odds with their respective leaders. This suggests policy differences were not simply nationally driven and the notion of a monolithic US policy imposed on a reluctant group of British policymakers is misleading.

UK policymakers reasoned that an American commitment via multilateral structures would not only support Britain’s position as a world power but also place limits on American power in both political and, especially, economic affairs. A 1942 report on civil aviation described the choice for Britain in terms that applied in other policy areas. The author argued “...as far as civil aviation is concerned, the choice before the world lies between Americanisation and internationalisation. If this is correct, it is difficult to doubt that it is under the latter system that British interests will be best

⁴⁷ Howson and Moggridge, *Wartime Diaries of Robbins and Meade*, 14, 18, 26, 49, 60, 61, 63, 75, 77, 89, 180–81, 228; Howson, *Lionel Robbins*, 449, 454.

⁴⁸ Ikenberry, ‘A World Economy Restored’, 292; Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 76.

served."⁴⁹ The British sought to forestall bilateral American pressure to end Imperial Preference by taking a multilateral approach to trade policy, calculating the Americans were more likely to agree tariff reductions in a multilateral forum than in bilateral discussions.⁵⁰ James Meade argued that multilateralism would enable Britain to mitigate selfish American policies after the war, especially on tariffs and exchange rates, a position supported by Keynes.⁵¹ According to L.S. Pressnell (1986), persuading the US to take a multilateral negotiating approach over commercial issues at the 1943 Washington Talks was "a major British achievement".⁵² Lionel Robbins confided to his diary whilst at the UN Food Conference in 1943 that while US power may not be a political danger given the compatibility of British and American political philosophies, it was a different matter in financial and trade issues: "economically it might be very sinister indeed". Tying the US to co-operation in internationalist solutions, he argued, was "the chief hope of the world".⁵³ In March 1943 Keynes, who had direct experience of negotiating with the Americans, argued to expand economic bodies to include smaller states to act as a counter-weight to the economic power of the US in any economic forum since "we should, diplomatically speaking, be in a weak position on any four-Power economic council, seeing that only we and the Americans would really be interested and the latter might be able to put us in a minority of one."⁵⁴ Keynes hoped economic multilateralism would put limits on American diplomatic power.

⁴⁹ Covering letter Finlay to Jowitt, December 18, 1942: Report for Reconstruction Committee by Lord Finlay, 'Internationalisation of Civil Aviation After the War'. CAB 87/2 RP(42)48.

⁵⁰ Summary of discussions with Dominions on Commercial Policy, June 15-June 30, 1943, July 29, 1943, in Gen 5/4 CAB 78/5.

⁵¹ Paper by Meade, Cabinet Office Economic Section, "Note on Post-War Anglo-American Economic Relations', August 18, 1941, FO371/28907 W12556/426/49. See also paper by Meade 'Proposals for Anglo-American Post-War Economic Co-Operation', October 15, 1941, *ibid.* For Keynes see Keynes, Johnson, and Moggridge, *Collected Writings Volume 25*, 45; Steil, *The Battle of Bretton Woods*, 107.

⁵² Pressnell, *External Economic Policy Since the War. Volume 1*, 118. Pressnell cites report of plenary US-UK meeting, September 21, 1943 in CAB 99/33; tels 4278 Sept 25 and tel 4439, Oct 4, Washington to London, CAB 117/76; report on Commercial Policy discussions, Oct 16, T247/20.

⁵³ Robbins Diary, entry for June 5-7, 1943, Howson and Moggridge, *Wartime Diaries of Robbins and Meade*, 54-55.

⁵⁴ Record of Third Treasury-Foreign Office Meeting, March 2, 1943, FO371/35331 U983/47/70.

Richard Law, who negotiated extensively with the Americans during the war on commercial policy, civil aviation, and oil, concluded it was more effective to engage with them in multilateral rather than bilateral discussions. Writing immediately after the Food Conference in June 1943 he told the War Cabinet: "I have little doubt in my own mind after our experience in Hot Springs, that they [the Americans] are much easier to handle in a crowd than they are in bilateral discussions."⁵⁵ Law was a consistent supporter of cooperation with the US but noted on his return from a trip to America in January 1945 the necessity for Britain to ensure the US was tied into a multilateral framework: "...we shd remember that, whether we like it or not, the USA is coming into the brave new world (there may be a swing back to isolationism but I don't think it will be the old isolationism - it will be an expansionist isolationism of a highly inconvenient character) & that if the USA is not supporting us it will be a damned nuisance to us - perhaps a fatal nuisance."⁵⁶

UK policymakers also wanted to draw the Soviet Union into a rules-based order in which they made formal commitments to the wider international community. As Jebb remarked on the signing of the Charter in 1945, not only was the US now formally tied into the new world order but "...the Soviet Union will...be bound by the most solemn obligations, which it must surely hesitate to repudiate...".⁵⁷ This could have been achieved through traditional alliance arrangements but the public nature of the Charter, and the implied commitment to the international community as a whole, placed additional constraints on future Russian behaviour.

In this sense UK policymakers self-identified Britain as both a Great Power and a small power. Acting like a Great Power in the UN validated Britain's Great Power status whilst also projecting power.⁵⁸ Simultaneously, it provided some protection from the consequences of Britain's relative weakness with respect to the US and

⁵⁵ War Cabinet Paper by Law, 'Food Conference', June 28, 1943, WP(43)275 CAB 66/38/42, 6-7.

⁵⁶ Minute by Law, undated but between January 22 and 25 1945, FO371/50659 U242/5/70.

⁵⁷ Paper by Jebb, July 25, 1945, 'Reflections on San Francisco', FO371/50732 U5998/12/70, para 6.

⁵⁸ As Jebb later wrote, "The international organisation...might halt Britain's further decline; bolstered by close association with the two superpowers, Britain might be able to retain its position as a world power." Gladwyn, 'Founding the United Nations: Principles and Objects', 25.

Russia. This realpolitik rationale for multilateralism facilitated policy consensus between traditionalists and internationalists. This was not internationalism alongside realism, as Ehrhardt suggests: this was another example of internationalism as realism, to optimise the projection of British power.

2.1.3 Great Power Responsibility

The assumption Great Powers had a special role in the international system was widely held amongst British policymakers. Bevin and Herbert Morrison made public statements to this effect in 1941 and 1942, pre-dating Jebb's Four Power Plan, and it formed a core assumption of British post-war policy.⁵⁹ The British justified a differential position for Great and small Powers by allotting them different, and by implication unequal, functions: "all members enjoy equality of status, though not necessarily equality of function."⁶⁰ As the British proposals for Dumbarton Oaks expressed it: "The more power and responsibility can be made to correspond, the more likely is it that the machinery will be able to fulfil its functions."⁶¹

This enabled the British to legitimise structural advantages (permanent membership of the World Council and special voting privileges in both the security and economic organisations) on grounds of the added responsibility they were obliged to assume. As Eden claimed in 1942, leadership of the world was a "burden" that Britain must shoulder, to take up the "responsibility" of power.⁶² It was a circular, and self-serving, argument: power meant responsibility, and in return for taking on this responsibility the Great Powers deserved (not just demanded) special privileges and additional power. UK policymakers were able to convince themselves that not only should they play a dominant role in the international system but that this was

⁵⁹ Bevin speech to TGWU, 'Labour And Defence.' Times [London, England] 19 Aug. 1941: 2. The Times Digital Archive; Morrison speech, Manchester Guardian, May 6, 1942.

⁶⁰ Memorandum A, final version, paragraph 3, in 'War Cabinet Paper', 'Future World Organisation', July 3, 1944, CAB 66/52/20 WP(44)370.

⁶¹ 'War Cabinet Paper', 'Future World Organisation', Memo A, April 1944, paragraph 15, CAB 66/49/20 WP(44)220.

⁶² Cited in Reinisch, 'Internationalism in Relief', p269 who cites Anthony Eden, 'Sacrifices for Peace: Extract from Speech at Usher Hall, Edinburgh, 8 May 1942', in: *The Peoples' Peace*, by Representatives of the United Nations (New York, 1943), p70. See also speech by Cripps, Bristol, April 18, 1943, cited by Mitrany, *A Working Peace System* Mitrany is critical of this line of reasoning.

morally justified. The United Nations therefore legitimised Britain's privileged position within the international system and reinforced a sense of moral superiority.

2.1.4 Force to support the UN, not a balance of power

Some policymakers favoured an outright alliance though this was a minority view, associated with those most sceptical of a world organisation. As Julian Lewis (2003) has shown, the COS rejected the idea of a collective security system as unworkable throughout post-war planning.⁶³ Before Dumbarton Oaks the COS, plus individuals in the Foreign Office as well as Churchill, wanted what was termed a 'nuclear alliance' with the US (the Foreign Office, but not the COS, potentially added Russia) rather than a multilateral security system. Jebb defined a 'nuclear alliance' as "treaties of mutual defence between the Great Powers, with which other Powers can associate themselves". However, he acknowledged that "...in the absence of some scheme which can at least be represented as a step towards the creation of an international society, we are not in practice likely to get our nuclear alliances."⁶⁴ Eden agreed, warning Churchill in April 1944 that: "Without a general international organisation we cannot obtain the "nuclear alliance" of the three major powers."⁶⁵ The idea of a simple alliance of the Great Powers as the basis of the world order was therefore rejected as unattainable. The COS reluctantly accepted a security system based on the world organisation following ministerial pressure during preparations for Dumbarton Oaks.⁶⁶ However, the COS remained deeply sceptical of the UN and continued to work for a revival of Anglo-American military cooperation through the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Churchill shared the reservations of the COS but was alone

⁶³ Lewis, *Changing Direction* especially chapters 3 and 4.

⁶⁴ Covering note to PHP(44)1(0)(Final) by Jebb, February 1944; Ehrhardt, 'The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45', 182; The term 'nuclear alliance' was coined by Walter Lippman in 1943, Lippmann, *U.S. Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic*, 164-65; Wertheim, *Tomorrow, the World: The Birth of U. S. Global Supremacy*, 157.

⁶⁵ FO371/40691 U4036/180/70; Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 31.

⁶⁶ APW(44)10, 'World Security Discussions', April 25, 1943, CAB 87/67; APW(44)2nd and 3rd meetings, April 27 and May 4, 1944, CAB 87/66; APW(44)15, 'Earmarking of Specified Forces for the World Council', May 5, 1944, CAB 87/67; Lewis, *Changing Direction*; final version of Memo C, 'Security', of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals in CAB 99/28, PMM(44)4. This was signed off by the Cabinet on July 7, 1944, CAB 65/43/4 WM(44)88. For the MSC at the Talks see Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 156-58.

amongst Ministers and this was another occasion on which Churchill was on the losing side in policy formulation with respect to the UN.

Others regarded the world organisation as a means of securing a traditional balance of power, initially to prevent a German or Japanese revival. Jebb argued in October 1942 that in the Four Power Plan “... if we play our cards properly, are all the elements of a real world balance of power.”⁶⁷ In February 1944, Jebb gave a lecture on ‘The Balance of Power’ arguing the new world order would maintain a balance of power based on reconciling the vital interests of Britain, the US and the USSR.⁶⁸ As he wrote in a minute in March 1944, the world organisation would be a Great Power alliance between Britain, America and the USSR: “This entails a) that they must regard each other as equals b) that they pay due regard to each others ‘vital interests’. This is what is meant by the Balance of Power, and if its balance is unbalanced then trouble is bound to follow.”⁶⁹ His idea of balance as mutual respect amongst the Big Three suited weaker and smaller Britain. Although Jebb spoke of the balance of power it was more a ‘preponderance of power’ placing overwhelming force behind the UN.⁷⁰ This opened the way to a policy consensus between those, like Jebb, who stressed Great Power relations and those, like Webster and Attlee, who wanted a world organisation supported by force.

Internationalist policymakers rejected a balance of power strategy as dangerously unstable. In December 1942 Bevin criticised Jebb’s Four Power Plan for “thinking too much in terms of political groupings, derived from the old balance of power...I am deeply concerned to get a different approach to our post-war organisation...any plan which sets itself merely to secure a balance of political forces will not last.”⁷¹ Bevin returned to the theme in November 1945, criticising the tendency of the wartime

⁶⁷ Four Power Plan, October 20, 1942, FO371/31525 U742/742/70, para 54.

⁶⁸ Paper delivered to the Canning Club, Oxford University, 21 February 1944, FCO 73/263/Mis/44/1; for discussion of this viewpoint amongst policymakers see the correspondence on this paper in Gladwyn Papers, GLAD 1/4/1, Churchill Archives.

⁶⁹ Minute by Jebb, March 3, 1944, FO371/40607B U2283/84/70.

⁷⁰ Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, 9.

⁷¹ Letter Bevin to Eden, December 8, 1942, FO371/31525 U7198/742/70. As we’ll see in the next chapter, Bevin’s solution was to give primacy to economic and social cooperation.

Allies to retreat into what he called the Three Monroe's of competing spheres of influence in an uneasy and unstable balance. Bevin contrasted the co-operative world organisation with the "power politics" of spheres of influence and concluded that the only solution was not a balance of power but to make the UN work.⁷²

Douglas (2004) claims Bevin was arguing the UN would not work but Bevin concluded: "In my view, therefore, the only safe course for this country is to stand firm behind the United Nations Organisation...".⁷³ By Dumbarton Oaks the British had concluded that alliances without a stabilising structure of international governance were dangerous and outdated. Webster criticised Jebb for his attachment to alliances: "We were moving into quite a new age...An Alliance was all right in 1935-39 but we wanted something more concrete."⁷⁴

Fear of competing blocs was also evident in economic planning. In February 1944 Richard Law, facing down challenges to the October 1943 Washington Proposals from Conservative Ministers such as Amery (Secretary of State for India) and Robert Hudson (Minister of Agriculture), argued "The only alternative to something like the Stabilisation Fund or the Clearing Union is a system of currency blocs and bilateral trading arrangements..." This would lead to retaliatory protectionism and provoke the Americans. Referring to the autarkic protectionism of Nazi Germany, he continued: "Short of our seeing the Secretary of State for India himself installed in the White House next January [after the Presidential election] with the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries presiding, as Vice-President, over the Senate, it is impossible to conceive of any changes in the political scene in the United States which will affect the truth of the proposition that the adoption by this country of a naked Schachtian policy will be taken as a Declaration of War...[W]e shall be

⁷² Memo by Bevin, 'The Foreign Situation', November 8, 1945, FO800/478, MIS/45/14. Note Bevin blamed the US and Russia equally (though not the UK).

⁷³ Ibid; Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, 152; Halifax, who received a copy of Bevin's comments, interpreted this as a statement of support for the UN: Halifax to Bevin, December 12, 1945, FO800/478 MIS/45/28. See also Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.3, Foreign Secretary, 1945-1951*, 193-94.

⁷⁴ Webster diary entry, July 7, 1944 Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 37. Brierly also argued against alliances and ententes as 'impermanent arrangements' and for a 'more permanent and comprehensive association of states'. FRPS paper, 'Possible Forms of the Post-War International Structure', July 3, 1942, para 6, in Mitrany 20, LSE Archives.

deliberately organising the world into rival economic groupings in which not private entrepreneurs but powerful Governments will be the protagonists.”⁷⁵ Multilateral structures were required, not competing alliances.

For internationalists like Bevin, Attlee and the Labour Coalition Ministers, a US commitment was essential to support an effective world organisation. It was a means to an end, to construct a post-war order anchored on a strong world organisation, rather than the end itself. They shared the view that power, including military force, was essential to make any new world organisation a success and they accepted the argument that America’s rejection of membership had fatally undermined the League.⁷⁶ As Bevin told the cabinet APW Committee during preparations for Dumbarton Oaks, “...[h]e was not...prepared to subscribe to any system of world security which did not have force behind it. He had attended many of the proceedings of the League of Nations at Geneva, and he had seen clearly in what an impossible position we had been placed by the absence of force to back up the decisions of the League.”⁷⁷ The Great Powers needed to provide the new world organisation with the necessary material and moral force to make it effective and for this a US, and Soviet, commitment was essential.⁷⁸ Whilst they acknowledged the importance of an American commitment, for Attlee and the internationalists it was a means to provide the new world organisation with this necessary material and moral force. A US (and Soviet) commitment meant a stronger world organisation, not an alliance.

The British Dumbarton Oaks proposals assumed the Great Powers would provide the force necessary, and in return be given power within the organisation to reflect this

⁷⁵ War Cabinet paper by Law, February 7, 1944, WP(44)81 CAB 66/46/31.

⁷⁶ Paper by Brierly, ‘Memorandum on the Causes of the Failure of the League’, printed version dated January 11, 1943 (though circulated originally in the summer of 1942), FO371/34513 C480/480/98. Brierly added “and by the world economic depression” to the end of this sentence, and he did not ascribe the League’s failure solely to America’s absence.

⁷⁷ APW(44)2nd meeting, April 27, 1944, CAB 87/66.

⁷⁸ Comments by Bevin, April 27, 1944, APW(44)2nd meeting CAB 87/66; Covering memo to UK Dumbarton Oaks proposals, April 22, 1944, WP(44)220 CAB 66/49/20, para 7.

responsibility.⁷⁹ This emphasis on force to support the world organisation, and the insistence on the responsibilities and rights of the Great Powers based on their material strength, reflected the blurring of distinctions between idealism and realism. Internationalists agreed force was vital and regarded the supposed utopianism of a world organisation as a realist response to the international system of the mid-20th century. When Aneurin Bevan directly challenged the Great Power orientation of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals in the Commons, shortly before UNCIO in April 1945, Attlee defended the emphasis on power as both idealism and realism. As he told the Commons: “the fact that we are realists does not prevent us from being idealists also”.⁸⁰ On his return from UNCIO Attlee told the Labour Party Conference that: “We are all in this movement idealists, but we are realists too.”⁸¹ Idealism required that power be taken seriously, and what previously appeared to be the utopianism of international cooperation was now a realist strategy for the post-war world. The US commitment would provide the world organisation with the force it needed to be effective, and the UN therefore meant realism in an idealist form.

These two ideas, pragmatic balance of power and an internationalist preference for multilateralism, co-existed amongst policymakers. Both required a policy of Great Power authority through a world organisation which enabled consensus between the internationalists and those in the Foreign Office and elsewhere for whom the world organisation was necessary to secure a US commitment in a balance of power strategy. The outcome was not a US alliance but a structured world order backed by the Great Powers. These two patterns of thought were reconciled, in the words of Foreign Office official William Strang, in the belief that the US should be persuaded to “share in international responsibilities after the war”.⁸² As Webster expressed it to Keynes in March 1946, in their respective political and economic spheres both

⁷⁹ UK Dumbarton Oaks proposals, April 22, 1944, Memo C, ‘Military Aspect of any Post-War Security Organisation’, paras 5 and 21(b), WP(44)220 CAB 66/49/20; Eden memo to Churchill, May 4, 1944, FO371/40691 U3872/180/70, para 5.

⁸⁰ April 17, 1945: cited in *The Times* (London, England), Wednesday, Apr 18, 1945; pg. 2.

⁸¹ May 23, 1945, Attlee speech to Labour Party Conference, Attlee and Jenkins, *Purpose and Policy*, 140.

⁸² Minute by Strang, April 30, 1943, FO371/35396 U1823/402/70.

Webster and Keynes aimed to “anchor the US permanently to world cooperation in such a manner that she would bear a responsibility proportionate to her strength”.⁸³ For UK policymakers, the UN therefore had meaning both as a strengthening of Great Power cooperation but also an international governance structure backed by the material power needed to make it effective.

2.1.5 Final Rejection of Alliance

The British preference for a general organisation over a simple alliance arrangement with the Americans was decisively reconfirmed between Dumbarton Oaks and San Francisco. When disagreements over the veto and the Russian request for all the Soviet Republics to become UN members threatened breakdown of the Anglo-US-Soviet talks at Dumbarton Oaks, British and American officials discussed a more limited “Consultative Organisation” with a separate Five Power alliance to “keep Germany + Japan in order”.⁸⁴ This was not taken further. Cadogan recognised it would be a significant retreat from the organisation envisaged at Dumbarton Oaks and he did not include the proposal in a list of options for next steps he sent to London in September 1944.⁸⁵ Cadogan was clear that the concept of the United Nations to which the British were now committed was a general international organisation which he directly contrasted with an alliance. On October 2, 1944, he wrote that: “The real choice...that presents itself to us lies between a Four- or Five-Power Alliance dominating a World Organisation, and a 'democratic' universalist Organisation to deal with all eventualities. The latter is what we are, or were, aiming at.”⁸⁶ Officials produced variants on the idea but Webster, Cadogan and William Malkin opposed any retreat from a general international organisation and the idea was not circulated outside the Foreign Office.⁸⁷

⁸³ Diary entry, April 1946, Webster Diary, vol 9, LSE Archives.

⁸⁴ Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 48–49; US Department of State, *FRUS 1943, Vol I*, 798-802.; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 206-7. Pasvolsky later (March 1945) told the Canadians that such an idea, backed by a military alliance directed against Germany and Japan, was discussed in the State Department during Dumbarton Oaks. See comments by Hume Wrong at the British Commonwealth Ministers meeting, April 10, 1945: BCM(45)8th meeting, CAB 99/30.

⁸⁵ Telegram from Cadogan to Foreign Office, September 13, 1944, FO371/40713 U7374/180/70.

⁸⁶ Minute by Cadogan, October 2, 1944, FO371/40719 U7664/180/70.

⁸⁷ Paper by Cadogan October 4, 1944, FO371/40720 U7919/180/70. See also minutes by Jebb, September 18, and Malkin, September 19, 1944, FO371/40713 U7374/180/70.

Jebb remained interested in an alliance, though he still believed that for domestic political reasons the US would not agree.⁸⁸ The possibility of “naked” alliance arose, however, in January 1945 when Senators Vandenberg and Connally, separately, publicly proposed a four-power alliance to keep Germany and Japan disarmed.⁸⁹ Although the reaction of both Roosevelt and the State Department was ambivalent, Vandenberg’s proposal was well received by the American press and public.⁹⁰ This suggested domestic US politics may not be an obstacle to an alliance. The Foreign Office recognised the significance of the speeches. Halifax called Vandenberg’s proposal a “spectacular move” and believed it “amounts to a positive call for entangling alliances”, though intended to supplement the Dumbarton Oaks proposals, not replace them.⁹¹ Eden felt both proposals were important enough to circulate to Ministers.⁹²

A paper circulated by Eden to the APW Committee on the Vandenberg and Connally proposals at the end of January 1945 confirmed that when faced with the possibility of an alliance with the US even pragmatist British policymakers opted to prioritise a general world organisation as their main objective.⁹³ Jebb briefly saw an opportunity to secure an American alliance as a backstop in case the world organisation was not established, to Webster’s disappointment.⁹⁴ However, by mid-January 1945 even

⁸⁸ Minute by Jebb, November 16, 1944, FO371/40723 U8353/180/70. See also minute by Jebb, October 19, 1944, FO371/40720 U7919/180/70.

⁸⁹ Vandenberg, *Vandenberg Papers*, 127–45. Senator Connally proposed an ‘interim Security Council’ of the Four Powers, pending creation of the UN.

⁹⁰ ‘Ibid’; for Roosevelt’s non-committal reaction see report of Halifax’s interview with the President, January 17, 1945 in APW(45)12, CAB 87/69, January 25, 1945. See also Divine, *Second Chance*; Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 484-6. A similar resolution by Senators Ball and Hatch, supportive of Dumbarton Oaks, was headed off by Roosevelt in December 1944. Divine (1967) p261; Halifax to FO, January 8, 1945, FO371/50659 U233/5/70.

⁹¹ Telegram Washington to London, ‘Weekly Political Situation’, January 14, 1945, FO371/44535 AN213/4/45; Telegram Washington to London, January 11, 1945, FO371/50659 U333/5/70; Halifax to FO, January 13, 1945, FO371/50659 U350/5/70.

⁹² Paper by Eden, ‘World Organisation’, January 25, 1945, APW(45)12, CAB 87/69. The paper was noted but not discussed by the APW Committee, Feb 1, 1945: APW(45)3rd meeting, CAB 87/69.

⁹³ Paper by Eden, ‘World Organisation’, January 25, 1945, APW(45)12, CAB 87/69.

⁹⁴ For Jebb’s hopes for an alliance, see minutes by Jebb, October 19, 1944, FO371/40720 U7919/180/70, and November 16, 1944, FO371/40723 U8353/180/70; for Webster see Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 55.

Jebb regarded an alliance as an inferior second choice.⁹⁵ He decisively confirmed his conversion in an April 1945 paper analysing the Franco-Soviet treaty of December 1944, the terms of which permitted military action without the prior approval of the Security Council, which would require an amendment to the Dumbarton Oaks proposals.⁹⁶ The British had concluded this was not acceptable and on March 29, 1945 the APW Committee agreed this amendment should be opposed as it would “make nonsense of the World Security Organisation” by undermining the authority of the Council.⁹⁷ Jebb’s April 1945 paper argued that any system of alliances would undermine the authority of the UN and alliances were a potential threat to the World Organisation, which was now the strategic priority. Erhardt (2020) suggests Jebb’s intervention was related to arguments over a western Bloc, but it originated in connection with UNCIO and his paper was circulated to the UK delegation to San Francisco.⁹⁸

Jebb’s paper reiterated that an American commitment remained a British objective, though this was no longer in serious doubt by San Francisco. In his post-conference ‘Reflections on San Francisco’ Jebb welcomed the American commitment through the UN as the US would “be committed to intervene if trouble breaks out anywhere in the world.”⁹⁹ This, though, was within the institutional framework of a general international organisation, which was now the primary objective. Policymakers regarded an American commitment to the new world order as vital, but their

⁹⁵ Pimlott, *The Second World War Diary of Hugh Dalton 1940-45*, 824–25.

⁹⁶ Jebb paper ‘World Organisation or Alliances’, April 15, 1945, copy in Webster Papers 14/2, LSE Archives. For the background to the French amendment proposals see Williams, ‘France and the Origins of the United Nations, 1944–1945: “Si La France Ne Compte plus, Qu’on Nous Le Dise”’.

⁹⁷ Paper APW(45)44, March 28, 1945, para 6, and APW(45)9th meeting, March 29, 1945, both CAB 87/69.

⁹⁸ Jebb paper ‘World Organisation or Alliances’, April 15, 1945, para 9, copy in Webster Papers 14/2, ‘LSE Archives’; Jebb’s paper was printed and circulated to the UK delegation to San Francisco. Ehrhardt, ‘The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941–45’, 270–71 Ehrhardt suggests the FO favoured a Western bloc alliance in 1944, but this was to be in support of, or ‘under the umbrella’ of the world organisation. Ibid, 204–5; Draft memorandum by Webster, ‘Britain and Western Europe’, 11 April 1944, FO 371/40692/U4102; Draft memorandum by Jebb, ‘The “Western Bloc”’, 12 April 1944, FO 371/40692/U4102.

⁹⁹ Paper by Jebb, ‘Reflection on San Francisco’, 25 July 1945, FO371/50732 U5998/12/70.

primary aim remained the creation of an institution of international governance, operating within a framework of principles and purposes.

2.2 International Society: An International Community of States

The preference for a general international organisation arose from a desire to create broader structures of international governance, not simply political and military security through a preponderance of force. Policymakers understood the international system as a 'society', or a 'community of states'. For internationalists like Attlee the world organisation represented both a means of strengthening international society and a public expression of that society. Attlee acknowledged "the state of international anarchy" but believed it could be mitigated by international cooperation.¹⁰⁰ The UN could bring structure and order to the international anarchy, and the role of the Great Powers was to support that structure. It was not sufficient for Britain as a sovereign state to seek national security through an improved balance of power: true security could only come through the creation and strengthening of international institutions, and the habits of cooperation derived from working together on a regular basis on common projects.¹⁰¹ In this context international governance was conceived as a set of guidelines, or principles, within which states should operate. Whilst planners rarely discussed post-war plans explicitly in terms of governance such considerations were central to internationalists' understanding of the meaning of the UN and the wider UN System.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Attlee speech to House of Commons, November 28, 1939, 5s, vol 355, cols 16-17. See also Attlee speech to the House of Commons, reported in 'The Times' April 18, 1945, p2 Vickers, *The Labour Party and the World, Volume 1, 1900-1951*, 6.

¹⁰¹ War Cabinet Paper by Cripps, 'Armistices and Related Problems', June 15, 1943, WP(43)243 CAB 66/37/43. Attlee speech to the House of Commons, reported in 'The Times', April 18, 1945, p2.

¹⁰² Though policymakers did use the term. In September 1942, the Foreign Office Legal Adviser William Malkin spoke explicitly of the "schemes such as are now under consideration for the better governance of the world in future." September 17, 1942, minute by Malkin on Coulson paper August 1942 on approaches to disarmament. Malkin was arguing in favour of large-scale disarmament after the war. FO371/31514 U636/27/70.

Internationalists understood that international institutions not only reflected an already existing international society but expected them to strengthen such a society. They believed the practice of inter-state collaboration would create habits of cooperation that would increase interdependence and minimise the risk of future conflict. It was therefore not only reflecting greater interdependence but designed to encourage it. There are references to this idea throughout post-war planning. The British Dumbarton Oaks proposals envisaged “a continual process achieved through discussion and compromise between the Great Powers and, in their due place, the smaller States concerned.” They added “it is essential that such a process be guided by principle and subject to an ordered procedure, and it is necessary, therefore, that it should take place within an international organisation.”¹⁰³ As the interdepartmental Law Committee, which prepared the proposals, noted, the “true objectives of a world order...[were]...the interdependence of nations and the transcendence of national sovereignties”.¹⁰⁴ This was a vision of an ordered society co-operating in a structured system. International structures and a system of rules, both formal and informal, imply the development of an agreed, and therefore legitimate, system of international governance.

The British Dumbarton Oaks proposals suggested that an international community was not simply a means to prevent conflict but was itself the objective. Peace and security are “...a means by which an ordered and progressive community of States may come into existence.”¹⁰⁵ The references to ‘community’ and ‘society’ in the Dumbarton Oaks proposals suggest the UN was expected to be more than a tool of international crisis management or a form of balance of power alliance. The UK did not propose a commanding supranational authority to mitigate anarchy but stronger rules of acceptable behaviour in inter-state relations, though it recognised the need for overwhelming force to support such rules. This required structures of formal

¹⁰³ War Cabinet paper ‘Future World Organisation’, Memo B, Peaceful Settlement, para 17, July 3, 1944, WP(44)370 CAB 66/52/20.

¹⁰⁴ Note of Law Committee meeting, April 3, 1944, FO371/40687 U2585/180/70.

¹⁰⁵ Future World Organisation, Memo B, Peaceful Settlement, para 2, July 3, 1944, WP(44)370 CAB 66/52/20; Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 28.

intergovernmental governance beyond security alliances. The Dumbarton Oaks proposals also extended the scope from purely security issues to wider topics of cross-border interest, such as health and nutrition, as well as economic and commercial affairs, as we shall see in Chapter Three. The world organisation therefore had meaning for UK policymakers as formalising and strengthening international society.

Power was important, and Douglas (2004) describes UK policy as ‘muscular internationalism’ due to its emphasis on the military strength of the Great Powers within the UN. However, power was to be exercised within societal constraints. As Attlee told the Commons before San Francisco: “It was no good burking the fact that great Powers exercised great power in any effect. The only question was whether they would exercise that power inside or outside the framework of an ordered society of nations.” Attlee sought to mitigate the anarchy of the system through the development of social constraints from the other state actors in the system: “The Great Powers must only act in accordance with principles which the whole body of States recognised.”¹⁰⁶ The UN was not only to reflect international society but to construct, deepen and strengthen it.

Despite rhetorical appeals to a sense of global community the understanding of international society shared by British planners was one of sovereign states. The Moscow Declaration of October 1943 only included states as members of the general international organisation, and British plans envisaged no formal role for non-state actors except other intergovernmental organisations. As the first sentence of the British Dumbarton Oaks proposals declared: “The World Organisation will consist of independent States freely associated and working together for the better realisation of the common good of mankind.”¹⁰⁷ Invocations of the “common good of mankind” were not matched by formal representation or recognition of either individuals or non-state actors. Supranational powers were resisted, as evidenced by

¹⁰⁶ House of Commons debate, April 17, as reported in Times April 18, 1945 ‘The Times’, p2.

¹⁰⁷ War Cabinet paper ‘Future World Organisation’, April 22, 1944, memo A, para 1, WP(44)220 CAB 66/49/20.

the rejection of a genuinely international force in favour of national contingents coordinated by the Great Powers as "this postulates a greater advance in international co-operation than States are yet prepared to make, as it implies the existence of a world State...".¹⁰⁸ Governance was to be achieved through the cooperation of sovereign states rather than world government. It did, though, leave open the possibility of a future world state.

British planners realised this could not be achieved simply through a display of material power. As Morris (2013) points out, by Dumbarton Oaks concerns regarding legitimacy caused each of the Great Powers to moderate an explicit Great Power directorate.¹⁰⁹ Policymakers were aware the world had changed, and that Britain could no longer dominate the smaller states as they had done in the League. As one Foreign Office official put it in 1943: "the fact must be faced that the UK will be in the future, as regards material wealth & influence, no longer a Triton among minnows, as at Geneva...".¹¹⁰ British planners were conscious that, in addition to formal power within the organisation, they also required validation and legitimation of Britain's role as a Great Power through the institutions of the world organisation, both in relation to the other Great Powers and the smaller states. For British policymakers, therefore, the UN, and Britain's privileged position within it, had meaning as a validation of Great Power status within the community of states.

Legitimacy required support of the new international order by the smaller states. Labour Ministers were most sensitive to the position of the smaller powers. Attlee argued for inclusion of the smaller allies in the UN Declaration of January 1, 1942, ensuring they were admitted as wartime United Nations from the outset.¹¹¹ He supported the smaller states, including the Dominions, in their attempts to mitigate the most egregious instances of Great Power domination during planning for the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, memo C, para 7.

¹⁰⁹ Morris, 'From "Peace by Dictation" to International Organisation'; For a similar argument with respect to China see Loke, 'Conceptualising the Role and Responsibility of Great Power'.

¹¹⁰ Minute by Moss, August 8, 1943, FO371/35398 U3919/402/70.

¹¹¹ War Cabinet Meeting, December 24, 1941, CAB 65/20/27 WM(41)135; Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 2005, 55.

new world organisation.¹¹² In a fierce debate over the structure of the UNRRA Executive Committee, in which the Foreign Office agreed with the Americans and the Russians it should be confined to the four powers, it was Attlee and Dalton who persuaded Eden to support admission of some smaller states.¹¹³

Policymakers who prioritised the world organisation, such as Attlee, Webster and Toynbee, argued that the Great Powers needed to acknowledge they only acted with the consent of the international community, though this position was not adopted formally by the British.¹¹⁴ British concerns that the smaller powers may not consent was evident in the British Dumbarton Oaks proposals which recognised that giving the World Council too much power “might seem to imply too great a recognition of the position of the Great Powers in the Organisation.”¹¹⁵ Objections by Attlee, Cadogan and Webster to the Russian thesis that parties to a dispute should be entitled to vote, and therefore veto, in the Council were expressed in terms of damage to the moral authority of the new organisation, undermining its legitimacy. Cadogan argued that “...we shall undermine the moral authority of the new Organisation from the start, and we shall have great difficulty with the smaller States...”.¹¹⁶ By contrast, more power-oriented policymakers such as Churchill

¹¹² See for instance his War Cabinet papers January 28 1943, CAB 66/33/44 WP(43)44, March 22, 1943, CAB 66/35/15 WP(43)115, and July 19, 1943, CAB 66/39/21 WP(43)321. Attlee was Dominions Secretary from February 1942 to September 1943, which may have heightened his sensitivity to small state concerns, but see also Attlee’s speech on War Aims to the Commons, November 1939, which recognized the rights of small states to independence, November 28, 1939, HoC, 5s, vol 355, col 16–17.

¹¹³ Letter, Attlee to Eden, June 30, 1942, FO 371/31501 U35/12/73. Eden was persuaded to accept a larger Policy (Executive) Committee by Dalton and Attlee at a meeting in October 1942, on the proviso it would be limited to 7 members. FO 371/31504 U1052/12/73. ‘NA’; Note that the British failed to convince the Americans and Russians and the UNRRA Executive Committee was established as a four-power body; Sharpe, ‘The Origins of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration’.

¹¹⁴ War Cabinet Paper by Attlee ‘Proposed Four-Power Declaration’. September 22, 1943, CAB 66/41/12 WP(43)412. See also minutes by Toynbee and Webster on article by Wolfers, Sept 1943 in FO371/35397 U3814/402/70. The Dominions tried to get the British to accept the sovereignty of the Assembly before UNCIO, but the British resisted, meeting of British Commonwealth Prime Ministers, April 10, 1945, BCM(45)8th meeting, CAB 99/30.

¹¹⁵ War Cabinet paper ‘Future World Organisation’, April 22, 1944, covering memo, para 13, WP(44)220 CAB 66/49/20.

¹¹⁶ FO to Cadogan, September 6, 1944, FO371/40710 U7223/180/70; Paper by Cadogan, ‘World Organisation’, November 22, 1944, APW(44)117 CAB 87/68. Cadogan himself was arguing both in terms of the effect on the organisation but also out of principle. Attlee to Eden, September 15, 1944, APW(44)85 CAB 87/68; Webster diary entries, October 14, 1944, November 1, 1944 Reynolds and

(supported in this case by Eden), Jebb and the COS, were less concerned at legitimacy and initially endorsed the Russian position.¹¹⁷ Churchill was only talked out of supporting the Soviet position with great difficulty, and only on the grounds that the American compromise provided a diplomatic escape route and that Britain should therefore follow the American lead on the issue.¹¹⁸

More internationalist policymakers understood legitimacy and governance would be enhanced by a universal, rather than limited, organisation. Internationalists such as Webster were the strongest supporters of what Cadogan called a “‘democratic’ universalist Organisation”, worldwide and open to the membership of all (‘peace-loving’) states, even the ex-enemy states after a suitable period of penitence.¹¹⁹ Their main opposition came from those, such as Amery and Churchill, who favoured more limited regional structures, with the Empire treated as a non-contiguous region to strengthen imperial identity.¹²⁰ They were more sceptical of a world organisation, as were other imperialists such as Cherwell and Beaverbrook.¹²¹ A combination of Eden’s Foreign Office and the Dominions successfully opposed Churchill’s regionalism due to fears of competing blocs, the Dominions’ desire for a global security system and the risk it may have provided the US an excuse to retreat from

Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 50–51, 62; For Attlee see January 4, 1945, APW(45)1st meeting, CAB 87/69; January 5, 1945, War Cabinet Paper by Attlee reporting the conclusions of the APW Committee, WP(45)12, CAB 66/60/29; Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, 132.

¹¹⁷ Webster diary entry, October 14, 1944, Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 50–51; minute by Jebb, November 20, 1944, FO371/40723 U8353/180/70; paper by Vice-COS, November 30, 1944, APW(44)117 CAB 87/68; see also Cripps note to Churchill, October 7, 1944, and Cadogan’s response circulated as War Cabinet Paper WP(44)667 CAB 66/58/17. Minute by Eden, November 20, 1944, FO371/40723 U8353/180/70; Churchill to Eden, December 30, 1944, PREM 4/30/10. See also tel by Halifax to the FO, January 5, 1945, saying: ‘Thinking it over and putting himself in Stalin’s position, he felt a good deal of sympathy with it.’ FO371/50670 U159/12/70.

¹¹⁸ War Cabinet meeting January 11, 1945, WM(45)4 CAB 65/49/4.

¹¹⁹ Minute by Cadogan, October 2, 1944, FO371/40719 U7664/180/70; Webster diary entry, June 26, 1945 Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 69.

¹²⁰ Amery War Cabinet papers, November 12, 1942, WP(42)524 CAB 66/31/4; and January 25, 1943, WP(43)39 CAB 66/33/39; see for instance Churchill’s lunchtime speech at the UK Washington Embassy, May 22, 1943, in WP(43)233 CAB 66/37/33; Confidential Annex; War Cabinet meeting, April 27, 1944, WM(44)58 CAB 65/42/16, minute 2. Again, Cripps sided with Churchill, see War Cabinet paper by Cripps, November 19, 1942, WP(42)532 CAB 66/31/12.

¹²¹ For Cherwell to Churchill opposing UNRRA, minutes June 16 and June 27, 1942, PREM 4/28/11; for Beaverbrook’s opposition to internationalism see Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 332–33.

Europe.¹²² Although British plans incorporated elements of regionalism to placate Churchill, the UK Dumbarton Oaks proposals clearly favoured wide membership in a centralised organisation.¹²³ This enabled the UN to claim legitimacy as representative of the world, as well as extending governance worldwide, reinforcing Britain's validation as a Great Power.

2.3 Illiberal Internationalism?

Although UK policymakers preferred a general international organisation over a simple alliance of the Great Powers, this was no liberal internationalist ideal. Plesch (2010) argues that the post-war UN was based on “liberal cooperative ideas” developed within the wartime United Nations.¹²⁴ Recent literature on the liberal international order (LIO) that emerged after World War Two, prompted by its possible demise, has questioned its liberal nature.¹²⁵ This thesis accepts the argument that what has become known as the post-war LIO emerged only after 1949 as American policy in the early post-war Cold War turned to creating a Western regime alongside the universal UN established in 1945. Further, as argued by Acharya and Plesch (2020), the UN was established as a universal and multipolar instrument of international governance to reflect a global society of states and should not be conflated with the less liberal US-led LIO. Acharya and Plesch, though, argue that the UN order of 1945 was more liberal than it later became, recalling

¹²² For differences between Churchill and the FO and the defeat of Churchill over regionalism see entries for April 1944 in Stettinius, *Stettinius Diaries*, 52–56; FO brief (drafted by Webster) undated but early May 1944, accusing Churchill of favouring a four power alliance, FO371/40691 U4035/180/70; minute by Jebb, May 9, 1944, FO371/40692 U4194/180/70; May 9, 1944, Meeting of Dominions PM's, PMM(44)9th meeting CAB 99/28; Ehrhardt, 'The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45', 206–14; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 51–53; Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume V*, 116–26; Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 33–35.

¹²³ Dumbarton Oaks proposals, covering memo April 22, 1944, para 10, WP(44)220 CAB 66/49/20; July 3, 1944, Memo A, para 14, WP(44)370 CAB 66/52/20

¹²⁴ Plesch, *America, Hitler and the UN*, 2.

¹²⁵ Acharya, 'After Liberal Hegemony'; Porter, *The False Promise of Liberal Order*; Tooze, 'A New Bretton Woods'.

Ikenberry's identification of an interregnum of liberal internationalism 1.5 before the LIO of 2.0.¹²⁶

However, the UN of 1945 envisaged by UK policymakers may perhaps be described as 'illiberal internationalism'. The concept of liberalism is both wide and contested and varies through time and geography.¹²⁷ This makes broad judgements of whether policies conform to liberal ideals both challenging and open to contestation.

However, it is suggestive that recognised liberal internationalists from the first half of the 20th century, such as Lord Cecil and Gilbert Murray, expressed serious misgivings at key elements of the Charter. The idea of the UN advocated by UK policymakers departed from some key elements of liberalism in that it rejected the equality of member states (despite the formal commitment to sovereign equality), denied plurality by defining the state as the only legitimate international actor, abandoned the idea of harmony of interests in its belief in planning, and rejected laissez-faire. It also incorporated an understanding of the rule of law that prioritised order over justice and embodied structures that enabled the Great Powers to set, interpret and enforce rules. This argument is neither original nor new and has been a consistent criticism of the UN.¹²⁸ It is important, though, to understand the nature of the internationalism advocated by UK policymakers and its sources.

2.3.1 Wartime United Nations as Model: The Combined Boards

The feature of the wartime UN that attracted UK policymakers was not the propaganda ideal of the Atlantic Charter but the command structure of Great Power dominance within the alliance. Inequality was inherent in the model UK policymakers adopted for the concept of the UN. As Plesch (2010) argues, the post-war UN grew out of the wartime alliance of the United Nations.¹²⁹ However, UK policymakers'

¹²⁶ Acharya, *The End of American World Order*; Acharya and Plesch, 'The United Nations: Managing and Reshaping a Changing World Order'; Ikenberry, 'Liberal Internationalism 3.0' Ikenberry regards both 1.5 and 2.0 as liberal.

¹²⁷ Bell, *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire*, chap. 3.

¹²⁸ See, for instance, Claude, *Swords Into Plowshares*, 71–73; and analysis by Martin Wight cited in Hall, *Dilemmas of Decline*, 74.

¹²⁹ Plesch, *America, Hitler and the UN*; Plesch and Weiss, '1945's Forgotten Insight', 5; Howard, 'The United Nations'.

understanding of the 'concept of the United Nations' was based upon the structure of a wartime alliance that itself was based on a Great Power Directorate in which the smaller allies were reduced to a subordinate role.

The Combined Boards, the first of which were introduced at the creation of the wartime United Nations itself, at the meeting between Churchill and Roosevelt in December 1941 and January 1942, were central to the UK's concept of the UN. The war had dramatically increased acceptance of central planning which was perceived as both rational and effective.¹³⁰ This encompassed not only military planning but eventually a broad range of economic functions including supply, production, shipping, and food.¹³¹ This example served as a model for peacetime international administration. As one Treasury official put it with regards to post-war organisation: "There might...be the hope that when the assembled nations had been brought to see the acute problem of supply and demand that would arise, they would come back to the Combined Boards and realise that the machinery was there."¹³² Jebb's October 1942 Four Power Plan suggested the Combined Boards might be "maintained and expanded" to provide post-war "technical services", and the Combined Food Board served as a model for the proposed food agency discussed at Hot Springs.¹³³ Policymakers were attracted by the perceived efficiency of the Combined Boards and the wartime United Nations, which the Foreign Office regularly contrasted with the inefficiency of the League with its "rigid" procedures placing limits on the Great Powers.¹³⁴

UK policymakers welcomed the Anglo-American cooperation at the heart of the Combined Boards and Combined Chiefs of Staff. Smaller allies were excluded. It was

¹³⁰ McKenzie, 'Peace, Prosperity and Planning Postwar Trade, 1942–1948', 21–26; Engerman, 'The Rise and Fall of Central Planning'.

¹³¹ For the Combined Boards see Hall, *Studies of Overseas Supply*; Rosen, *The Combined Boards of the Second World War: An Experiment in International Administration.*; Roll, *The Combined Food Board*.

¹³² Comment by Dunnett, meeting April 9, 1943, Gen 8/14 CAB 78/6.

¹³³ Four Power Plan, October 20 1942, FO371/31525 U742/742/70, para 40; Cabinet paper, Woolton, March 22, 1943, CAB 66/35/14 WP(43)114; Cabinet meeting March 25, 1943, CAB 65/33/45 WM(43)45; Hammond, *Food, Vol 1*, 357.

¹³⁴ Covering Note by Law to 'Future World Organisation', War Cabinet Paper, April 22, 1944, para 3, WP(44)220 CAB 66/49/20.

this, rather than the popular propaganda elements of the four freedoms and the Atlantic Charter, that made the concept of the United Nations attractive. The Atlantic Charter was regularly invoked, but the Foreign Office understood its value lay more in propaganda than a basis for planning.¹³⁵ The Chiefs of Staff especially valued the wartime Anglo-American military collaboration and argued this should be the basis of post-war security planning.¹³⁶

The Combined Boards were also a model for the UN's economic and social agencies for UK policymakers. This was consistent with the rejection of laissez-faire as outdated, inefficient and the source of potential conflict, a view held by internationalists but also, as we saw in Chapter One, national planners such as Amery and Henderson who opposed a world organisation. The Bretton Woods institutions were similarly created to actively manage the international economy. It was an implicit rejection of the key liberal concept of harmony of interests.¹³⁷ The 1945 Labour Government looked to the Combined Boards to provide a model for effective international administration in Agencies such as the FAO, and the failure of UN bodies to match this model after the war was a source of disappointment to Ministers like Morrison, as we'll see in Chapter Six.

2.3.2 Sovereign Equality

British conceptions of the UN also challenged the sovereign equality of member states. In February 1943 Jebb identified special rights for more powerful states as a key difference between the new concept of the United Nations and the old League, writing: "the point in the Foreign Secretary's paper [United Nations Plan, January 1943] about the non-admission of Gleichberechtigung is vital and constitutes an essential feature in which the United Nations Plan differs from the old League of

¹³⁵ Jebb made this clear in April 1943 when he admitted that the reference to the Atlantic Charter added to the United Nations Plan "was inserted in order to make an appeal to the Americans in the event of the document ever being communicated to them." Minute by Jebb, April 20, 1943, FO371/35396 U1823/402/70.

¹³⁶ For a detailed account of the COS efforts to continue the CCOS see Lewis, *Changing Direction*.

¹³⁷ EH Carr had rejected harmony of interest in international affairs in 1939. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis*, chap. 4.

Nations Plan."¹³⁸ When the Americans first suggested sovereign equality as a principle of the organisation British Ministers objected that this was inconsistent with the special responsibility of the Great Powers, suggesting "...this phrase might be taken to imply that each nation's voice should carry equal weight in the proposed general international organisation...The phrase might therefore lead to misunderstandings...".¹³⁹ The British formula in the UK Dumbarton Oaks proposals of "equal in status though not necessarily in function" reflected this and justified the unequal rights of the Great Powers in the UN.¹⁴⁰

The British failed to overturn the principle of sovereign equality at Dumbarton Oaks due to opposition from the US and Russia and did not subsequently challenge the principle. It was incorporated into the Charter and became a central pillar of the UN System, enabling smaller states to challenge the position of the Great Powers throughout the lifetime of the UN. However, the Charter itself institutionalised clear inequality between the permanent members of the Security Council and other members, and hence function, as the British wished, most obviously in their permanent membership and, especially, the power of veto.¹⁴¹ As J.L. Brierly, the legal academic, put it when discussing the Charter in 1946, "instead of limiting the sovereignty of states we have actually extended the sovereignty of the Great Powers, the only states whose sovereignty is still a formidable reality in the modern world."¹⁴²

¹³⁸ Minute by Jebb on a letter from Bruce commenting on the United Nations Plan, February 5, 1943, FO371/35396 U2329/402/70. The German word Gleichberechtigung can be translated as 'equal rights', which is the sense in which Jebb is using the term here.

¹³⁹ The draft text of the Declaration was circulated, with copies of FO telegrams commenting on the text, in the War Cabinet Paper 'Four-Power Declaration' by Eden, September 4, 1943, CAB 66/40/39 WP(43)389. Minutes of War Cabinet meeting September 6, 1943, in CAB 65/35/34 WM(43)124. Churchill, Attlee, and Bevin were all absent from this meeting, which was chaired by Eden. The minutes do not show who made the arguments about 'sovereign equality', and I have been unable to find cross-references to this meeting in other archives or private papers. See also telegram from the Dominions Office to Dominions Governments, September 13, 1943, War Cabinet Paper 'Proposed Four-Power Declaration'. September 22, 1943, CAB 66/41/12 WP(43)412

¹⁴⁰ Dumbarton Oaks proposals, July 3, 1944, Memo A, para 11(ii), para 15, WP(44)370 CAB 66/52/20.

¹⁴¹ Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 108.

¹⁴² The Henry Sidgwick Memorial Lecture, November 30, 1946, reproduced as Brierly, 'The Covenant and the Charter', 92.

2.4 The Rule of Law and the Principle of Justice

UK policymakers' commitment to liberal principles is also questioned by their equivocal stance on the rule of law in international affairs. It was regularly invoked rhetorically by UK policymakers, but they contested the role of international law in practice. For most the rule of law was not a law of rules, it was a law of broad principles in which cases could be decided in what they themselves described as a 'pragmatic' and 'non-ideological' way, based fundamentally on political considerations, usually by the Great Powers. UK policymakers were broadly sceptical of the role of international law and acknowledged the influence of power over the rule of law. As Zimmern had written in the 1930's, international law "...comes dangerously near to being an imposture, a *simulacrum* of law, an attorney's mantle artfully displayed on the shoulders of arbitrary power".¹⁴³

This attitude was reflected in policy toward a World Court. Neither the January 1943 United Nations Plan nor the July 1943 United Nations Plan for Organising Peace included references to an international court. The January United Nations Plan assumed the World Council, consisting only of the four Great Powers, would initially act as a "Court of Appeal", but this was a political function rather than a legal process.¹⁴⁴ The July 1943 paper referred to "judicial and arbitral machinery" but purely as "arbitral and fact-finding machines" rather than a formal legal institution.¹⁴⁵ In August 1943 Ministers expressed reservations about the validity of a World Court and a reconstituted Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ) only became UK policy after Eden and the Foreign Office Legal Adviser William Malkin argued strongly in support of it.¹⁴⁶ Even then, at Dumbarton Oaks the British argued

¹⁴³ Zimmern, *The League of Nations and the Rule of Law, 1918-1935*, 94; Paper by Zimmern, 'Processes of Political Integration', April 10, 1941, RB I/2/i CAB 117/79, p6. For Zimmern as a sceptic on international law see Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations*, 362; For a similar argument see also Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis*, chap. 10.

¹⁴⁴ The United Nations Plan, January 16, 1943, para 27, WP(43)31 CAB 66/33/31; The United Nations Plan for Organising Peace, July 7, 1943, WP(43)300 CAB 66/38/50.

¹⁴⁵ The United Nations Plan for Organising Peace, July 7, 1943, para 6, WP(43)300 CAB 66/38/50.

¹⁴⁶ The debate took place in the Post-War Settlement Cabinet Committee, chaired by Attlee. PS(34)1st meeting, August 5, 1943, PS(43)3rd meeting, August 18, 1943, both CAB 87/65; for Eden and Malkin's defence see War Cabinet paper "United Nations Plan: Judicial and Arbitral Machinery", August 16, 1943, WP(43)371 CAB 66/40/21. See also Webster diary, entry August 7, 1943 Reynolds and Hughes,

the Court should be independent of the new world organisation. However, both the US and Russia favoured a closer relationship and the British reluctantly agreed.¹⁴⁷ At UNCIO the British did not challenge the agreed Dumbarton Oaks proposals but in debates over detail in the Charter favoured a largely secondary role for the Court.¹⁴⁸ They opposed the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court though accepted the continuation of the 'Optional Clause' through which states could opt-in to accept this provision. They subsequently reconfirmed their acceptance of the Optional Clause carried over from the PCIJ, maintaining previous reservations with respect to intra-Commonwealth cases.¹⁴⁹

Legal experts associated with policymaking believed in the primacy of power over the rule of law, the need for order before law, and the priority of conflict resolution over 'justice'. Their view of both international and domestic law recognised the political nature of law. J.L. Brierly, the eminent international legal academic who worked for FRPS during the war, was typical. He argued power ultimately determined outcomes in domestic law, and the same was true in international law: "...[s]uch a conclusion will shock only those who have taken an unrealistic view of the place of law generally in human society, idealising its role within the state and failing to notice how the element of power influences its creation and its working in that sphere." Brierly denied this implied international anarchy, however, any more than the limitations of domestic law implied domestic anarchy: "This does not mean however that we must regard the nature of international relations as intrinsically anarchical. Inter-group relations within the state are not necessarily anarchical because they are only precariously subjected to law. Every state has the same problem as that of the international society, and some of them have made fair

The Historian as Diplomat, 22. Note that this debate occurred alongside the debate on the inclusion of the phrase 'sovereign equality of states' in the Four Power Declaration described earlier in this chapter.

¹⁴⁷ Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 117–18.

¹⁴⁸ 'UNCIO, Vol XIII', 496.; Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 890–91.

¹⁴⁹ It became Clause 36(2) of the Statute of the ICJ. 'UNCIO, Vol XIII', 249.; Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 884–90; Goodwin, *Britain and the United Nations*, 386–7. Britain first accepted the Optional Clause at the PCIJ in 1929, under the MacDonald Labour Government.

progress towards its solutions.”¹⁵⁰ Brierly concluded in a 1941 FRPS paper: “Peace can be secured, in the state or between states, only by placing an overwhelming superiority of force on its side. This is the first requirement of all political organisation.”¹⁵¹ While this makes Brierly appear opposed to internationalism, he was in fact a committed internationalist.¹⁵² His argument was another articulation of the consistency of force with apparent idealism.

UK policymakers argued that order preceded law. Jebb’s Four Power Plan suggested that ‘freedom from fear’ came before ‘freedom from want’, and Brierly argued: “Our common phrase ‘law and order’ inverts the true order of priority, both historically and logically. Law never creates order; the most it can do is to help to sustain order when that has once been firmly established...always there has to be order before law can even begin to take root and grow.”¹⁵³ Malkin, the Foreign Office legal adviser, agreed. In April 1944 he told the Americans that a World Court could not stop wars because these have economic and political causes.¹⁵⁴ The British rejected the view that law creates international order, the position argued, for instance, by Oona Hathaway and Scott Shapiro (2017) with respect to the Kellogg-Briand Pact.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁰ Paper by Brierly, ‘The Role of Law in International Reconstruction’, March 12, 1941, p5, RR I/35/1, CAB 117/79. In his paper Brierly specifically criticises Zimmern’s position but quotes Carr approvingly. Ibid, p1 and p5 respectively.

¹⁵¹ Paper by Brierly, ‘The Role of Law in International Reconstruction’, March 12, 1941, p9, RR I/35/1, CAB 117/79.

¹⁵² Hall, ‘The Art and Practice of a Diplomatic Historian: Sir Charles Webster, 1886–1961’, 18; Brierly told Halifax in July 1942 that “He felt sure there would be trouble if the organisation was merely a cloak for Great Power hegemony.” July 13, 1942, meeting between members of FRPS and the Foreign Office at Balliol, Oxford, Mitraney 20, LSE Archives. For an account of Brierly as a progressive in international law see Suganami, *Domestic Analogy*, 152–58; and a sympathetic appraisal in Lauterpacht, ‘Brierly’s Contribution to International Law’.

¹⁵³ Jebb’s comment in long version October 22, 1942, para 41, FO371/31525 U742/742/70; Brierly, *Outlook For International Law*, 74. Brierly wrote this book as a defence of international law in a period in which many believed it had failed. Goodwin, *Britain and the United Nations*, 377; Suganami, *Domestic Analogy*, thesis 152-8.

¹⁵⁴ Report of visit to UK by Stettinius, May 22, 1944 US Department of State, *FRUS, 1944, Vol III*, 18–20.

¹⁵⁵ Hathaway and Shapiro, *The Internationalists*. See comment on Kellogg-Briand by Gore-Booth to Mabane, May 13, 1945, on a Brazilian proposal to outlaw war during UNCIO, that “...the memory of the last formal instrument outlawing war as an instrument of national policy was not a greatly happy one.” Webster Papers 14/12, LSE Archives.

The belief that order preceded law justified the further step that order was more important than justice. The absence of references to 'justice' in the British Dumbarton Oaks proposals was not an oversight but a deliberate decision. At a meeting of the interdepartmental Law Committee of officials on April 11, 1944 those present agreed to oppose 'justice' as a principle for inclusion in the Charter partly because of difficulties defining the term but also "because it might in fact be necessary for States to put up with what they might consider minor injustices in the overriding interests of peace."¹⁵⁶ The British had initially objected when the Chinese proposed "international law and justice" as principles at Dumbarton Oaks, ostensibly on the grounds of difficulties in defining 'justice'.¹⁵⁷ Although they eventually accepted the Chinese proposal the British delegation at San Francisco sought to limit the scope and prominence of references to 'justice' in the Charter and only accepted the phrase "in conformity with the principles of international law" in Article 1 paragraph 1 of the Charter under considerable pressure from the smaller powers.¹⁵⁸ The British also unsuccessfully opposed a Bolivian amendment to add a reference to justice in the Principles of the Charter (Article 2).¹⁵⁹ The briefing document for the UK delegation at UNCIO was frank: "while naturally we desire that everything should be done in accordance with justice, there may be occasions on which some compromise will have to be made in order to maintain international peace and security, since we have not yet got a world in which justice can be guaranteed on all occasions."¹⁶⁰ This reconfirmed the primacy of order over justice without any pretence as to problems of definition or interpretation.

¹⁵⁶ Meeting of the Law Committee, April 11, 1944, FO371/40689 U3131/180/70. The decision was contested at the meeting, which was attended by officials from the Foreign Office and other government departments, though the record does not show who argued which outcome. Malkin was present and there is no record of him opposing the decision.

¹⁵⁷ Jebb to FO, Oct 3, 1944, FO371/40718 U7643/180/70; and Jebb to FO Oct 4, 1944, FO371/40718 U7659/180/70; Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 456.; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 240.

¹⁵⁸ UK Delegation meeting, May 10, 1945, CAB 21/1611; Gore-Booth to Mabane, May 13, 1945, Webster Papers 14/12, LSE Archives; minutes of UNCIO Committee 1(1), meetings May 9, and May 15 1945 'UNCIO, Vol VI', 282, 296.

¹⁵⁹ Committee 1(1) meeting June 4, 1945, 'UNCIO, Vol VI', 333–34; minute Gore-Booth to Mabane, June 4, 1945, Webster Papers 14/12, LSE Archives; UK delegation meeting, June 5, 1945, CAB 21/1611.

¹⁶⁰ United Kingdom Delegation Document No 1, Notes on Purposes, Principles and Preamble, April 30, 1945, CAB 21/1612 [and also FO371/50709 U3584/12/70.

British opposition at UNCIO was based on the argument of order before law: "When the Organization had used its force to stop wars, then the principles of international law and of justice would have a chance to operate, both within the state and between states."¹⁶¹ As Lord Halifax told Commission 1, stopping conflict was the first priority of a policeman: "he stops it, and then...justice comes into its own", another clear reference to the priority of order over justice.¹⁶² Smaller states feared another Munich, a fear British comments suggested was valid. As Paul Gore-Booth of the UK delegation acknowledged: "they suspect a loophole for appeasement".¹⁶³

The British eventually accepted the references to justice in both the Purposes and the Principles of the organisation, but reluctantly. It should be noted that justice in this context referred to inter-state relations. Social justice, significant for the notion of a Positive Peace, as we'll see in the next chapter, was used to refer to individuals. Resistance to references to 'justice' in the Charter, and to the principles of international law, were symptomatic of Britain's preference to prioritise the political in relations between states over a rules-based system. It was for the Great Powers, within the Security Council, to be free to decide what constituted 'justice' rather than be obliged to follow fixed rules. This put them into direct conflict with most of the smaller states who sought to limit the actions of the Great Powers through such rules and more precisely defined principles.

2.4.1 Principles Over Rules

The British invoked 'pragmatism' and 'practicality' to justify this political approach to law. During drafting of the Charter, they resisted tight legal definitions and the setting of rules and proposed instead the formulation of broader principles to guide

¹⁶¹ Committee 1(1) meeting June 1, 1945, 'UNCIO, Vol VI', 317–19.

¹⁶² Meeting of Commission 1, June 14, 1945, 'UNCIO, Vol VI', 25–26.

¹⁶³ May 14, 1945: minute by Gore-Booth to Mabane on progress in Ctee 1(1) on Purpose, Webster Papers 14/12, 'LSE Archives' As we have seen, this reference to Munich was entirely justified given the UK attitude to the need for smaller states to make sacrifices for peace.

action.¹⁶⁴ They also rejected guarantees of territorial integrity and political independence (as in Article X of the Covenant), on the grounds that such guarantees would obstruct “peaceful change”, a position agreed with the Americans and Russians at Dumbarton Oaks.¹⁶⁵ This policy was reconfirmed at a meeting with Dominion Prime Ministers in April 1945 ahead of San Francisco, the British rejecting Dominions’ insistence on guarantees of territorial integrity though more willing to compromise over political independence.¹⁶⁶ They argued the use of ‘principles’ rather than ‘rules’ gave the organisation greater flexibility in deciding action in different circumstances, weakening pre-set rules in favour of ad hoc political decision-making. However, in an organisation in which power lay with the Council, and especially its permanent members, this was to the advantage of the most powerful, especially since, on American prompting, decisions of the Security Council were to be binding on all UN members.¹⁶⁷

What looked to UK policymakers like pragmatism and practicality looked to smaller states, likely to be on the receiving end of such practicality, more like Great Powers reserving the right to dispense with principles of justice. It provoked vigorous opposition from smaller states, including the Dominions, who looked to such guarantees for their own protection.¹⁶⁸ As a result, at UNCIO the British clashed with smaller states who demanded more tightly defined rules in the Charter to establish stronger legal protections against the potentially self-interested actions of dominant Great Powers. The memory of Munich hung over the debate, and representatives of

¹⁶⁴ Covering Note by Law, April 16, 1944, in ‘Future World Organisation’, para 15. See also paras 5 and 6, WP(44)220 CAB 66/49/20 ‘NA’.

¹⁶⁵ Memo B, ‘Future World Organisation, paras 19-27, July 3, 1944, WP(44)370 CAB 66/52/20; UK Parliament, Foreign Office, ‘Cmd 6571, Commentary on the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals’. Note that China, whose history over the previous 150 years gave them a different perspective on this from the other participants at Dumbarton Oaks, again sided with the smaller states on this issue.

¹⁶⁶ War Cabinet paper by Eden, ‘World Organisation: Points for Decision’. March 31, 1945, WP(45)209 CAB 66/64/9; War Cabinet meeting, April 3, 1945, WM(45)38 CAB 65/50/1.

¹⁶⁷ Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 464–67; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 136–37. See Dumbarton Oaks proposals, Sections VIII-B and VIII-C. This became Article 25 of the Charter.

¹⁶⁸ See the angry comments of especially the Australians at the British Commonwealth Ministers meeting before UNCIO, BCM(45)5th meeting April 6, 1945; BCM(45)9th meeting April 11, 1945, CAB 99/30. Zimmern (1936) points to such guarantees as part of the ‘old diplomacy’, as “a form of protection afforded, under the old international system, by a strong state to a weaker state.” Zimmern, *The League of Nations and the Rule of Law, 1918-1935*, 219.

the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand all referred to appeasement and the threat that small countries may be sacrificed in the interests of the great.¹⁶⁹ As van Kleffens, the Netherlands Foreign Minister, complained, the position of the Great Powers “...is not clearly inconsistent with the feeding of international crocodiles...”¹⁷⁰

At UNCIO the British position came under intense pressure both in respect of the guarantees of territorial integrity and political independence and the inclusion of ‘aggression’ as an automatic trigger for action. Amendments intended to provide such guarantees in the Charter were submitted by Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Egypt, Ethiopia, Peru, Ecuador, Iran, Mexico and Uruguay.¹⁷¹ In addition, Bolivia, Czechoslovakia, the Philippines, Egypt and Iran all introduced amendments attempting to define aggression¹⁷² and Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Uruguay, Egypt, Iran, Ethiopia, New Zealand and the Philippines all argued, unsuccessfully, for the automatic application of sanctions based on objective criteria rather than Council decision which could be influenced by political factors or subject to a veto.¹⁷³ In response to a New Zealand amendment¹⁷⁴ the UK delegate made clear the British conception of collective security in the new organisation was not for collective action but for the Council to direct efforts for the maintenance of peace: “The [New Zealand] amendment imposed an automatic collective obligation to resist aggression, whereas the whole basis of the new Charter was the identification by the Security Council of threats to the peace, followed by action by the member states in accordance with the Security Council’s plans and requests.”¹⁷⁵ The British did not want to be bound by pre-set rules but free to decide according to political circumstances at the time, as determined by the Council. The New Zealand

¹⁶⁹ Comment by Evatt, BCM(45)9th meeting April 11, 1945, CAB 99/30; Speech by New Zealand delegate, Committee 1(1) June 5, 1945, ‘UNCIO, Vol VI’, 343.

¹⁷⁰ Letter, van Kleffens to Stettinius, March 16, 1945, FO371/50690 U2199/12/70. Van Kleffens sent a copy to Eden the same day. See also a speech made by van Kleffens at Chatham House January 23, 1945, at which he made similar points and expressed the hope the veto would be dropped. Note in Mitrany Papers volume 20, LSE Archives.

¹⁷¹ Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 673.

¹⁷² ‘UNCIO, Vol III’, 585; Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 670–71.

¹⁷³ Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 671–72.

¹⁷⁴ ‘UNCIO, Vol III’, 486.

¹⁷⁵ Committee 1(1), June 5, 1945, ‘UNCIO, Vol VI’, 344, 356. The UK delegate was Paul Gore-Booth. See also minutes of the UK delegation meeting, June 5, 1945 in CAB 21/1611.

amendment won the vote in the committee by 26 votes to 18 but failed due to the requirement imposed by the Sponsoring Powers that amendments to the Dumbarton Oaks proposals needed to receive a 2/3rds majority to pass, one of the most obvious examples of the successful manipulation of the voting process to ensure outcomes desired by the Great Power Sponsors.¹⁷⁶

The results were widely criticised as a new Holy Alliance, a charge previously made against the League.¹⁷⁷ Even some in the Foreign Office expressed misgivings at the role the Great Powers would be granted in the new organisation. In September 1944, in the debate over the veto following Dumbarton Oaks, Frank Roberts wrote: "I am not happy with this proposal, which seems to me to smack too much of 'Holy Alliance' methods & will surely increase distrust of the big three in general & of Russia in particular...[I]f the world is not to relapse into complete cynicism & power politics there is surely much to be said for preserving the international decencies &, if necessary, pillorying the Russians on this issue."¹⁷⁸ As noted earlier, Aneurin Bevan made the same accusation in April 1945, in a pre-UNCIO parliamentary debate.¹⁷⁹ In response Attlee did not deny the authority the Great Powers would wield but defended it on the grounds that such power was to be used in accordance with positive principles: "The Holy Alliance had, he thought, most unholy principles....He hoped they were going to build an organisation with holy principles, at least principles that they could all approve."¹⁸⁰ Attlee's appeal to principles did not convince the smaller states.

2.5 Conclusion

If the British had preferred an American commitment the result may have looked more like the limited alliance of NATO than the broad instrument of international

¹⁷⁶ Committee 1(1), June 5, 1945, 'UNCIO, Vol VI', 346. The Sponsors all opposed the New Zealand amendment, though China was again generally sympathetic to the arguments of the smaller states.

¹⁷⁷ See criticisms made by Germany (1919) and Lloyd George (1923) cited in Osiander, *States System of Europe*, 296, 305; in 1926 Mussolini accused the League of being the "Holy Alliance of Western plutocratic nations", cited in Pemberton, *Global Metaphors*, 45.

¹⁷⁸ Minute by Roberts, September 26, 1944, FO371/40719 U7664/180/70.

¹⁷⁹ House of Commons debate, April 17, 1945, as reported in Times April 18, 1945 'The Times', p2.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

governance of the UN Charter. However, by Dumbarton Oaks in August 1944, UK policymakers had agreed that the extension of the Great Power wartime alliance envisaged in the 1942 Four Power Plan was insufficient and that a general international organisation was required. This met the needs both of those policymakers prioritising a preponderance of power, including a US commitment, but also those who sought to create a robust international society through institutions of international governance. The UN thus had multiple meanings for policymakers.

Mazower (2009) suggests the UN was a liberal internationalist project intended to protect territorial Empire on the British model, and that the apparent American origins of the organisation were an “optical illusion”.¹⁸¹ However, the British conception of the UN was an illiberal internationalism and Mazower’s identification of the UN with the liberal internationalism of an earlier generation is questionable. Alfred Zimmern and Jan Smuts, singled out by Mazower, were peripheral to policymaking and their ideas no longer influential.¹⁸² The older generation of liberal internationalists (Robert Cecil, Gilbert Murray, Lord Lytton, David Astor, Lionel Curtis) played no direct role in policy. They opposed key aspects of the illiberal internationalism of the UN, especially the veto, but were ignored.¹⁸³ As Toye and Toye (2004) have argued, Zimmern’s rejection as Director of UNESCO in favour of scientist Julian Huxley symbolised the rejection of old classicist liberal internationalism in favour of the technocratic spirit of the post-war world.¹⁸⁴ This discourse of technocracy has itself been identified as a new form of cultural imperialism, a successor to the civilisational justifications of earlier imperialists, but the liberal internationalism identified by Mazower had been superseded.¹⁸⁵ The most serious opposition to a universal world organisation, and to Bretton Woods, came from supporters of Empire such as Amery, Beaverbrook and (to a large extent)

¹⁸¹ Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, 16.

¹⁸² Ehrhardt, ‘The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45’, 50.

¹⁸³ Cecil to Eden, December 22, 1944, cited in Lynch, *Beyond Appeasement*, 201; meeting Eden with LNU executive, March 13, 1945, CAB 123/237.

¹⁸⁴ Toye and Toye, ‘One World, Two Cultures?’

¹⁸⁵ For the argument that ‘civilisation’ was no longer the major driver by 1945, (though he is critical of the British at UNCIO) partly because the Nazis had undermined the case for the superiority of European civilisation, see Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society*, 135–43.

Churchill. Support for the UN came from those who wanted to maintain Britain's world role but were less committed to territorial Empire.

The British, with the Americans and Russians, reproduced their own dominance through structures institutionalising the asymmetric power of the Great Powers and centre/periphery relations on both political/military and economic/social relations and were purposely intended to project power without the need to maintain territorial colonies.¹⁸⁶ It was not designed to maintain territorial Empire as Mazower (2009) suggests but was intended to project power through principles and rules, formal and informal, governing the international system and reproduced through a formal structure of governance. The unequal integration of states identified by Adom Getachew (2018) was by design, not accident.¹⁸⁷ It is more suggestive of Hopkins' contention that the nature of globalisation in the second half of the 20th century was incompatible with territorial empire, and that supranational "joint management" was required to encourage and manage an increasingly interdependent world.¹⁸⁸ It is also consistent with the argument that what is termed liberal internationalism itself relies upon illiberal, or non-liberal, practices and that the UN forms part of an institutionalised post-imperial system.¹⁸⁹ UK policymakers looked to the UN to facilitate informal empire in a world in which territorial control was no longer acceptable, practical, or necessary.

For UK policymakers the UN therefore had meaning as a way to manage the mid-20th century international system through familiar structures of central direction which validated and legitimised Britain's role as a Great Power. They sought to manage their changing external environment in terms that were, to them, 'practical' and 'pragmatic' using new tools of international governance. This required a general international organisation with a universal, not regionalised, membership. This

¹⁸⁶ Getachew, *Worldmaking After Empire*.

¹⁸⁷ Getachew, 18–20, 31–34.

¹⁸⁸ Hopkins, 'Back to the Future', 243; Hopkins, 'Rethinking Decolonization'; Hopkins, 'Globalisation and Decolonisation'.

¹⁸⁹ Jahn, *Liberal Internationalism: Theory, History, Practice*; Jahn, 'Liberal Internationalism'.

applied both to policymakers who prioritised power and those more ideologically committed to internationalism. As we'll see in the following chapters, this strategy to cope with the modern interdependent world was applied to the economic and social field as much as political and military security.

3 Chapter Three: A Positive Peace: The UN and Social Justice

“Mr Attlee suggested that the promotion of social progress...in fact constituted one of the fundamental objectives of the whole World Organisation.”¹

Attlee at meeting of the British Commonwealth Prime Ministers, April 12, 1945

Having established that UK policymakers had, by 1944, agreed they wanted a general international organisation, this chapter argues that UK policymakers expected the UN to deliver a ‘Positive Peace’ based on social justice, not just peace as an absence of conflict through collective security. The general international organisation was to provide international governance for economic, social, and cultural affairs as well as political and military security. Internationalist policymakers defined security more broadly to include economic and social issues and they aligned with pragmatist policymakers for whom the UN offered a means of managing the international system. While inclusion of economic and social issues was often justified in terms of security, as removing the causes of conflict, it also enabled policymakers to manage their state responsibilities.

UK advocacy for the economic and social responsibilities of the UN is rarely covered in the literature. Woodward (1975) ignores social and economic issues in planning and does not mention ECOSOC at all in his account of Dumbarton Oaks. The UN was not, as Goodwin (1957) argues, simply a means for the UK to secure a US commitment to security. Nor was the inclusion of responsibilities for such issues as individual human rights a “necessary evil” for the UK to secure US commitment as

¹ BCM(11th) meeting, April 12, 1945, CAB 99/30.

Mazower (2004) argues.² The idea of a Positive Peace, beyond simple political and military security, was central to British understanding of the concept of the UN.

However, I argue the claim that the UN was a 'New Deal for the World', projecting Roosevelt's domestic programme to the global stage, is more problematic as it suggests it was a purely US initiative.³ The New Deal provided a rallying call for many internationalist UK policymakers as it coincided with their own understandings.

However, it was a more ambiguous model for the more pragmatic officials of the Foreign Office and Treasury who distrusted its association with 'grand designs' and were more motivated by national UK concerns, though they too accepted the need for planning and state intervention.

I also challenge the argument of Steffek and Holthaus (2018) that the UN represented the nucleus of Welfare Internationalism with welfare services provided through an international organisation. Many UK policymakers believed the UN's role in social and economic issues supported the successful functioning of the UK state and met their interests as state managers, but they viewed social and economic welfare as a national responsibility which the UN was intended to facilitate, not replace. This is consistent with Ruggie's embedded liberalism, with an international system designed to support domestic welfare provision.⁴ It was a technocratic outlook, related to Mazower's identification of 'scientific internationalism'.⁵ This enabled a policy consensus to be reached between pragmatic UK officials seeking to manage their policy areas in an interdependent world and internationalist UK policymakers who also saw the UN's social and economic role as humanitarian and

² Mazower, 'Strange Triumph of Human Rights', 387.

³ Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 2005; For the argument that the New Deal inspired the UN see also Claude, *Swords Into Plowshares*, 71–72; Burley, 'Regulating the World: Multilateralism, International Law, and the Projection of the New Deal Regulatory State'; Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan*, 179–81; Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 100; Mazower, *Governing the World*, 199–201; Helleiner, 'Back to the Future?'; For the argument that the New Deal influenced later US modernisation theory see Ekbladh, 'Depression Development: The Interwar Origins of a Global US Modernization Agenda', 127–46.

⁴ Ruggie, 'International Regimes, Transactions, and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Postwar Economic Order'.

⁵ Mazower, *Governing the World*, 274, and chap 4; Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*.

moral. Johannes Morsink (1999), Daniel Whelan and Jack Donnelly (2007), Kathryn Sikkink (2017) and Samuel Moyn (2018) have all demonstrated the importance of social and economic rights in the human rights discourse in the 1940s, and these rights were also written into the Charter with the active support of the British.⁶

This chapter has three main sections. The first describes ‘Positive Peace’ which defined security as more than the absence of conflict and which formed the foundation of British proposals at Dumbarton Oaks and UNCIO. The second demonstrates how this idea was promoted by the internationalists in the wartime Coalition, especially the Labour Ministers. The third shows how this resulted in an expanded scope for the world organisation, reflected in the Charter, that included objectives and responsibilities for the UN in social and economic affairs, including individual human rights and full employment, that were fundamental to the new organisation.

3.1 Social and Economic Responsibilities: A Positive Peace

3.1.1 Positive Peace

The idea of a Positive Peace was central to UK plans for a new world organisation, and the concept of the UN as it existed by summer 1944. The term Positive Peace has been popularised by Galtung who coined it in 1964, though prior usage includes Martin Luther King (1953) and Jane Addams (1907).⁷ However, UK policymakers were using similar language during wartime planning. They did not conceptualise Positive Peace as the absence of structural violence in the sense used by Johan Galtung but they did associate it with social justice. Both the January 1943 ‘United Nations Plan’ and the July 1943 ‘United Nations Plan for Organising Peace’ had explicitly advocated “progressive policies” to “smooth out discrepancies in social

⁶ Morsink, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*; Whelan and Donnelly, ‘The West, Economic and Social Rights, and the Global Human Rights Regime’; Sikkink, *Evidence for Hope*; Moyn, *Not Enough*, 89–90.

⁷ Galtung, ‘An Editorial’; King, *Why We Can’t Wait*; Addams, *Newer Ideals of Peace*.

standards” through international organisation, including the use of the ILO.⁸ ‘Positive Peace’ was further defined by UK planners during planning for Dumbarton Oaks. In presenting the draft UK Dumbarton Oaks proposals to Ministers in April 1944, Richard Law claimed the “conception of peace in the new system was positive”, something more than just the absence of war.⁹ The UK proposal for Dumbarton Oaks, which summarised UK policy, is worth quoting at length. Echoing Law’s statement to Ministers it argued: “international peace and security must be made positively, and not only kept by the negative means of suppressing violence. They will be confirmed and strengthened by guarding the right of man to seek his freedom, and by increase in the well-being of human society.” This was “both the purpose and the condition of development in international order.”¹⁰

This was reflected in the proposed objectives for the new organisation. In addition to ensuring peace and security, settlement of disputes and harmonising the policies of states “towards a common end”, the British defined two further objectives: “To promote the betterment of world-wide economic conditions and the well-being of all men [sic] by international agreement so that the fear of want may be removed from the world”; and: “to guard and enlarge the freedom of man by institutions for the removal of social wrongs.”¹¹ British proposals argued: “it will be necessary, therefore, for the Organisation to create institutions to promote the betterment of world-wide economic conditions and the removal of social wrongs, and to support and extend institutions which now exist for these purposes.”¹²

Similar ideas appeared in public discourse in terms of ‘Winning the Peace’. This phrase was used during the war in both a domestic and international context as a rallying cry for international cooperation to build a new, and better post-war world

⁸ War Cabinet Paper by Eden, ‘The United Nations Plan’, January 16, 1943, CAB 66/33/31 WP(43)31, para 14; War Cabinet Paper by Eden, ‘The United Nations Plan for Organising Peace’, July 7, 1943, CAB 66/38/50 WP(43)300, para 10.

⁹ Meeting of the Armistice and Post-War Committee, April 22, 1944, APW(44)1st meeting, CAB 87/66.

¹⁰ War Cabinet Paper by Attlee, ‘Future World Organisation’, April 22, 1944, WP(44)220 CAB 66/49/20, Memo A, para 8.

¹¹ Ibid, para 12.

¹² Ibid, para 9.

order.¹³ This was taken to mean more than just peace, promising a better standard of living for all. Keynes defended his Clearing Union plan on the grounds that: "It is capable of arousing enthusiasm because it makes a beginning at the construction of the future government of the world between nations and the 'winning of the peace'..."¹⁴ As Lord Cranborne told the Dominions Prime Ministers in April 1945 before the UNIO Conference in San Francisco, the war had been won so now "...we should busy ourselves with the task of considering means not only of making the world safe for democracy, but also of making international democracy safe and beneficial for the world, which, in fact, is what world organisation means."¹⁵ In this context, the UN represented the international expression of what Allied propaganda claimed the war was being fought for: a better world for all.

While it repeated ideas from allied propaganda the UK proposal for a Positive Peace presented at Dumbarton Oaks was not simply a propaganda statement for public consumption but a confidential planning document that formed a central element of UK post-war planning.¹⁶ The British went into Dumbarton Oaks committed to a wider view of peace and security than simple military security, a position overlooked in the literature. These objectives were framed around individuals as well as states, even if states retained the primary responsibility for their delivery, and encompassed management of the international economy. This was termed 'social security' by some UK planners and can be seen as an early version of what later came to be known as human security.¹⁷ These objectives were to be supported through a coordinated family of international bodies operating in a UN System.

¹³ This was the case both in the UK and US. Plesch, America, Hitler and the UN; The phrase continued to be used after the war, both publicly and amongst policymakers, as in Morrison's appeal for stronger international agencies in July 1946: 'I am much concerned over the piecemeal and untidy state of the international machinery for handling the supply and economic side of winning the peace.' Cabinet meeting, July 22, 1946, CAB 128/6/9 CM (46) 71. See Chapter Six below.

¹⁴ December 15, 1941, ICU Plan 3rd draft, para 94 Keynes, Johnson, and Moggridge, *Collected Writings Volume 25*, 69–94; Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 222–23.

¹⁵ Cranborne's opening comments to the British Commonwealth meeting April 4, 1945: BCM(45)1st meeting CAB 99/30.

¹⁶ For the alternative argument that UK actions betrayed their public pronouncements see Lauren, *International Human Rights*.

¹⁷ Examples include Eden's Mansion House speech, May 29, 1941, in which he stated: 'We have declared that social security must be the first object of our domestic policy after the war. And social

This was a significant statement of intent and a clear signal that UK policymakers saw the UN as more than an American commitment to a status quo peace. They regarded the UN as a vehicle for social advancement and progressive management of the international system. UK policymakers shared an understanding of Positive Peace as requiring progress and social justice.¹⁸ As Attlee told Commonwealth Prime Ministers in London in April 1945, on the eve of San Francisco: "...the promotion of social progress...in fact constituted one of the fundamental objectives of the whole World Organisation."¹⁹

3.1.2 Consensus between internationalist Ministers and pragmatic officials

UK policymakers were expressing liberal ideas dating back at least to Kant.²⁰

However, policymakers framed this as necessary for realist reasons, not as an idealist project. The advocacy of internationalist Labour Ministers like Attlee ensured these objectives formed part of UK planning for the new world organisation, but departmental officials across Whitehall accepted that international cooperation was essential to enable them to manage the UK's interests in the world and deliver their own domestic economic and welfare responsibilities. The consensus that emerged prevailed over reservations from rejectors of the extension of the world organisation into social and economic fields, including Churchill.

Labour Ministers took the lead in ensuring ideas of social security were added to the international agenda in post-war planning. This was partly a consequence of their belief in the value of planning and state responsibility for the welfare of citizens,

security will be our policy abroad not less than at home.' Eden, *Freedom and Order*, 108; For Bevin see Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.2, Minister of Labour, 1940-1945*, 39–42, 199–202; for Keynes approvingly quoting Bevin in November 1940 see Keynes, Johnson, and Moggridge, *Collected Writings Volume 25*, 11; For the significance of social justice in the human rights discourse of the 1940s see Moyn, *Not Enough*.

¹⁸ This is similar to Martin Luther King's later association of Positive Peace with 'the presence of justice.' King, *Why We Can't Wait*; Howard (2002) also suggests the term 'implies a social and political ordering of society that is generally accepted as just.' Howard, *The Invention of Peace and the Reinvention of War*, 2.

¹⁹ BCM(11th) meeting, April 12, 1945, CAB 99/30.

²⁰ Howard, *The Invention of Peace and the Reinvention of War*, 29–31.

which had an international as well as domestic dimension (see Chapter One above). However, as Steffek and Holthaus (2018) suggest they also had a broader sympathy with the international provision of social welfare. In 1940 Bevin made public speeches advocating 'social security' as a war aim, which provoked Churchill to ask him to avoid post-war commitments.²¹ Though Bevin's intervention had domestic political implications, Labour Ministers consistently sought to extend this to foreign policy. Article 5 of the Atlantic Charter, echoing Roosevelt's call for Freedom from Want and adding the objective of "securing for all improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security", was inserted by Labour Ministers when Churchill consulted the War Cabinet on the draft Charter.²² Borgwardt (2005) finds the British Cabinet's insertion of reference to economic planning and Freedom from Want "surprising", but she misses the Labour influence and their social agenda.²³ More egregiously, Moyn (2018) seems unaware that it was the British who introduced the reference to Freedom from Want into the Atlantic Charter, claiming the inclusion as Roosevelt's initiative.²⁴ Similarly, in the drafting of the United Nations Declaration of January 1942 Labour Ministers tried to add a specific reference to 'social security' and proposed adding the wording: "Righteous possibilities of human freedom, justice and social security not only in their own lands" to the declaration.²⁵ To their disappointment the reference to 'social security'

²¹ Churchill to Bevin, November 25, 1940, PREM 4/83/1A; Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War*, 154; Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.2, Minister of Labour, 1940-1945*, 39–42.

²² Cabinet meeting, August 12, 1941, CAB 65/19/16 WM(41)80 and separate cabinet meeting the same day in CAB 65/19/17 WM(41)81 at which "great importance was attached to the new paragraph dealing with social security"; telegram Attlee to Churchill, August 12, 1941, in CAB/66/18/26 WP(41)203; Sherwood, *White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, 361; Schneer, *Ministers at War*; Helleiner, 'Back to the Future?', 300–302; Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.2, Minister of Labour, 1940-1945*, 69-70 suggests it was Bevin who added the phrase at the meeting of the War Cabinet, but frustratingly does not provide verifiable references. The formal cabinet minutes do not reveal individual contributions. However, for later evidence of Bevin's role see D.F. Hubback to J.P.E.C. Henniker, September 19, 1946; E.E.B. to Sir Norman Brook, September 19, 1946; D.F.H. to Sir Edward Bridges, September 18, 1946, all in CAB 21/4005.

²³ Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 2005, 27.

²⁴ Moyn, *Not Enough*, 46. Of course, the British draft simply echoed Roosevelt's own words back to him, and he welcomed the addition, which was consistent with his own objectives. The point, though, is that this vision was not just something the US imposed on the world but was championed by others, including the Labour members of the UK's wartime Coalition government. For this argument see Helleiner, 'Back to the Future?'

²⁵ War Cabinet meeting December 24, 1941, CAB 65/20/27 WM(41)135, including telegram Attlee to Churchill in the annex to the minutes; Sherwood, *White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, 450–51;

was omitted from the final text. According to Robert Sherwood this was due to opposition from Roosevelt because, ironically, its potential association with the New Deal could have created problems with his critics in Congress.²⁶ However, the sentiment of the Declaration reflected the British suggestions.

Bevin underlined the potentially radical nature of these ideas in a speech to the TGWU on August 18, 1941. Referring to both raw materials and “primary foods”, the Times reported he declared: "They must no longer be subject to speculation. They must be organized. If he [Bevin] had his way he would introduce for the raw materials of the world something in the nature of a postage-stamp principle. He would pool them internationally, pool the freights, and make a charge for their use with international control. This, he believed, would relieve some of the primary causes of the international struggle. He hoped that the [Atlantic Charter] declaration meant not only free access to raw materials but the working out of a system whereby these great basic materials would be free to mankind on equal terms."²⁷ This was an interventionist and activist international economic and social agenda.

Bevin's most telling contribution to extend the scope of the new world organisation was his challenge to Jebb's Four Power Plan in December 1942. Jebb's paper referred to the need for “technical services in the international field, covering such things as communications, transport of commodities, or investment" but these were clearly subsidiary to military security concerns.²⁸ In his reply, titled 'The Economic Basis of International Organisation,' Bevin criticised the Four Power Plan for its focus on outmoded ideas of balance of power. He argued peace was indivisible and reliant on economic and social conditions, not merely the imposition of force, and that peace will not be achieved unless any organisation encompasses economic objectives: “We have to find an economic basis for collective security if individual

Borgwardt credits Hopkins with this addition, but Sherwood correctly attributes the origins to the Labour members of the War Cabinet, Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 2005, 55–56.

²⁶ Sherwood, *White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, 454; Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945*, 318.

²⁷ "Labour And Defence." Times, 19 Aug. 1941, p. 2. The Times Digital Archive, Accessed 1 July 2022.

²⁸ 'The Four Power Plan', November 8, 1942, CAB 66/30/46 WP(42)516, para 9.

nations and peoples are to recognise that they have a stake in maintaining it.” Bevin advocated a single organisation with a “governing body” coordinating the provision of the services necessary for “feeding, transport, currency, economic rehabilitation and customs” for member nations, what he called the “common services”. This would include the ILO, which would become a part of the new organisation: “The United Nations under the leadership of the four Great Powers might form the nucleus of a world organisation of which the International Labour Office would be an important part...[W]e ought to formulate proposals for its development or its merging into some more comprehensive organisation, including some of the Technical and Health Services of the League...” Any world organisation must include economic and social affairs as well as political security in its scope.²⁹ Bevin’s views were echoed by Cripps who also responded to the Four Power Plan by arguing for economic measures such as the “internationalisation of transport”.³⁰

Labour Ministers were also supportive of the New Deal as an international model. Borgwardt (2005) presents the ‘New Deal for the World’ as an American initiative, translating domestic policy to the international stage, though she assumes it found international support. In the UK, support for the New Deal as a rallying call for international planning was strongest on the left, though it was less trusted elsewhere. In November 1940 Attlee wrote to Laski celebrating Roosevelt’s election victory, praising Roosevelt’s ideological sympathies as a man who understood the connections between domestic and foreign policy. Laski passed the letter to the President.³¹ In June 1941 Attlee wrote to Eden suggesting R.H. Tawney join the British embassy in Washington as “someone in a high position on the staff of the Embassy, who would be able to make contacts with what one might call broadly the ‘New Deal’ America...Roosevelt stands, not only for support for us in the war, but essentially for social reform in America as contrasted with the old Wall Street

²⁹ Bevin to Eden, December 8, 1942, FO371/31525 U1798/742/70; Bevin’s support for the ILO has been extensively reported. See for instance Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.2, Minister of Labour, 1940-1945*, 97, 199, 202–5, 282–83, 323–24; Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*, 344.

³⁰ War Cabinet Paper by Cripps, November 19, 1942, ‘The Four Power Plan’, CAB 66/31/12 WP(42)532.

³¹ Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War*, 153; Bew, *Citizen Clem*, 262–63.

republican gang and the reactionary elements of the Democratic Party, both in the South and in the North”.³² This ideological sympathy with both the reforming principles of the New Deal and the link between domestic and international policy was a feature of Labour’s support for the creation of a new international institutional infrastructure.³³

Amongst the Liberals, Keynes also saw the attractions of internationalising the New Deal. The fourth draft of the International Currency Union Plan in February 1942, which formed part of the ‘Treasury Plan’ considered by the Jowitt Reconstruction Committee, Keynes included an “international T.V.A.” to support “general world purposes”.³⁴ Keynes had also written about ‘social security’ as an international, not just national, priority in December 1940.³⁵ The attraction of the New Deal as a model was partly that it reinforced existing Labour and Liberal sympathies and, as Steffek and Holthaus (2018) suggest, reflects longer term traditions in welfare provision.

In the Foreign Office the New Deal was also recognised as a model but was less valued. In October 1942 Jebb wrote disparagingly in his long version of the Four Power Plan of “New Dealers”, with their “‘Tennessee Valley Authority’ nostrums for the organisation of international society, which they tend to urge with missionary fervour.”³⁶ Jebb called the Four Power Plan a “New Deal dream”, drawing a direct connection between the New Deal and his assessment of American plans for a new world organisation, but it was not intended as a compliment. His endorsement of the Four Power Plan came despite its apparent New Deal links, not because of them. Following meetings in Washington in March 1943 he wrote dismissively of the

³² Attlee to Eden, June 12, 1941, CAB118/41.

³³ For a general review of the Left’s admiration of FDR see Addison, *The Road to 1945*, chapters 4 and 5; see also ‘The President and the British Left’ in Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War*; Helleiner (2013) identifies the Labour sympathy with the New Deal in respect of Bretton Woods, though he argues their commitment was less obvious than that of Roosevelt’s America. Helleiner, *Forgotten Foundations of Bretton Woods*, 12–13.

³⁴ CAB 87/2 RP(42)2, February 11, 1942, paragraph 134; for an account of the intellectual underpinning of the New Deal by Keynesian ideas, see Rauchway, *The Money Makers*.

³⁵ Keynes, *The Collected Writings of John Maynard Keynes. Vol.23, Activities 1940-1943, External War Finance*, 103–13.

³⁶ Paper by Gladwyn Jebb, ‘The Four-Power Plan’, October 20, 1942, FO371/31525 U742/742/70, paragraph 11.

“daring and 'cosmic' schemes of many of the New Deal members of the Administration.” Jebb contrasted Pasvolsky’s “backward looking and humane outlook [which] seems to me to be more in accordance with British interests” with the New Dealer aspirations.³⁷ Jebb’s comments were typical of British condescension of Americans. Rex Leeper commented in July 1940 that the New Deal was simply “an attempt to bring the U.S.A. up to the level of more advanced economies such as our own”, and, condescendingly, that it was “defective...in its execution”.³⁸ E.L. Woodward’s opposition to the New Deal was more nuanced. He criticised it as “regulated capitalism” whereas what was needed was a “planned economy”.³⁹ The pragmatists in the Foreign Office balked at the implicit idealism of the New Deal, which offended their sense of practicality and realism, though their attitude reflected distrust of grand schemes not opposition to planning and state intervention in principle.

There were supporters of an internationalised New Deal amongst Foreign Office advisers, though. In FRPS, David Mitrany, an enthusiastic advocate of the New Deal, championed the need to provide “social security” for citizens as an international responsibility, to be delivered through international co-operation.⁴⁰ In a paper of October 1940 Mitrany wrote: "There is abroad an incipient new sense of the meaning and implications of security. It is hardly conscious as yet, and not vocal, but people are clearly beginning to think less in terms of physical or military security, and more in terms of social security: it is an active sense rather than one purely defensive, one that tends to build a bridge rather than a moat." He argued that delivery of these benefits should be through international bodies to counter the

³⁷ Minute by Jebb of meeting with Pasvolsky, March 29, 1943, FO371/35396 U1546/402/70.

³⁸ Leeper to Sargent, July 11, 1940, FO371/25207 W8805/8805/49.

³⁹ Woodward worked in the Foreign Office during the war. Woodward to Strang, June 26, 1940, FO371/25207 W8805/8805/49.

⁴⁰ For Mitrany’s advocacy of the New Deal and TVA see Mitrany, *A Working Peace System*; Mitrany, *American Interpretations*; Steffek and Holthaus, ‘The Social-Democratic Roots of Global Governance: Welfare Internationalism from the 19th Century to the United Nations’, 119; Rosenboim, *The Emergence of Globalism*, 219,221; Rosenboim, ‘The International Thought of David Mitrany, 1940 - 1949’, 6.

attractions of extreme nationalism.⁴¹ In February 1941 he was more explicit: "The State is in process of social transformation: an increasing number of activities are being organised on a communal basis. As many of them as possible should be caught on the wing and linked up internationally, before they are set up in the national mould...The new system in its organisation and activity should tend to change the emphasis of 'security' from military security to social security, from a protected peace to a working peace (i.e. should concentrate its efforts on problems of malnutrition, epidemics, over-population, etc. rather than organising sanctions)."⁴² His argument was normative and ideological as well as descriptive. This, though, was to supplement state provision rather than replace it as Steffek and Holthaus suggest.⁴³ Also, Mitrany had limited influence on post-war planning.

Pragmatist officials from across Whitehall supported the wider scope for the world organisation though. They valued the practical benefits of working through international bodies to address domestic problems with cross-border dimensions. Penrose (1953), writing of British economic planning during the war, argued British officials linked domestic and international action: "...in Whitehall the experienced civil servants, both permanent and temporary, were well aware of the inseparable relations between domestic and international affairs and threw their energies into the formation of plans for both parts of the work."⁴⁴ The Ministry of Food enthusiastically engaged with the Food Conference and FAO to achieve their nutrition objectives and the Ministry of Labour championed the cause of the ILO to meet their own objective to manage the social conflicts of the globalising industrial world through global labour standards.⁴⁵ The Treasury and Board of Trade pursued

⁴¹ Paper by Mitrany, 'Note on the new Nationalism and the New Internationalism', October 3, 1940, Mitrany Papers, File 54, LSE Archives.

⁴² Paper by Mitrany, 'Some Postulates Which a New International Order Should Satisfy', February 25, 1941, Mitrany Papers, File 54, LSE Archives.

⁴³ For the relationship of functional agencies to the state in Mitrany's thinking see Rosenboim, *The Emergence of Globalism*, 43–45.

⁴⁴ Penrose, *Economic Planning for the Peace*, 35.

⁴⁵ On the ILO see for example paper by Tomlinson, 'Relationship of Proposed World Economic Organisations to the World Council', September 1, 1943; paper by Leggett (Ministry of Labour) April 3 1944, FO371/40687 U2814/180/70; comments by Leggett, meeting of the Law Committee, November 1, 1944, FO371/40722 U8058/180/70; the British also made considerable, and largely unsuccessful, efforts to increase the visibility of the ILO in the Charter at San Francisco: letter, Bevin to Eden, March

the Bretton Woods and ITO commercial negotiations to provide a multilateral framework for international economic cooperation, and the Treasury demanded their own representation at UNCIO.⁴⁶ In advance of UNCIO the Ministry of Health made the case for a new international health organisation and the Home Office wanted to secure the continuation of useful League bodies such as those dealing with narcotic control and the traffic in women and children.⁴⁷ Whitehall officials also ensured the inclusion of social and cultural bodies alongside economic in what the draft UK plans for Dumbarton Oaks initially called the “Central Economic Council” and later became ECOSOC.⁴⁸ Officials also agreed the new organisation needed positive economic and social goals to encourage the engagement of smaller states and the wider public, and that social and economic progress should be an end in itself, not simply a means of achieving peace and security.⁴⁹

This is consistent with Murphy’s (1994) argument that the expansion of multilateral functional agencies in the middle of the 20th Century arose through the need to manage the increasingly interdependent economic and social processes of the modern world. It is also consistent with Ikenberry’s (2011) argument that post-war policymakers sought to use international institutions to actively govern the international system, evidence of what he calls their “pragmatic interest in managing international relations”.⁵⁰

5, 1945, FO371/50682 U1719/12/70, War Cabinet paper by Bevin, ‘Relation of ILO to World Organisation’, March 26, 1945, WP(45)194 CAB 66/63/49, tel Tomlinson (UK del UNCIO) to Bevin, May 3, 1945, FO371/50707 U3439/12/70. For the argument that international organisations such as the ILO provided a means to manage the social conflicts of the globalising industrial system, see Murphy, *International Organization and Industrial Change: Global Governance since 1850*, 188.

⁴⁶ Letter Waley to Hall-Patch, March 24, 1945, FO371/50691 U2240/12/70.

⁴⁷ Paper by ADK Owen, March 10, 1945, FO371/50682 U1752/12/70. The Ministries of Health, Education and Home Office all prepared briefs for UNCIO. Meeting of UK Delegation, April 30, 1945, CAB 21/1611.

⁴⁸ Draft paper by Fleming, March 1944, FO371/40686 U2293/180/70; Law Committee meeting, April 3, 1944, FO371/40687 U2585/180/70.

⁴⁹ Minute by Boyd-Shannon, Dominions Office, March 24, 1944, FO371/40686 U2465/180/70; meeting of Law Committee, April 11, 1944, FO371/40689 U3131/180/70.

⁵⁰ Murphy, *International Organization and Industrial Change: Global Governance since 1850*; Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan*, pp124-6. Ikenberry specifically referred to American policymakers but I argue the same applies to the British.

This is not to argue there was no principled element to support for multilateralism amongst officials. The enthusiasm of the Ministry of Food for international cooperation in nutrition and the efforts of the Ministry of Labour to champion the cause of the ILO both had considerable ideational motivations in their respective functional areas. It was, though, also consistent with the functional demands of their roles as state managers. As such, the self-identified practicality of UK officials aligned with more ethical inclinations toward internationalism to produce a strong policy consensus in favour of the extension of the scope of the world organisation to encompass economic and social responsibilities.

As Clavin (2013) has shown, UK policymakers were building on the work of the League and the ILO, and the presence of many officials with interwar experience of international organisations amongst UK policymakers (James Meade, Marcus Fleming) brought this influence into policymaking. Also, UK policymakers maintained close contact with British international civil servants who maintained their international responsibilities during the war, such as Wilfrid Jenks (ILO) and Alexander Loveday (the League's EFO) and actively sought to involve them in post-war planning. For instance, UK officials successfully argued for the involvement of Loveday and Jenks in the Interim Commission of the food organisation, against strong American opposition, where both (especially Jenks) made significant contributions.⁵¹ This was partly because of their professional experience of international administration but UK officials would only have made these efforts if they believed the views of individuals such as Jenks and Loveday, including support for a strong and effective international secretariat, were consistent with their own policy objectives.

⁵¹ UK delegation Food Conference to FO, June 21, 1943, and FO to UK delegation, July 1, 1943, which suggests: 'We think it would be a mistake not to make use of the experience and talent of the Economic Section of the League of Nations in the work of the Interim Commission', both FO371/35377 U2781/320/70; Brief for UK Representative to the Interim Commission, July 21, 1943, CAB 78/6 Gen 8/95.

Conversely, there was resistance from some officials to what were perceived as threats to their own policy autonomy from international institutions. This was sometimes manifested in arguments about sovereignty. Few policymakers argued outright against the need for international cooperation in their respective departmental responsibilities. Instead, those most resistant to multilateralism tended to argue for looser governance structures and consultative bodies rather than bodies with executive powers. The Ministry of Agriculture were sceptical at plans for a food organisation with executive powers over commodity markets and led opposition to the ideas of the nutritionists. The Bank of England, meanwhile, opposed plans for the Bretton Woods institutions they believed would undermine the central bank's control of interest rates and the monopoly of trade in sterling, especially any suggestion that the IMF could trade in its own right.⁵² Elements of the Treasury had similar misgivings about the powers of the IMF and IBRD a viewpoint that strengthened after April 1946 when Keynes' death removed the main inspiration for internationalist solutions in the department.⁵³ However, this was the exception, not the norm.

Conservative Ministers in the Coalition were far less likely to invoke the New Deal as a model though Labour advocacy of social security as a foreign policy objective did receive support from key Conservatives, such as Eden and, to a lesser extent, Law.⁵⁴

⁵² See comments by Thompson-McCausland, Bank of England adviser to the UK delegation at the Washington Talks, September 1943 Howson and Moggridge, *Wartime Diaries of Robbins and Meade*, 92; and comments by Catterns and Cobbold of the Bank's Board to the War Cabinet, February 16, 1943, as reported by Dalton Pimlott, *The Second World War Diary of Hugh Dalton 1940-45*, 706-8.

⁵³ For Treasury reservations during wartime planning see for instance Waley to Dunnett, Henderson, and Keynes, May 27, 1942, Treasury Papers T160/1404/3; for post-war resistance to international economic cooperation see tel Halifax to Bevin, March 27, 1946 *DBPO Ser 1, Vol IV*, doc 57; and note by Meade, of meeting June 11, 1946 on the IMF and IBRD with representatives of the Treasury and Bank of England, cited in Howson, *The Collected Papers of James Meade. Vol. 3, International Economics*, 288-90.

⁵⁴ See speech by Eden, May 29, 1941, in which he declared "...social security will be our policy abroad not less than at home." Eden, *Freedom and Order*, 108. See also letter Eden to Bruce, February 16, 1943, replying to an earlier letter from Bruce on the United Nations Plan, in which Eden says "...I am myself inclined wholly to agree with you about the desirability of creating an authority to deal with economic questions." FO371/35396 U2329/402/70. For Law see his opening speech to the Food Conference, May 17, 1943, reported in *The Times*, 'A World Freed From Want', 18 May 1943, p. 3. The *Times Digital Archive*, <http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/BVdGC1>. Accessed 10 Aug. 2019. For Law's distrust of 'grand designs' see next section.

However, other Conservatives opposed a social justice role for the world organisation, especially those most resistant to the idea of a world organisation. Attlee highlighted this publicly in a speech of September 1942, declaring: "I know there were many Conservatives who could not have accepted the necessary interdependence of peace and social justice".⁵⁵ Most notable was Churchill who argued the world body should be "strictly limited to the prevention of war", and not become involved in social and economic issues.⁵⁶ As late as Spring 1945 he told the Americans Stettinius and Baruch, separately, that he opposed giving the world organisation social and economic responsibilities.⁵⁷ However, the strength of the policymaker consensus against him, in favour of the wider social and economic role for the world organisation, again meant that Churchill was in a minority and ignored.

3.1.3 Positive Peace in the Policy Process

Following Bevin's intervention on the Four Power Plan, the January 1943 redraft, now titled the 'United Nations Plan', placed economic and social issues firmly within scope of any post-war world organisation. The understanding that political security was dependent on economic and social security was made explicit: "International friction and aggression frequently have their roots in economic and social disharmonies. If standards of living are too unequal, for instance, frictions will be created leading to dangerous crises and even to war itself. Consequently, it will be of the highest importance for the Four Powers to concern themselves with world economic and social problems..."⁵⁸ The July 1943 "United Nations Plan for Organising

⁵⁵ Attlee explicitly referenced the Atlantic Charter. Cited in Williams, *Failed Imagination?*, 122.

⁵⁶ Minutes of meeting of the Dominion Prime Ministers, PMM(44)12th meeting, May 11, 1944, Confidential Annex, CAB 99/28.

⁵⁷ For Churchill's opposition to the inclusion of social and economic responsibilities in the scope of the world organisation see Stettinius, *Roosevelt and the Russians: The Yalta Conference*, 16–17, 62, 316; see comments made by Churchill to Stettinius at Yalta, Stettinius Diary, February 1, 1945; and to Baruch, entry for March 12, 1945 Stettinius, *Stettinius Diaries*, 232, 298.

⁵⁸ War Cabinet Paper, by Eden, 'The United Nations Plan', January 16, 1943, CAB 66/33/31 WP(43)31, paragraph 12. This redraft of the short Four Power Plan was completed with the assistance of David Owen, a British academic working for Cripps in December 1942, who subsequently became the first Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs at the UN in 1946, responsible for the social and economic work of the organisation, and ECOSOC. Meeting, Jebb with Owen, December 3, 1942, and various shared redrafts, FO371/3515 U1547/27/70.

Peace” retained the identical phrase.⁵⁹ This was not only about managing economic competition but identified economic inequality as a source of conflict.

Notions of welfare, identified by Steffek and Holthaus as Welfare Internationalism, are evident in the July 1943 ‘United Nations Plan for Organising Peace’. This was originally titled the ‘United Nations Plan for Organising Peace and Welfare’, the term ‘Welfare’ removed only shortly before circulation after an intervention by Eden.⁶⁰ In April 1944 the interdepartmental Law Committee, preparing proposals for the Dumbarton Oaks talks, also considered the use of the word ‘welfare’ in the objectives for the world organisation, but rejected it only because of its “different significance in the United Kingdom and the United States respectively, and its unfavourable connotation in British industrial circles.”⁶¹ This, though, was a matter of presentation rather than an objection to the principle that social and economic issues were relevant international concerns. As we’ve seen, a broader definition of the purpose of an international organisation was incorporated into the plans presented at Dumbarton Oaks, including economic management and social security as well as human rights. The British proposals prepared in advance of Dumbarton Oaks in 1944 are explicit that progressive management of the world economy and objectives of full employment and fairer access to raw materials should be within the scope of the UN System, stating that the various “economic and technical organisations...should be co-ordinated in order that the problems of full employment and the proper use of resources may be solved.”⁶² In British conceptions of the new international order, full employment and efficient use of resources for the common good globally were to be objectives of the world organization from the outset.

⁵⁹ War Cabinet paper by Eden, ‘The United Nations Plan for Organising Peace’, July 7, 1943, CAB 66/38/50 WP(43)300, para 9.

⁶⁰ Draft paper June 30, 1943, FO371/35397 U2889/402/70; Webster claims the full title was his suggestion. Webster Diaries volume 10, entry for June 29, 1943, LSE Archives.

⁶¹ Notes of meeting, April 3, 1944, FO371/40687 U2585/84/70.

⁶² War Cabinet Paper, covering note by Richard Law, ‘Future World Organisation’, April 16, 1944, CAB 66/49/20 WP(44)220.

This commitment followed through into preparation of the UN Charter. At a meeting of the British Commonwealth Prime Ministers in April 1945, before UNCIO, at which Attlee and Bevin took the lead in the discussions for the UK, policymakers agreed draft wording for inclusion in the Charter that emphasised the importance of economic and social objectives and restated the ideas of Positive Peace from Dumbarton Oaks planning: “All members of the Organisation pledge themselves to take action both national and international, for the purpose of securing for all peoples, including their own, improved labour standards, economic advancement, and social security; and...undertake to take appropriate action through the instrumentality of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the International Labour Office and such other bodies as may be brought within the framework of the international Organisation.” They also agreed to “promote human welfare” as a purpose of the organisation.⁶³ Although the form of words differed in significant respects (for instance the term ‘welfare’ does not appear in the Charter) these sentiments were incorporated into the Preamble, Chapter 1 (Purposes and Principles) and Chapter IX (Economic and Social Cooperation) of the Charter.

3.1.4 Primacy of the Member State

As we saw in Chapter Two, internationalist policymakers often spoke of international community and regarded inter-state relations as an international society, but they did not believe international society had a direct responsibility for social welfare. Although UK policymakers envisaged international machinery for social and economic affairs they remained committed to state-led structures. Contrary to the contention of Steffek and Holthaus that welfare through international organisations was to supersede state provision, UK policymakers saw welfare as a national responsibility, supported by multilateral cooperation, rather than a social responsibility of international society. The British intended the world organisation to

⁶³ This wording was originally proposed by the Australian Evatt and accepted by the meeting. BCM(45) 10th meeting, April 11, 1945, CAB 99/30; Foreign Office Paper, ‘War Cabinet and Armistice and Post-War Decisions on questions which may arise at the San Francisco Conference’, April 18, 1945, CAB 123/237. See also note by Gore-Booth to Mabane, May 13, 1945, about promoting human welfare. Webster Papers 14/12. LSE Archives.

strengthen member states through international cooperation rather than supplant them with a supranational world government. UK policymakers did not seek to create a replica of the welfare state at an international level, what Gunnar Myrdal later called a 'Welfare World'.⁶⁴ Cross-border wealth distribution was ruled out.⁶⁵ When the American delegate to the 1943 Food Conference, Paul Appleby, suggested the need for international "social services" the UK delegation decisively rejected any international redistribution of wealth beyond emergency relief operations as "permanent santa claus".⁶⁶ In the same connection an April 1943 paper by the Foreign Office Reconstruction Department concluded that the world was not yet ready for cross-border wealth transfer.⁶⁷

UK policymakers, internationalists as well as pragmatists, took a similar line with respect to such diverse issues as human rights and nutrition. The UK argued that states are responsible for human rights within their territory, not the world organisation.⁶⁸ Individual human rights were vital but were best defended by the state, a view shared by the US.⁶⁹ Webster supported the American proposal for

⁶⁴ Myrdal, *Rich Lands and Poor*; Moyn, *Not Enough*, 107–8; Moyn, 'Welfare World'.

⁶⁵ This is consistent with Moyn's argument that in the mid-1940s the idea of 'human rights' encompassed economic and social justice as well as individual political rights and physical security, and the welfare state was the vehicle for its achievement. Moyn also argues that this was not intended to be justice between states but within them. I agree the focus of British concerns was individual economic and social well-being not an attempt to restructure the international economy to reduce disparities in wealth between states. As I will try to show below, the rules the British sought to create for the new rules-based order were designed to maintain and strengthen British economic power not to create a more just and equal world. However, their plans for the postwar order envisaged a greater role for the UN System in providing 'social security' than Moyn allows. Moyn, *Not Enough*.

⁶⁶ See meetings between Robbins and members of the US delegation, Robbins Diary, May 17 entry, reporting conversation with Penrose who advocated lower food prices for poorer countries subsidised by wealthy states, known as 'differential pricing'. See also entries for May 18 and 19, Howson and Moggridge, *Wartime Diaries of Robbins and Meade*, 24–27; Robbins condemned this as 'permanent santa claus', meeting of the UK Delegation, May 18, 1943, CAB 78/6 Gen 8/38. Appleby was reported as arguing "...in a world of unequal incomes and differing economic status between nations, it was necessary for poorer individuals or nations to be given assistance in the form, as it were of social services." Account of meeting by Gore-Booth, in UK delegation meeting May 19, 1943, CAB 78/6 Gen 8/38. See also UK delegation 17th meeting, May 25, 1943, CAB 78/6 Gen 8/62.

⁶⁷ Paper by Baster April 16, 1943, FO371/35370 U1889/320/70.

⁶⁸ Cadogan to FO, September 17, 1944, FO371/40714 U7427/180/70; for UK arguments at UNCIO session see record of Committee 1(1), June 2, 1945 'UNCIO, Vol VI'; note by Gore-Booth, June 2, 1945, Webster Papers 14/12, LSE Archives.

⁶⁹ Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 91; Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 780–81.

inclusion of human rights at Dumbarton Oaks precisely because it “placed no responsibility whatever in the Organisation”.⁷⁰ The role of the United Nations was to encourage states to fulfil their human rights responsibilities, not to assume responsibility for those rights. As a March 1946 Foreign Office brief for the first meeting the ECOSOC Human Rights Commission, concluded, the protections in the Charter were dependent on the “the fulfilment by member states of their obligations” under the Charter.⁷¹

On nutrition, even the more internationalist Ministry of Food argued that the role of an International Food Office was to create international norms for states to make their own citizens’ nutrition the ‘first charge upon national income’ rather than take direct action itself to improve nutrition.⁷² This assumption was shared by pragmatist officials as well as internationalists, which enabled a policy consensus to emerge in support, for instance, of the inclusion of human rights in the Charter since they were to remain the responsibility of the member states, supported by intergovernmental cooperation.

On economic cooperation even the most committed internationalists acknowledged the primacy of national policies. Meade believed that international coordination of policies for full employment was essential but that national policies would remain the most important “at any rate for the next fifty years”.⁷³ As a War Cabinet paper by Cranborne expressed it in April 1944, in response to Australian pressure for more international cooperation on full employment, the British could accept responsibility for domestic action to meet international obligations, but “opinion has not yet developed to a point at which it would be reasonable to expect Governments, either

⁷⁰ Webster diary, entry September 7-10, 1944, Webster Diary vol 12, LSE Archives.

⁷¹ Briefing paper March 25, 1946, ACU(46)98, FO371/57317 U5380/3380/70; Simpson, *Human Rights and the End of Empire: Britain and the Genesis of the European Convention*, 48–49. See also minute by Gore-Booth, September 1, 1945, FO371/50737 U6718/12/70.

⁷² The phrase used was: ‘An international body was required to establish norms.’ Interdepartmental meeting on International Food Office, April 9, 1943, CAB 78/6 Gen 8/14.

⁷³ Paper by Meade, ‘International Action for the Maintenance of Employment’, September 18, 1943, AD(43)17 CAB 99/33; Meade diary entry September 17, 1943, Howson and Moggridge, *Wartime Diaries of Robbins and Meade*, 105–6.

to submit to the judgement of an international tribunal upon the efficacy of their employment policies, or to impose sanctions of the obligation to maintain employment was not fulfilled."⁷⁴

At UNCIO an Australian amendment for members to pledge to implement domestic policies to achieve the objectives agreed in the Charter reinforced the principle of national, not UN, responsibility. It was supported by the British against considerable opposition from the Americans who saw it as intruding on domestic affairs.⁷⁵ The amendment was, in fact, largely directed at the Americans due to widespread fears the US could lead the world into a post-war depression if they pursued deflationary domestic economic policies.⁷⁶ It became Article 56 of the Charter and Attlee specifically praised the commitment in his speech to Parliament recommending the Charter.⁷⁷

3.2 Charter Provisions for Delivery

As we saw earlier in the chapter, Positive Peace included social justice and efforts to “smooth out discrepancies in social standards.”⁷⁸ The sincerity of British support for a Positive Peace has been questioned by those pointing to the lack of enforcement and delivery provisions in the Charter for these wider social and economic goals. In policy terms, two issues reflecting concern with social justice were human rights and full employment. British understanding of human rights held that social and economic rights, not just political, were fundamental, while full employment was a

⁷⁴ War Cabinet Paper by Cranborne, April 6, 1944, WP(44)192 CAB 66/48/2.

⁷⁵ The British agreed in advance to support the Australian initiative at UNCIO at the Commonwealth Prime Minister’s meeting in London, April 1945. BCM(45) 10th meeting, April 11, 1945, CAB 99/30; Foreign Office Paper, ‘War Cabinet and Armistice and Post-War Decisions on questions which may arise at the San Francisco Conference’, April 18, 1945, CAB 123/237. For the debates at UNCIO see Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 786–88.

⁷⁶ This was a view held both on the right and the left of politics. See for instance, War Cabinet Paper by Amery, March 29, 1944, WP(44)176 CAB 66/48/26; War Cabinet Paper by Anderson, February 24, 1945, WP(45)96 CAB 66/62/1 para 6 (vii) Employment Policy; see also comments by Australian Melville to Evatt on Dominions discussions, April 21, 1944, DFAT, 1944, doc 113; Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy*, 104–6.

⁷⁷ Attlee speech, August 22, 1945: HoC, 5s, vol 413, col 666 ‘House of Commons’.

⁷⁸ War Cabinet Paper by Eden, ‘The United Nations Plan’, January 16, 1943, CAB 66/33/31 WP(43)31, para 14; War Cabinet Paper by Eden, ‘The United Nations Plan for Organising Peace’, July 7, 1943, CAB 66/38/50 WP(43)300, para 10. ‘NA’.

major domestic objective. British reluctance to agree clear definitions and methods of redress in the Charter for human rights especially has been criticised by Mazower (2010), Paul Lauren (2011) and Brian Simpson (2004).⁷⁹ One counter to this is the significance the British attached to ECOSOC, and this will be argued in the following chapter. This next section considers the validity of this criticism firstly in human rights, and secondly the commitment to full employment as an international issue.

3.2.1 Human Rights

As Simpson (2004) argues, individual human rights were given a relatively low level of priority by UK policymakers in the mid-1940s, in favour of social justice.⁸⁰ The UK accepted individual human rights as a legitimate area of concern for the world organisation but held this was a responsibility of nation states to their own citizens. The role of the UN was to promote good practice amongst member states and support states through setting standards and expectations. Accordingly, British proposals for a Positive Peace did not extend to the formal inclusion of individual human rights. They included references to ‘freedoms’, but UK policy assumed attainment of economic and social goals, including equality, was an adequate (and necessary) safeguard of ‘freedom’ and the British prioritised social and economic objectives in post-war planning.⁸¹

Labour understood that freedom was based on social justice: real freedom required a decent standard of living. Morsink (1999), Whelan and Donnelly (2007), Sikkink (2017) and Moyn (2018) have all argued social and economic rights were central to the human rights discourse in the 1940s, and these rights were written into the Charter with the active support of the British. In his opening address to the General Assembly in January 1946 Attlee argued social justice was the foundation of human

⁷⁹ Mazower, ‘The End of Civilization and the Rise of Human Rights’; Lauren, *International Human Rights*, 161–62, 184–89; Simpson, *Human Rights and the End of Empire: Britain and the Genesis of the European Convention*.

⁸⁰ Simpson, *Human Rights and the End of Empire: Britain and the Genesis of the European Convention*, 5–6, 39–41.

⁸¹ Meeting of the Law Committee, April 11, 1944, FO371/40689 U3131/180/70. Simpson, 231. As a result Simpson complains that the reference to human rights in the Dumbarton Oaks briefs was ‘vague’, *ibid*, p241.

rights and stressed the importance of meeting “the simple elemental needs of human beings”, echoing Bevin’s call for international provision of “common services” in December 1942.⁸² As a result, with respect to human rights the British focus was social and economic rather than political, and social rather than individual.

At Dumbarton Oaks the British initially resisted the inclusion of human rights as a responsibility of the world organisation but accepted an American proposal to include ‘promotion’ of human rights as a general principle. At San Francisco they agreed its inclusion as an objective but sought to restrict references in the Charter to the preamble and general principles to limit specific commitments to defend those rights.⁸³ These issues were contested amongst UK policymakers, though, especially at UNCIO, and reveal differences between the internationalists, pragmatists and those who rejected a role for the UN.

UK policymakers had two main concerns. First, any obligation for the organisation to defend individual human rights was seen as inconsistent with the principle of domestic jurisdiction and the right to non-interference in domestic affairs. Russell (1958), Hilderbrand (1990) and Lauren (2011) all argue that UK policymakers feared UN intervention in the Empire.⁸⁴ This was certainly a motivation for some policymakers.⁸⁵ Simpson (2004) by contrast argues the UK was less concerned about Empire but feared other states would not accept a provision that implied interference in domestic policies.⁸⁶ The American delegation claimed Congress

⁸² Plenary meetings of the General Assembly, verbatim record, 10 Jan.-14 Feb. 1946, A/PV.1-33. - [1946]. (GAOR, 1st part, 1st sess.), p41; for Bevin see above.

⁸³ Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 423–24, 778–81; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 90–92; Simpson, *Human Rights and the End of Empire: Britain and the Genesis of the European Convention*, 239–49; Moyn, ‘Personalism, Community, and the Origins of Human Rights’, 85; Lauren, *International Human Rights*, 161–62; Mazower, ‘Strange Triumph of Human Rights’, 391–94.

⁸⁴ Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 423–24; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 91–93; Lauren, *International Human Rights*, 162; also Sikkink, *Evidence for Hope*, 66.

⁸⁵ Cadogan to FO, September 17, 1944, FO371/40714 U7427/180/70.

⁸⁶ Simpson (2004) argues that Churchill may have had misgivings with respect to Empire but this was not shared by other UK policymakers. Simpson, *Human Rights and the End of Empire: Britain and the Genesis of the European Convention*, 242 fn106.

would not accept any dilution of the principle of domestic jurisdiction.⁸⁷ The Foreign Office argued that smaller states would oppose any limitation on the principle of domestic jurisdiction as weakening protection against interference from larger states, threatening the UN's legitimacy and even acceptance of the Charter. This concern was justified. The COS actually opposed domestic jurisdiction arguing it could prevent Britain "from protecting our rights and interests in, e.g. Egypt", a confession of imperial intent from those most sceptical of a world organisation.⁸⁸

Second, UK policymakers believed responsibility for protection of human rights would not be enforceable by the world organisation, and its inclusion would set expectations that would ultimately undermine confidence in the organisation. Lauren (2011) criticises the UK, and the other Great Powers, of preventing enforcement provisions and ensuring the Charter spoke not in terms of 'guarantee' and 'protect' but 'promote' and 'encourage', a weaker commitment.⁸⁹ This was deliberate. In April 1945 Attlee acknowledged the world organisation could not 'guarantee' human rights since "it would not possess the executive power to put this guarantee into effect", and there was no suggestion it should be given such power.⁹⁰ At UNCIO when Attlee asked whether there could be a "defence of personal rights" in the Charter the UK delegation agreed that: "It would be a mistake to require the new Organisation to enforce principles which were not in fact enforced."⁹¹ This was a central concern of the Foreign Office pragmatists, especially Cadogan, who

⁸⁷ Simpson, 262–63; Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 900–903. It should also be noted that fears of possible interference in the domestic affairs of other states was not simply motivated by concerns over their own sovereignty vis a vis an international organisation but by the belief that Hitler used interwar Minorities protections to exploit the presence of ethnic Germans in other states to foment conflict.

⁸⁸ For FO and other officials see meeting of the Law Committee, April 11, 1944, FO371/40689 U3131/180/70; Minute by Falla, December 4, 1944, FO371/40723 U8461/180/70. For COS see tel, FO to Jebb, September 15, 1944, relaying the views of the Vice COS. FO371/40714 U7426/180/70; also Simpson, *Human Rights and the End of Empire: Britain and the Genesis of the European Convention*, 245.

⁸⁹ Lauren, *International Human Rights*, 188.

⁹⁰ Meeting of British Commonwealth Prime Ministers, BCM(45)10th meeting, April 11, 1945, CAB 99/30.

⁹¹ UK delegation meeting at UNCIO, April 30, 1945, CAB 21/1612.

stressed difficulties in defining human rights.⁹² These officials framed it as pragmatically matching commitments to the capabilities of the organisation, though it was also an issue of control. Lack of clarity in definition meant that human rights may be invoked in cases inconvenient to the British, such as India, but it also enabled decisions on interventions in human rights cases to be made on political grounds by the major powers, not as legally enforceable rights that may prove embarrassing.

Internationalists, though, believed the UN had the right to intervene to protect human rights in certain circumstances. Mazower (2004), Lauren (2011) and Simpson (2004) argue that the domestic jurisdiction provisions in the Charter would have prevented intervention in response to Hitler's treatment of the Jews.⁹³ However, this was not the British intention. At Dumbarton Oaks, the British supported the need for Security Council involvement in human rights when international peace was threatened, and though this was partially cynical calculation that Britain could not be seen to oppose "such admirable sentiments" as human rights, it would permit intervention in domestic affairs.⁹⁴ Preparing for UNCIO, Attlee only accepted the UK position on domestic jurisdiction after he was assured the agreed draft would enable the UN to intervene to prevent persecution of the Jews, on the grounds that this would count as a "threat to international peace and security" and was therefore subject to enforcement action by the Security Council.⁹⁵ This position was agreed by the War Cabinet, and a brief for the UK delegation at UNCIO explicitly confirmed: "It would be assumed for instance that the action taken by Hitler towards the Jews

⁹² UK delegation, UNCIO, briefing document, May 1, 1945, FO371/50709 U3584/12/70; UK delegation document No 1, 'Guidance on Commission 1', April 30, 1945, FO371/50709 U3584/12/70.

⁹³ Mazower, 'Strange Triumph of Human Rights', 394; Lauren, *International Human Rights*, 189; Simpson, *Human Rights and the End of Empire: Britain and the Genesis of the European Convention*, 268–69.

⁹⁴ Tel, FO to Cadogan, September 13, 1944, FO371/40712 U7318/180/70; Minute by Ward, September 13, 1944, FO371/40712 U7318/180/70; see also comments by Jebb to Alger Hiss at Dumbarton Oaks, quoted in Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 92–93; Hoopes and Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the UN*, 191.

⁹⁵ Reply by Cadogan to question by Attlee, APW(45)9th meeting, March 29, 1945, CAB 87/69; comments by Webster, UK delegation meeting at UNCIO, April 30, 1945, CAB 21/1612. See also Webster diary, entry June 13, 1945, Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 68.

threatened the maintenance of international peace and security" and would therefore be subject to Security Council intervention.⁹⁶

At UNCIO, when the Australians sought to strengthen the principle of domestic jurisdiction to protect their own racist immigration policies, the UK delegation was concerned that "it would be most injurious to clip the wings of the new organisation" by an extension of the rights of domestic jurisdiction that could prejudice its ability to intervene in "the internal policy of states in regard to e.g. the oppression of Jews or the practice of militant fascism."⁹⁷ As a result they were deeply reluctant to support the Australian amendment, a reluctance that overspilled into heated disagreement within the delegation when Halifax's decision to support the Australians on the grounds of Dominion solidarity were unsuccessfully challenged by Webster and Jebb.⁹⁸ The Australian amendment was eventually passed 31-3, with the Latin Americans and the Indians all voting in favour in an attempt to prevent the UN investigating domestic policies in their own countries, suggesting small states favoured prevention of interference in their internal affairs over concerns about human rights.⁹⁹

UK policymakers, both internationalists like Attlee and pragmatists such as Cadogan and Jebb, assumed the UN had the right (even duty) to intervene in domestic affairs when the scale and nature of the situation demanded. This suggests a genuine

⁹⁶ For War Cabinet see meeting, April 3, 1945, WM(45)38, CAB 65/50/1, Paper by Eden, 'World Organisation: Points for Decision', March 31, 1945, WP(45)209 CAB 66/64/9; for the UNCIO brief see FO371/50709 U3584/12/70. See also Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 901–2.

⁹⁷ Tel UK Delegation to FO, May 18, 1945, FO 371/50711 U3808/12/70; for the debate on the Australian amendment see Russell, 904–10; Simpson, *Human Rights and the End of Empire: Britain and the Genesis of the European Convention*, 265–68.

⁹⁸ Minutes of UK delegation meeting, June 13, 1945, Webster Papers 14/1 'LSE Archives'; Webster diary entry June 13, 1945 Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 68.

⁹⁹ Meeting of Commission 1, UNCIO, June 13, 1945 'UNCIO, Vol VI', doc 976, 494-9; China voted against the amendment. In private Menon, the Indian delegate, explicitly gave his reason for supporting the amendment as wanting to prevent UN investigation into disputes between Hindus and Moslems in India. Tel 677, Menon to Caroe, June 12, 1945, FO371/50719 U4613/12/70. The correspondence of the Indian delegation was routed through the British telegraphic system and appears in the UK National Archives. Sikkink (2017) argues that jurists in the Latin American states saw protection of national sovereignty through domestic jurisdiction rights as consistent with, and necessary for, the protection of individual human rights, as a 'weapon of the weak' even though it prevented international intervention to protect those rights, Sikkink, *Evidence for Hope*, 60–62.

commitment to these objectives as part of the UN though they assumed that individual human rights constituted national responsibilities rather than the responsibility of the organisation. The UN was to work through member states, not by-pass them: rather than international protection of individual human rights it was cooperation to improve national protection of the rights of citizens.

3.2.2 Full Employment

A second significant example of how the UN was expected to contribute to a Positive Peace and deliver social justice is full employment, which was designated a central goal of the organisation. By the 1950's the UN had made development its priority but in the interregnum period of the 1940s, when the original hopes of the UN founders were paramount, social justice and full employment was a higher priority.¹⁰⁰ As Russell (1958) observes, 'full employment' was a "political catchword" in the mid-1940s, signifying an interventionist economic policy in contrast to the free-market approach preferred by the Americans.¹⁰¹ More than a technical issue of international economic management it was part of the human rights agenda at this time. As Morsink (1999), Whelan and Donnelly (2007), Sikkink (2017) and Moyn (2018) have all argued, full employment was a significant element in the promotion of social and economic rights in the human rights discourse in the 1940s.¹⁰² The UK's position with respect to full employment supports this argument and shows how this concern with social and economic rights translated into the Charter. It also demonstrates the British understanding of these issues as a legitimate concern of the UN.

¹⁰⁰ Development was on the agenda as early as Bretton Woods, but only emerged later as an organisational priority. Helleiner, *Forgotten Foundations of Bretton Woods*; Toye and Toye, 'How the UN Moved From Full Employment to Economic Development'.

¹⁰¹ Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 781; For differences between US and European nations see Toye and Toye, 'How the UN Moved From Full Employment to Economic Development'.

¹⁰² Morsink, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, chap. 5, esp pp167-8; Whelan and Donnelly, 'The West, Economic and Social Rights, and the Global Human Rights Regime'; Sikkink, *Evidence for Hope*, 65–71; Moyn, *Not Enough*, 95–97; Mazurek and Betts, 'When Rights Were Social'.

For UK policymakers, full employment was a major political objective in post-war planning, and this was seen as an international as well as domestic issue.¹⁰³ It was regarded as an international issue following experience in the Depression when economic nationalism reduced trade and increased unemployment. It became, therefore, a key responsibility for the world organisation. Meade especially argued for international action to support full employment.¹⁰⁴ The subject arose at the 1943 Anglo-American Washington Talks and the first proposals for a coordinating economic body, which was to become ECOSOC, emerged in the discussions on employment at the Talks.¹⁰⁵

Full employment was accordingly incorporated into UK policy with respect to the world organisation as an element of Positive Peace. Law's covering paper to the UK Dumbarton Oaks proposals in April 1944 explicitly made full employment an objective of the world organisation.¹⁰⁶ At Bretton Woods that summer the UK delegation supported an unsuccessful Australian proposal to commit to an international goal of full employment, arguing that international coordination of economic policies was "necessary".¹⁰⁷ The case for full employment as an

¹⁰³ In May 1944 the Coalition government published a Command Paper on Employment committing to a policy of full employment UK Parliament, Ministry of Reconstruction, 'Cmd 6527, Employment Policy'; Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.2, Minister of Labour, 1940-1945*, 316; Jay, *Change and Fortune*, 113; Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy*, 146–48.

¹⁰⁴ Paper by Meade, "International action for the maintenance of employment", September 18, 1943, AD(43)17 CAB 99/33; Meade diary, entries for September 17 and 18, 1943, Howson and Moggridge, *Wartime Diaries of Robbins and Meade*, 105–6.

¹⁰⁵ October 5, 1943, 15th meeting of the UK del to Washington Talks, AD(43)15th meeting, CAB 99/33; Plenary meeting October 16, 1943, CAB 78/14; Paper ASD(44)5 on Employment Policy, CAB 99/34; Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy*, 104–6; Pressnell, *External Economic Policy Since the War. Volume 1*, 124.

¹⁰⁶ War Cabinet Paper, covering note by Richard Law on 'Future World Organisation', April 16, 1944, in CAB 66/49/20 WP(44)220.

¹⁰⁷ Bretton Woods Commission III meeting, July 20, 1944 *The Bretton Woods Transcripts*, 17ff; for the Australian proposal see *Bretton Woods Proceedings, Vol 1*, doc 467; Australia had submitted (via the UK) a paper on the subject at the 1943 Washington Talks, September 16, 1943, AD(43)15 CAB 99/33, and it was discussed in detail at the meeting of Dominions economic representatives in London in February and March 1944, with the Australians producing a draft 'international employment agreement': February 29, 1944, ASD(44)(Employment)1st meeting, CAB 99/34; March 1, 1944, Draft International Employment Agreement, ASD(44)10 CAB 99/34; War Cabinet Paper by Cranborne, April 6, 1944, reporting on the meeting, especially Section V, paras 84-7 on Employment Policy, WP(44)192 CAB 66/48/2. For the Australian position see McKenzie, *Redefining the Bonds of Commonwealth*, 59–69; Howson, *Lionel Robbins*, 505–8.

international objective was also made at the ILO meeting in Philadelphia in May 1944, with UK support.¹⁰⁸ In November 1944 Meade proposed a separate international conference on employment which was circulated to UK Ministers and officials who responded “positively”, though nothing came of the proposal.¹⁰⁹ More substantively, before UNCIO the UK joined with Australia and New Zealand to make a similar proposal to the Americans who rejected it on the grounds that employment was dependent on international trade and should not be considered separately, which was their regular response to efforts to make full employment an international issue.¹¹⁰

At UNCIO the UK supported a commitment to promote full employment in the Charter, though there was opposition within the delegation to the use of the term ‘full employment’ and George Tomlinson (an Assistant Delegate, a Labour MP and representative of Bevin’s Ministry of Labour) had to defend the reference against the criticism of both the liberal William Mabane and Webster.¹¹¹ The Americans resisted references to full employment as “socialistic” but, under pressure from the Australians and other smaller states, were forced to accept the term in return for wording that strengthened the rights of domestic jurisdiction.¹¹² A commitment to ‘promote’ full employment eventually formed part of Article 55 of the Charter.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 782.

¹⁰⁹ Meade diary entry for November 25, 1944 Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 8.

¹¹⁰ The 1945 proposal was presented as an Australian initiative supported by the UK. Meeting, February 16, 1945, Washington US Department of State, *FRUS 1945, Vol II*, 1330–32; for the US response see note, Stettinius to Australian Minister in Washington, March 13, 1945, *ibid*, pp1333-4; see also briefing on Article VII negotiations for UK delegation to UNCIO, April 18, 1945, FO 976/2; Zeiler, *Free Trade, Free World*, 44.

¹¹¹ Tomlinson argued for UK support for the term in order to claim ‘moral leadership’ for the UK against the US, UK delegation meeting, May 19, 1945, CAB 21/1611.

¹¹² For the debates at San Francisco see Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 781–85; for US opposition to commitments to full employment, and related issues, during post-war planning see *ibid*, pp313-5; Schlesinger, *Act of Creation*, 241; Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*, 25.

¹¹³ Goodrich, *Charter of the United Nations: Commentary and Documents*, 371–74; Emmerij, Jolly, and Weiss, *Ahead of the Curve?*, 26–42.

This commitment to full employment as an international responsibility was restated by the Labour Cabinet in October 1946 when formulating policy toward the ITO.¹¹⁴ The UK also interpreted Article 55 as obliging states to provide opportunities for employment for all their own citizens, a position confirmed two years later in negotiations for employment provisions in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.¹¹⁵ Again, the responsibility for delivery remained with the member states. However, this was to be achieved through intergovernmental cooperation and the setting of international standards for action. It is further evidence UK policymakers intended the UN not only to provide peace and security in narrow military and political terms but to set the framework for the delivery by states of a broad scope of activities, social and economic as well as political, to deliver Positive Peace through international cooperation.

3.3 Conclusion

The term Positive Peace was rarely used beyond UK planning for Dumbarton Oaks, but the sentiment endured. UK policymakers regarded the UN as a general international organisation with a wide scope that included significant responsibilities in social, economic, and cultural affairs. As Webster wrote in November 1944, “it was hoped that there would be a great expansion of international economic and social activity” in the new world organisation.¹¹⁶ This was not intended simply as a means of preventing conflict with economic and social activities as secondary objectives. It represented a broader vision of international governance. This was partly a result of defining ‘security’ in broader terms, seeking to remove the potential social and economic causes of international conflict, but the agenda was wider. Many British

¹¹⁴ Cabinet paper by Morrison, ‘International Employment Policy’, September 30, 1946, CAB 129/13/14 CP(46)364; Cabinet Meeting October 3, 1946, CAB 128/6/22 CM(46)84. This policy brought the UK into direct conflict with the US who continued to oppose full employment as an international responsibility.

¹¹⁵ A UK representative in the HR Commission argued that Article 55 committed states “to the principle that States should take steps to guarantee a stable and high level of employment”, though this statement carefully avoids repeating the term ‘full employment’ to avoid antagonising the Americans. Cited by Morsink, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 167–68.

¹¹⁶ Letter, Webster to Leggett (Ministry of Labour), November 6, 1944, Webster Papers 13/2, LSE Archives.

policymakers, internationalist Labour Ministers but also many pragmatist Ministers and officials, recognised the need for international cooperation to enable the British state to deliver the domestic goals important to themselves as policymakers.

For Attlee, freedom was based on social justice, and his focus was social and economic rather than purely political. As he told the opening session of the General Assembly in January 1946: "Without social justice and security, there is no real foundation for peace for it is among the socially disinherited and those who have nothing to lose, that the gangster and the aggressor recruit their supporters."¹¹⁷

This was not necessarily the international application of what would later be called human security. While the British helped construct international institutions to facilitate the delivery of social and economic benefits the focus of UK policymakers was on the interests of the UK state and the management of cross-border activities that impacted on their own national goals and priorities. In this way a policy consensus was formed between those for whom internationalism was a morally superior form of organising global human society and those who saw the cooperation of nation states as the most effective, and the most practical, means to deliver their own priorities as state managers. Morsink (1999), Whelan and Donnelly (2007) and Moyn (2018) clearly identify the significance of economic and social issues in the human rights discourse, but for UK policymakers this extended across the breadth of responsibilities of the new world organisation. Goodwin (1957) is incorrect when he argues that this was seen as a “distraction from more urgent and important tasks” in the creation of the UN.¹¹⁸ This broad responsibility is evidenced in the scope of the Positive Peace envisaged in the UK Dumbarton Oaks proposals, and the willingness to include these objectives formally in the Charter.

Crucially, though, the British were wary of giving the world organisation formal executive responsibility for achieving the organisation’s objectives in this respect.

¹¹⁷ Plenary meetings of the General Assembly, verbatim record, 10 Jan.-14 Feb. 1946, A/PV.1-33. - [1946]. (GAOR, 1st part, 1st sess.), p41.

¹¹⁸ Goodwin, *Britain and the United Nations*, 37, 39–40.

Contrary to the Welfare Internationalism argument of Steffek and Holthaus (2018) UK policymakers did not intend the UN to deliver social and economic benefits directly. UK policymakers understood the role of the UN was to facilitate the activities of individual member states in the achievement of these objectives. In this respect, the UN was a means of increasing the ability of the state to achieve its own goals rather than the creation of a supranational authority to operate in the place of the state. Criticisms that UK policymakers did not seek to create mechanisms for the UN to deliver the lofty goals of the Charter need to be seen in this context.

However, UK policymakers did argue for a robust governance structure to coordinate agencies within a single UN System, and to cooperate in common social and economic goals. The primary mechanism for this was ECOSOC, and the next chapter describes the significant role UK policymakers wanted and expected ECOSOC to play in the governance of the UN System.

4 Chapter Four: ECOSOC and the UN System of Governance

“Important as is the work of the Security Council, no less vital is to make the Economic and Social Council an effective international instrument. A police force is necessary for part of the civilised community, but the greater the social security and the contentment of the population, the less important is the police force.”¹

Speech by Attlee to opening session of the General Assembly, January 10, 1946.

The previous chapter argued that UK policymakers understood the concept of the UN to include a broad range of social, economic, and cultural responsibilities alongside the UN’s role in political and military security. By summer 1944 the concept of the UN had become a UN System encompassing multiple Specialised Agencies operating across a broad range of international issues. With such a breadth of responsibilities the question arose of governance. This chapter argues that UK policymakers wanted a centralised UN System coordinated by ECOSOC, which was regarded as an important organ of the UN. I challenge the common argument that UK policymakers saw ECOSOC as unimportant. This misconception has been used as evidence they lacked commitment to the social and economic functions of the UN. To the contrary, ECOSOC was central to UK understanding of the UN.

The structure of the UN Specialised Agencies is regularly described as a loose collection of largely independent functional bodies, a decentralisation deliberately

¹ Attlee and Jenkins, *Purpose and Policy*, 134.

designed by the UN founders.² ECOSOC, meanwhile, stands accused of being an irrelevant talking shop, 'peripheral' and 'unimportant', and intended to be so by the founders of the UN.³ These claims are supported through textual analysis of the Charter provisions but with limited archival evidence. This view has been challenged by those who argue that the founders of the UN intended a more active and integrated UN System in which social and economic objectives were central to the organisation's purpose.⁴ Childers and Urquhart (1994) argue that ECOSOC was intended by the founders of the UN to be a powerful 'Economic Security Council' of the UN, though the powers granted it in the Charter have never been used.⁵ Recent historians of the League also identify continuities from interwar internationalism and the important role ECOSOC was expected to play in the new organisation. Clavin (2013) calls it "the often forgotten" ECOSOC, "which was intended to act as the lynchpin in relations between the Bretton Woods institutions and the humanitarian agenda of a new organisation to replace the League...".⁶ Where the British position is singled out the UK is seen as opposing a strong ECOSOC,⁷ regarding it as an insignificant talking shop,⁸ or conspiring to deliberately sideline it in favour of the supposedly more malleable Bretton Woods institutions.⁹ Helleiner (2014) argues the

² Luard, *A History of the United Nations, Vol 1*, 13–14; Dadzie, 'The UN and the Problem of Economic Development', 316; Claude, *Swords Into Plowshares*, chap. 17; Weiss and Thakur (2010, 157) argue "decentralised notions...drove the creation of the UN system from the outset". Weiss, Thakur, and Ruggie, *Global Governance and the UN: An Unfinished Journey*, 157.

³ Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations: An Issues Paper*; Rosenthal, 'Economic and Social Council'; Simma et al., *The Charter of the United Nations: A Commentary*; Dadzie, 'The UN and the Problem of Economic Development', 316.

⁴ Childers and Urquhart, *Renewing the United Nations System*; Jolly, Emmerij, and Ghai, *UN Contributions to Development Thinking and Practice*, 5–15; Emmerij, Jolly, and Weiss, *Ahead of the Curve?*; Meier and Seers, *Pioneers in Development*; Haq, 'An Economic Security Council', 22; Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*; Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*, 88–89; Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 114–15 though Kennedy argues ECOSOC was a secondary organ; Helleiner, 'Back to the Future?'; for the intention to build economic development into the original objectives of the UN Agencies see also Helleiner, *Forgotten Foundations of Bretton Woods*.

⁵ Childers and Urquhart, *Renewing the United Nations System*, 57.

⁶ Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*, 307.

⁷ Kaufmann, 'The Economic and Social Council and The New International Economic Order', 54; Sharp, *The United Nations Economic and Social Council*, 3; Campbell, *Masquerade Peace*, 35; Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*, 25.

⁸ Goodwin referred to it as potentially an "irritating international 'busybody'" Goodwin, *Britain and the United Nations*, 17–18; Kennedy (2006) argues British policymakers saw it as a secondary organ Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 114–15.

⁹ Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations: An Issues Paper*; Rosenthal, 'Economic and Social Council'.

UK was “lukewarm and inconsistent” with respect to development objectives in the creation of the UN.¹⁰

This chapter acknowledges that initial British 1942 planning for the concept of the UN speaks of a “loose” and “less ambitious” structure to contrast with the perceived centralised structure of the League, which is consistent with a looser functional structure. However, by 1945 UK policymakers supported a UN System with an integrated governance structure operating as means for states to manage the international system through multilateral cooperation and planning with global full employment a core objective. UK policymakers expected ECOSOC to play a significant governance role, a policy position held both by the more internationalist policymakers and pragmatic officials who valued coordination of the wide range of Specialised Agencies believed necessary to manage the international system. The performance of ECOSOC did not live up to these ambitions, but the intention was for a strong coordinating body. However, this stopped short of providing the executive powers that would make ECOSOC a true ‘Economic Security Council’. It supports the argument the UN was not seen simply as a limited security organisation to secure a US military commitment but as a general international organisation with a broad scope. It underlines the argument that UK policymakers saw security as wider than political and military and planned a multilaterally managed Positive Peace.

This chapter first outlines British planning for governance of the Specialised Agencies in the UN System and argues that although UK policymakers spoke of a “loose” arrangement in 1942 they consistently advocated a more centralised UN System. It argues Ministers preferred political control through the World Council but retreated when it became clear the US favoured separate governance. It then shows that UK policymakers intended a UN System closely coordinated through ECOSOC to provide effective planning and administrative control, though this fell short of a powerful ‘Economic Security Council’. This was to include oversight of the Bretton Woods institutions that were seen as integral to the UN System. The final section

¹⁰ Helleiner, *Forgotten Foundations of Bretton Woods*, chap. 8.

demonstrates that by summer 1945 Ministers in the incoming Labour Government viewed ECOSOC as central to the meaning of the UN and as the means to deliver a Positive Peace.

4.1 The Development of UK Policy on Governance for Specialised Agencies

In Chapter One we saw that UK policymakers believed the international system, including economic and social affairs, could and should be actively planned and managed for the benefit of humanity, and in Chapter Three how economic and social affairs were central to the responsibility of the new world organisation. If the international economy was to be planned and managed, then a forum was needed to accomplish this. ECOSOC was created to be that body, and those most supportive of international planning and opposed to laissez-faire economics were the most enthusiastic supporters of a strong coordinating ECOSOC. This section outlines how governance of economic and social functions was handled during post-war planning.

ECOSOC first appeared in the proposals agreed at Dumbarton Oaks. At Dumbarton Oaks the UK advocated an economic secretariat attached to the World Council to support the Agencies but no new intergovernmental body to coordinate social and economic activities.¹¹ This has led scholars such as Thomas Campbell (1973), Johan Kaufman (1989) and Walter Sharp (1969) to conclude the UK gave social and economic issues a low priority and wanted the UN to focus on political security.¹²

Churchill's personal antipathy toward the UN System has also confused scholars who place more significance on Churchill's influence over post-war planning policy than the evidence justifies.¹³ As we saw in the previous chapter, although Churchill did oppose a role for the world organisation in social and economic affairs he was

¹¹ War Cabinet Paper, 'Future World Organisation', April 22, 1944, WP(44)220 CAB 66/49/20. This included the revised version of 'Memo D'.

¹² Campbell, *Masquerade Peace*, 35; Kaufmann, 'The Economic and Social Council and The New International Economic Order', 54; Sharp, *The United Nations Economic and Social Council*, 3.

¹³ Claude, *Swords Into Plowshares*, 61; For Churchill's opposition to the inclusion of social and economic responsibilities in the scope of the world organisation see Stettinius, *Roosevelt and the Russians: The Yalta Conference*, 16–17, 62, 316; see comments made by Churchill to Stettinius at Yalta, Stettinius Diary, February 1, 1945 ; and to Baruch, entry for March 12, 1945 Stettinius, *Stettinius Diaries*, 232, 298.

decisively outvoted, and the assumption the British did not value the UN's social and economic responsibilities is incorrect.¹⁴ At Dumbarton Oaks the UK position, influenced by internationalist Ministers, was that security encompassed social and economic issues which were sufficiently central to the role of the world organisation as to demand direct oversight by the political World Council. Ministers rejected the recommendations of the 1939 Bruce Report to separate political and economic governance. This position was quickly overturned at Dumbarton Oaks where the UK accepted the American proposal for an ECOSOC attached to the Assembly. However, UK support for strong centralised coordination of social and economic activities remained fundamental to their understanding of the role of the UN.

4.1.1 Planning for Dumbarton Oaks

Governance for UN agencies was mentioned in early post-war planning papers, but the UK policy position was not clarified until the preparation for Dumbarton Oaks. Although the 1942 Four Power Plan assumed a "rather loose system", in explicit contrast to the League's overly ambitious structure, Jebb's longer version referred to a possible "Supreme Economic Council", based on the wartime Combined Boards, implying a model of central direction. Jebb argued that conflict may be caused by economic conditions and therefore "the political and economic approach must obviously be co-ordinated as closely as possible."¹⁵ The January 1943 'United Nations Plan', redrafted after input from Cripps and Bevin who demanded more attention to social and economic issues, incorporated an organisation chart proposing a "World Economic Council" reporting into the four power World Council. In turn, this World Economic Council had multilateral bodies reporting into it, including not only the ILO and Keynes' International Clearing Union, but also an International Investment

¹⁴ Hilderbrand (1990), who used UK archives, presents a more balanced view, though he does not link the UK position to wider debates on the nature of the world organisation, Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 86–87; see also Hoopes and Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the UN*, 142–43; Russell (1958) also notes the British argued that economic cooperation was central to the role of the world organisation Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 422.

¹⁵ Paper by Jebb, 'The Four Power Plan', October 20, 1942, FO371/31525 U742/742/70, paras 2, 41. The version circulated to the War Cabinet simply referred to the concept of the United Nations as "less ambitious and more practical" than the League and omitted reference to a Supreme Economic Council. War Cabinet Paper, November 8, 1942, CAB 66/30/46 WP(42)516, para 4.

Board, a Commodity Control body, the old League of Nations Humanitarian and Economic Services and the relief organisation which was soon to emerge as UNRRA.¹⁶ This was an integrated system of multilateral agencies, within a single universal umbrella organisation containing both political and economic and social bodies. The separate agencies were responsible to an organising economic Council but with the political Council clearly ascendant.

In July 1943, the revised UN Plan for Organising Peace dropped the reference to a World Economic Council.¹⁷ This omission was challenged when the paper was reviewed by the Post-War Settlement Committee of the War Cabinet, chaired by Attlee, who requested additional detail on the “relations of technical agencies to [the] World Council”, with the clear implication that the revised plan did not allow for sufficient planned coordination.¹⁸ The ensuing debate was inconclusive. The Foreign Office proposed an integrated system of “technical agencies” operating in a planned and co-ordinated structure overseen by an intergovernmental ministerial body, but significantly now separated from the political World Council to reduce the risk of political issues obstructing technical questions. This would be supported by a new economic secretariat, overseen by the same Secretary General appointed to head the political functions.¹⁹ This effectively removed the social and economic bodies from the direct oversight of the World Council.

The Foreign Office proposal was explicitly based on the 1939 Bruce Report which had reviewed the structure of the League and recommended separation of political and social and economic governance.²⁰ The paper reasoned that social and economic issues were “technical” and should not be politicised, which would be inevitable if

¹⁶ War Cabinet Paper by Eden, ‘The United Nations Plan’, January 16, 1943, CAB 66/33/31 WP(43)31.

¹⁷ War Cabinet Paper by Eden, ‘The United Nations Plan for Organising Peace’, July 7, 1943, CAB 66/38/50 WP(43)300.

¹⁸ PS(43)1st meeting, August 5, 1943, CAB 87/65; Webster Diary, August 9, 1943, vol 11, LSE Archives; Burridge, *British Labour and Hitler’s War*, 98.

¹⁹ August 19, 1943: ‘Relationship of the Proposed World Economic Organisations to the World Council’, paper by Richard Law, PS(43)6 CAB 87/65.

²⁰ Webster, who drafted the FO paper presented in Law’s name, specifically cites the Bruce Report. *Ibid* para 3; see also Webster Diary, August 9, 1943, and August 11, 1943, vol 11, LSE Archives.

governance was through a political body, so social and economic questions should be “removed as far as possible” from political issues. A supervisory “Central Council for economic and social questions”, consisting of government representatives at ministerial level, would be necessary to prevent unnecessary duplication and overlap of agencies, and this should report to the Assembly rather than the World Council.²¹

However, the author of the Foreign Office paper, Webster, was embarrassed to discover he had misunderstood the political context in which the Bruce Report recommendations were made. Ralph Assheton, First Secretary of the Treasury and a member of the Post-War Settlement Cabinet Committee, who was personally involved in the deliberations following the Bruce Report, told Webster that the intention of the original 1939 Report was to protect the social and economic activities from contamination by the damaged political body of the League by placing them under the protection of an alternative body. It was also an attempt to encourage the continued involvement of non-League members (primarily the United States) by distancing the technical agencies from the tainted League Council.²² This was subsequently confirmed by the Foreign Office library, where Webster chased down the relevant papers.²³ Assheton also suggested that Bruce now disagreed with his original conclusions. Webster had no opportunity to amend his August 1943 paper, but his own preference was for closer oversight of economic and social issues by the World Council rather than a separate body.²⁴

²¹ August 19, 1943: ‘Relationship of the Proposed World Economic Organisations to the World Council’, paper by Richard Law, PS(43)6 CAB 87/65.

²² Webster Diary, entries August 27, August 28, August 30, 1943, vol 11, LSE Archives; August 30, 1943, ‘Proposal for a Central Economic Council’, paper by Assheton, PS(44)7 CAB 87/65, para 4. See also Assheton’s record of a conference on the Bruce report held at the Hague in February 1940 in FO371/24434 C2403/1669/98; for an account of the Bruce Report that acknowledges the motivation to secure continued support from non-members for the League’s social and economic work see Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*, 242–51. Clavin’s argument that the recommendations of the Bruce Report were intended to place social and economic issues together and increase their importance in the League is also suggestive here. Attempts to build similar structures for the UN come from a similar motivation, *ibid*, 248–9.

²³ Webster diary entry August 27, 1943, vol 11, LSE Archives.

²⁴ Webster subsequently drafted the UK Dumbarton Oaks proposal for an economic secretariat attached to the World Council. Webster diary, April 22, 1944, Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 70. War Cabinet Paper, ‘Future World Organisation’, April 22, 1944, CAB 66/49/20 WP(44)220. See also Webster’s comments at the signing of the Charter that the UK favoured closer connection to the Security Council. Webster diary, entry June 26, 1945, *ibid*, p70.

Assheton's intervention, and a paper he submitted to the Cabinet Committee, was intended to refute the need for any coordinating body. Those sceptical of the need for a general international organisation at all, including Assheton, led opposition to the Foreign Office proposal in August 1943.²⁵ The Ministry of Labour also questioned the proposal for central coordination but on the grounds that the ILO should be granted more autonomy.²⁶ Cripps, meanwhile, made the internationalists' case for a strong central body and greater focus on the role of economic and social bodies.²⁷

The Post-War Settlement Committee did not meet after August 1943 and the question was not revisited until planning for Dumbarton Oaks began in Spring 1944. Officials then proposed to Ministers a more elaborate version of the Foreign Office scheme with a comprehensive governance structure including a ministerial level Central Economic Council to act as a coordinating body, an expert level Economic Consultative Committee and an official level Advisory Economic Staff to act as the secretariat for the Central Economic Council.²⁸ Following pressure from some Whitehall functional departments the role of the Central Economic Council was reduced. Although the World Council would retain responsibility for any economic issues which presented a threat to peace and could receive advice from the economic body, the Central Economic Council would be responsible to the Assembly, not the World Council, and its decisions would not be mandatory, making it more of a consultative body.²⁹ The proposed structure envisaged central coordination of

²⁵ August 30, 1943, 'Proposal for a Central Economic Council', paper by Assheton, PS(44)7 CAB 87/65.

²⁶ September 1, 1943, paper by George Tomlinson, Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Labour, PS(43)12, CAB 87/65.

²⁷ Paper by Cripps, 'Relationship of the Proposed World Economic Organisations to the World Council', August 31, 1943, PS(43)8 CAB 87/65; BurrIDGE, *British Labour and Hitler's War*, 98.

²⁸ Paper for Armistice and Post-War War Cabinet Committee, 'Future World Organisation', April 19, 1944, APW(44)4, Memo D, 'Co-ordination of Political and Economic International Machinery', CAB 87/67.

²⁹ The first draft of the paper, by Fleming of the Economic Section of the Cabinet Office, assumed mandatory decisions and the Economic Council acting as the link between the agencies and the World Council. Paper by Fleming, 'Co-ordination of International Economic Institutions and Their Relation to Political Organisation', February 1944, FO371/40685 U2038/180/70. J.M. Fleming worked in the Economics Section of the League of Nations in the 1930s, and later went on to work for the IMF. He was asked to write the paper by his superior, Lionel Robbins. For Whitehall pressure see minutes of interdepartmental meeting, March 8, 1944; letter, Leggett (Ministry of Labour) to Jebb, March 13,

agencies but it provided operational autonomy to the economic body and was effectively a reversion to the principles of the Bruce Report. It also resembled what was to become ECOSOC.

The proposal was considered by the ministerial APW Committee, chaired by Attlee with Bevin and Law as members. Unusually, the paper was flatly rejected by Ministers who demanded that any social and economic bodies must be “subordinated to the general political organisation”, directly rejecting the principles of the Bruce Report. They agreed coordination of the various technical agencies was necessary but demanded that the social and economic bodies be coordinated under the political World Council supported by a strong economic secretariat.³⁰ Ministers clearly wanted an integrated general international organisation under the ultimate control of a single World Council and overruled their officials. Far from downgrading these issues, Ministers believed the social and economic agenda was central to the role of the world organisation and therefore needed oversight by the World Council.³¹ This formed the UK proposal at Dumbarton Oaks.

Following the Ministers’ decision, Webster hurriedly drafted a revised paper omitting the structure initially proposed by officials and simply recommending the creation an “economic and social secretariat attached to the World Council” as requested by the APW Committee. This was forwarded to the War Cabinet and the Dominions Prime Ministers who approved it as Memo D of the UK Dumbarton Oaks proposals.³² The proposed economic secretariat was intended to strengthen political oversight through support of the World Council and remove the need for a separate

1944; Letter Franks (Ministry of Supply) to Jebb, March 14, 1944; letter Somervell (Board of Trade) to Jebb, March 13, 1944; all in FO371/40685 U2038/180/70.

³⁰ APW(44)1st meeting, April 22, 1944, CAB 87/66. The minutes of this meeting also use the term “to bring them [the Agencies] into relation with the World Organisation”, a phrase that was to survive into the Charter.

³¹ See also comments by another Labour Minister, Morrison, at the War Cabinet, April 27, 1944, that the ‘world authority’ should deal with both political and economic issues. War Cabinet meeting, April 27, 1944, WM(44)58 CAB 65/42/16, minute 2.

³² Webster diary, April 22, 1944, Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 30; War Cabinet Paper, ‘Future World Organisation’, April 22, 1944, CAB 66/49/20 WP(44)220; War Cabinet Meeting, July 7, 1944, CAB 65/43/4 WM(44)88th meeting.

intervening economic body. This was a decisive ministerial intervention in favour of an integrated UN System with strong centralised political control. The decision was intended to facilitate greater central control, not greater autonomy for the Agencies. It was also an indication of the importance attached to economic and social issues, not a downgrading of their significance.

The arguments of Campbell (1973), Kaufman (1989) and Sharp (1969) that the lack of a separate social and economic body in UK proposals is evidence of rejection of a strong economic and social role for the UN at Dumbarton Oaks is therefore incorrect and based on a misunderstanding of UK policy. Ministers' preference for social and economic affairs to be governed directly by the World Council reflected their view that these issues were fundamental to the international system and the purpose of the world organisation was to provide a means to manage these interdependent issues. For them the social and economic, and cultural, activities were essential elements of the Positive Peace and therefore ultimately political in nature and the political, security, social, economic, and cultural functions were to form an integrated UN System.

4.1.2 Dumbarton Oaks and San Francisco

At Dumbarton Oaks the British advocated coordination of the economic and social agencies through the World Council supported by an economic secretariat, as agreed by Ministers. However, when it became clear the Americans would not accept this the British quickly accepted the American proposal to give the Assembly this responsibility by establishing an ECOSOC as a body of the Assembly.³³ This effectively reverted the British position much closer to that outlined by officials in April 1944 before its rejection by Ministers.³⁴ It was also in line with the recommendations of the Bruce report. At Dumbarton Oaks the UK delegation also joined the US in firmly

³³ Webster, 'The Making of the Charter of the United Nations', 29; Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 428–29; Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, 86–90; Hoopes and Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the UN*, 142–43.

³⁴ Paper for Armistice and Post-War War Cabinet Committee, 'Future World Organisation', APW(44)4, Memo D, 'Co-ordination of Political and Economic International Machinery', CAB 87/67.

opposing Russian proposals for a security only organisation in further evidence of their desire to make social and economic responsibilities core to the new organisation.³⁵ They argued: “We consider that there should...be a close link between the economic and social bodies and the main security organisation.”³⁶

After Dumbarton Oaks the need for a separate ECOSOC was not challenged by UK policymakers, and UK commitment to ECOSOC deepened before UNCIO. This questions Ministers’ commitment to the policy agreed in April 1944. It was clear, though, that American insistence on separation of political and economic and social governance would be difficult for the UK to contest and Ministers also recognised that strong institutional focus on these activities had its own advantages. It was also consistent with the views of officials across Whitehall, as shown by the original proposal to the APW Committee. As a result, ECOSOC quickly became a significant feature of the new structure for UK policymakers. After Dumbarton Oaks the internationalist Ministers who had argued coordination should be the responsibility of the World Council became some of the most enthusiastic supporters of ECOSOC. It should be noted, though, that when the Charter was signed in June 1945 Webster claimed the British still preferred “more final control” for the Security Council over social and economic affairs than the Charter granted even though the British effectively accepted the US position.³⁷

At UNCIO the UK delegation, encouraged by Attlee, consequently supported a strong ECOSOC. Goodwin (1957) claims “most of the British delegation” opposed the agreed UK policy to make ECOSOC a principal organ of the UN, and were dubious of

³⁵ Tel, Cadogan to FO, August 17, 1944, FO371/40705 U6916/180/70; Eden told Cadogan the inclusion of economic and social affairs in the scope of the organisation was an important issue and he should not yield, FO to Cadogan, September 6, 1944, APW(44)77 CAB 87/68; and Eden’s comments to the APW Committee, September 7, 1944, APW(44)16th meeting CAB 87/66; Schild, *Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks*, 156–66.

³⁶ Paper by Eden, September 5, 1944, APW(44)75 CAB 87/68.

³⁷ Webster diary entry June 26, 1945 Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 70. For acceptance of the US position see briefing paper on ECOSOC just before UNCIO, which accepts “the principle that economic and social questions call for different machinery than that which is appropriate for dealing with security questions”, April 7, 1945, BCM(45)12 in CAB 99/30; statement by Cranborne, responding to question from Evatt, meeting of the British Commonwealth Prime Ministers, BCM(45) 8th meeting, April 10, 1945, CAB 99/30.

the value of the body, but this is not apparent in the archival record.³⁸ At an early delegation meeting UK delegates were instructed to “make it clear in the Commission [Commission 2, General Assembly, which dealt with ECOSOC] and in Committee [Committee 2(3)] work that the United Kingdom was pledged to support a progressive policy of international cooperation in economic and social matters.”³⁹ Attlee also made it clear he believed all Agencies must be “brought into relationship with the World Organisation” rather than allow the agencies to choose.⁴⁰ The consensus amongst all delegations at UNCIO was for a stronger and more important ECOSOC and this was supported by the UK.⁴¹ UK policy at UNCIO supported a strong ECOSOC as a principal organ of the UN as a general international organisation.

4.1.3 A UN Economic Secretariat, Bretton Woods, and the UN System

For ECOSOC to function as the coordinator of social and economic policy for the United Nations, and to lead the effort to fulfil the objective of full employment agreed in Article 55 of the Charter, it would need to include all the key economic bodies within its scope of authority, including the Bretton Woods institutions. This section argues that UK policymakers always intended ECOSOC oversight of the Bretton Woods institutions.

In 1943 the British suggested to the US the creation of a standing economic secretariat of the wartime United Nations. In March 1943, during preparation for the UN Food Conference, they proposed a general “United Nations economic conference” with a wide scope across all key economic issues, including the clearing union and commercial policy plus technical issues such as food. They also proposed a “standing economic secretariat” of the wartime United Nations to coordinate

³⁸ Goodwin called ECOSOC a ‘distraction from more urgent and important tasks.’ Goodwin, *Britain and the United Nations*, 37, 39–40.

³⁹ UK delegation meeting, UNCIO, April 30, 1945, CAB 21/1611.

⁴⁰ Ibid. See also note by Fleming, May 4, 1945, clarifying that this should be mandatory, not optional, for each agency. CAB 21/1611.

⁴¹ The report of the Rapporteur of Committee 2/3 of Commission 2 made it clear the changes to Dumbarton Oaks proposed in the Committee “are intended to expand the powers and functions of the Economic and Social Council in a way that corresponds to the enlarged economic and social functions of the Organization as a whole and the increased status which the Committee recommends for the Council.” ‘UNCIO, Vol X’, para 20, p275, doc 861, II/3/55 (1).

planning for the anticipated post-war technical Agencies and provide administrative support to the conferences expected to establish them.⁴² This proposal, originating in the Foreign Office, was agreed by Ministers and discussed informally with the US, the Dominions and the Russians, but not tabled as a formal proposal.⁴³ Although the idea was not acted upon it stimulated the Americans to suggest something similar at the October 1943 Moscow Conference.⁴⁴ Roosevelt raised it again in February 1944 in a message to Churchill and Stalin but delays to the British response due to continuing tensions within the Coalition over economic policy and Article VII meant it was overtaken by Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks.⁴⁵

This idea arose early in post-war planning when many policymakers felt the UK had not agreed its own policy sufficiently to risk such a conference, and it was contested by policymakers more sceptical of a general world organisation. However, it was seriously considered and is evidence UK policymakers sought to develop multilateral economic structures in a coordinated system based on the wartime UN. It also demonstrates that the social and economic responsibilities of the UN were

⁴² Draft telegram, FO to Washington, March 15, 1943, in War Cabinet Paper WP(43)119 CAB 66/35/19. Although the draft telegram was not sent Eden took a copy to Washington on his trip there that month and the UK embassy in Washington incorporated its wording into communications to the State Department.

⁴³ For the US see Halifax to FO (tel 1269), March 17, 1943, in War Cabinet Paper WP(43)119 CAB 66/35/19. Opie also met with Pasvolosky on March 17 when Opie raised the risk of 'chaotic' individual conferences, but 'I did not mention the term "steering committee".' Note of meeting, March 17. See also March 18, 1943, Halifax to FO, tel 1297, both in FO371/35365 U1218/320/70. Washington to FO (tels 1358 and 1359), March 23, 1943, *ibid*. For the Dominions see tel Dominions Office to Dominions, March 15, 1943, in PREM 4/28/10; Canadian Documents, DCER, vol 9, doc742, DEA/2295-G-40, note by Wrong to Robertson, March 19, 1943, in which he refers to the UK proposal verbatim. See also response from Australia, March 18, 1943, PREM 4/28/10, and Halifax to FO, tel 1660, April 7, 1943, FO371/35368 U1665/320/70; for Russia see Minute by Cadogan, report of meeting with Maisky on Food Conference, FO 371/35366 U1413/320/70. The Foreign Office also supported a Canadian suggestion that the machinery of the Food Conference might be retained to form the basis of a secretariat for the proposed Steering Committee, Draft tel by Coulson, FO to Washington, April 14, 1943, in response to Washington tel 1660, April 8, 1943, FO371/35368 U165/320/70. 'NA'.

⁴⁴ Russell (1958) claims the British suggestion prompted Hull's proposal of further preparations for the post-war organisation at Moscow in October 1943 Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 130–32; See also Notter, *Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation, 1939-45*, 560–62; For Hull's proposal see 'Bases of our Program for International Economic Cooperation', Annex 9 of the Secret Protocol, November 1, 1943, US Department of State, *FRUS 1943, Vol I*, 763–66; and the inconclusive discussion on October 29, 1943 *ibid*, 665-6.

⁴⁵ Tel 476, Roosevelt to Churchill and Stalin, February 23, 1944, US Department of State, *FRUS, 1944, Vol II*, 14–16; for Churchill's non-committal response see Churchill to Roosevelt, April 15, 1944, *ibid*, p36; see also minute by Coulson, March 3, 1944, FO371/40747 U1474/809/70.

considered an integral part of a single project for international governance through a world organisation with an assumption of coordination through a single process and common machinery.

The most significant economic bodies were the Bretton Woods institutions, the IMF and IBRD, and the relationship of ECOSOC to these Agencies is therefore a critical test of whether ECOSOC was intended to be a genuine coordinator of international economic policy. Singer (1995), Kennedy (2006) and Wilenski (1993), reflecting the subsequent evolution of their relationship with the UN and later separation from the rest of the UN System, all suggest the IMF and IBRD were deliberately constructed by the founders of the UN to be separate from the UN System and outside the coordinating influence of ECOSOC.⁴⁶ Some (Rosenthal, 2005, 2018; ul Haq, 1995; Singer, 1995) argue this separation was engineered to ensure the Agencies could operate under US and British control through the weighted voting system of governance adopted in both bodies without the interference of the less controllable United Nations.⁴⁷ However, the evidence suggests that UK policymakers, both internationalists and pragmatist officials, recognised the need for stronger coordination of international economic policies and saw these bodies as an integral part of the UN System to be coordinated with other Specialised Agencies through the central economic body.

From the start of post-war planning, Keynes' proposal for the International Clearing Union (ICU) envisaged formal links between the ICU and other international bodies forming an integrated international system. In addition to the fundamental multilateralism of his ICU plan, the second draft of his proposal in November 1941 assumed links to other bodies such as an "international body charged with post-war Relief and Reconstruction", which could be funded via overdrafts from the ICU, a

⁴⁶ Singer, 'Bretton Woods and the UN System'; Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 115–17; Wilenski, 'The Structure of the UN in the Post-Cold War Period', 459–60.

⁴⁷ Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations: An Issues Paper*, 15 : Occasional papers-New York:38; Rosenthal, 'Economic and Social Council'; Haq, 'An Economic Security Council', 22; Singer, 'Bretton Woods and the UN System'.

“Super-national policing body charged with the duty of preserving the peace and maintaining international order”, plus “international bodies charged with the management of a Commodity Control” and a “Board for International Investment” intended as an International Development Bank. Keynes wanted to create a coordinated system of multilateral institutions to actively manage the world economy: “If an International Investment or Development Corporation is also set up together with a scheme of Commodity Boards for the control of stocks of the staple raw materials, we might come to possess in these four Institutions a powerful means of combating the evils of the Trade Cycle.”⁴⁸ Keynes was even more explicit in an interdepartmental meeting on his proposal in December 1941: “Mr Keynes...said that it was in his mind that there would be a new League of Nations under Anglo-American direction; that the [international] Bank would act in co-operation with the League and under its direction in regard to matters of international politics.”⁴⁹ Whilst some in the Treasury were concerned at the implied loss of national sovereignty most supported the internationalism of Keynes’ ideas.⁵⁰ These ideas survived repeated revisions of his proposals. When in February 1943 Keynes presented his plans to the European Allies in London, he went so far as to say: “The [Clearing] Union might become the pivot of the future economic government of the world.”⁵¹ The explicit references to formal links with other proposed international institutions remained in the version of the Keynes Plan released publicly in April 1943.⁵²

⁴⁸ Draft 3, December 15, 1941 Keynes, Johnson, and Moggridge, *Collected Writings Volume 25*, pp68-94; Dormael, *Bretton Woods*, pp35-6; Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, pp221-4.

⁴⁹ Minutes of meeting of interdepartmental officials, December 1, 1941, T247/116.

⁵⁰ Paper by Catto, Financial Adviser to the Treasury, November 29, 1941, T247/116. Catto’s paper was broadly supportive of Keynes’ plan; note by Waley, ‘Queries on Mr Keynes’ proposals for an International Currency Union’, September 22, 1941, UKT247/116; memo by Harrod, ‘Plan for an International Clearing Bank’, November 27th, 1941, T247/116. Harrod was working in the Prime Minister’s Statistical Branch 1940-42. Robert Brand, a British banker based in Washington during the war as Head of the British Food Mission and a long time friend of Keynes, also expressed concern at the internationalist elements of the Keynes plan and the impact on national sovereignty it implied. See Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 215.

⁵¹ ICU Plan, shared with European Allies, February 1943, para 41, T160/1281 F18885/2. See also Grosbois, ‘The Benelux’s Monetary Diplomacy and the Bretton Woods Conference’, 57; Steil, *The Battle of Bretton Woods*, 128; Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 249–50.

⁵² *Cmd 6437* Section IX, paragraph 39.

The need for machinery for economic coordination was agreed at the Anglo-American Washington Talks in September and October 1943, at which new organisations for commercial policy, currency stabilisation, commodity control, international investment and cartels were envisaged. The agreed joint statement concluded: “In view of the closely related character of these fields...it is suggested that consideration be given to some form of economic organisation to co-ordinate their activities.”⁵³ One UK official claimed it was the British who took the initiative and the wording was inserted “as a result of British insistence in pointing out the interrelatedness of economic problems”.⁵⁴ The Americans and British also agreed on the need for an “Advisory Economic Staff” to coordinate economic policy, especially with respect to employment, and a representative governing body to which this Staff would report.⁵⁵ As Keynes explained to the UK delegation, there was a need for “...some international body which would have as its main task to make sure that the international bodies contemplated to deal with money, investment, commerce and commodities kept in step and worked together to promote a full employment policy.”⁵⁶ The two delegations cooperated on a joint proposal for “an economic body...to coordinate the activities of the main proposed international agencies”, which were listed as “Money, Investment, Commodity, Commercial Policy, ILO and Food and Agriculture”.⁵⁷ This link between full employment, actively managed at an international level, and a coordinating UN body was to remain a key feature of the early years of the UN and formed part of ECOSOC’s central responsibilities.⁵⁸ The

⁵³ War Cabinet Paper by Law, ‘Anglo-American Discussions Under Article VII’, December 17, 1943, CAB 44/44/9 WP(43)559 (Revise), section II, Annex A, VII, 4.

⁵⁴ Paper by Fleming, ‘Co-ordination of International Economic Institutions and Their Relation to Political Organisation’, February 1944, FO371/40685 U2038/180/70, para 10.

⁵⁵ Notter, *Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation, 1939-45*, 193. War Cabinet Paper by Law, ‘Anglo-American Discussions Under Article VII’, December 17, 1943, CAB 44/44/9 WP(43)559, section V.

⁵⁶ UK Delegation meeting, October 5, 1943, AD(43)15th meeting, CAB 99/33; Meade diary, entry for October 5, 1943 Howson and Moggridge, *Wartime Diaries of Robbins and Meade*, 128. The minutes of the Anglo-American meeting of October 5, 1943 are in BT 11/2215.

⁵⁷ Meade diary, entry for October 7, 1943, Howson and Moggridge, 130. ‘Employment Policies Paper No.1, ‘International Co-ordination of Measures for the Maintenance of High Employment’, October 7, 1943, BT 11/2215.

⁵⁸ Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy*, 104–6, 146–48; See ECOSOC, *National and International Action to Achieve or Maintain Full Employment and Economic Stability: A Report Prepared by the Secretariat of the United Nations*.

language used by Keynes focused on coordinating economic policy rather than administrative efficiency.

Policymakers at the Washington Talks expected this body to be part of, and subordinate to, any new world organisation. Keynes explained that the coordinating body “...was intended inter alia to take the place of the economic section of the League of Nations.”⁵⁹ The final draft agreed at Washington concluded that “if some political organisation is set up, it might prove desirable that this organisation should have an economic wing to which the Advisory Economic Staff would be responsible...”, an explicit link to the world organisation. Also, “matters of general economic policy might be sifted and debated before being submitted for ultimate political decision” in the world organisation, underlining the expectation that the economic bodies would come under direction of the political Council rather than act autonomously.⁶⁰ Hull also raised the possibility of the “advisory economic staff” in the context of the proposed world organisation in his paper at the Moscow Foreign Ministers Conference at the end of October 1943, though no decisions were taken.⁶¹

The Bretton Woods conference was unable to explicitly define the relationship of the IMF and IBRD with the world organisation as the latter’s structure was unknown and Dumbarton Oaks was still at the planning stage.⁶² However, the Bretton Woods Agreements for both institutions assumed a formal relationship with a “general organisation”. The Chairman of Commission 2, Keynes, explicitly acknowledged the need to discuss the relationship of the proposed institutions with other international institutions.⁶³ Article X of the Fund Agreement called for cooperation with “any general international organisation”. This was included in the draft agreement agreed

⁵⁹ Meeting of the UK delegation, October 14, 1943, AD(43)19th meeting, CAB 99/33.

⁶⁰ War Cabinet Paper by Law, ‘Anglo-American Discussions Under Article VII’, December 17, 1943, CAB 44/44/9 WP(43)559, section V, para 4.

⁶¹ Hull was reporting on progress at the Washington Talks, partly to ensure the Russians did not feel excluded, US Department of State, *FRUS 1943, Vol I*, 763–66.

⁶² Singer, ‘Bretton Woods and the UN System’, 348.

⁶³ Keynes acknowledged the issue of “the relationship of this institution to other international institutions and I think we want a committee which deals with that whole issue.” Commission II Plenary meeting, July 11, 1944, *The Bretton Woods Transcripts*, 18–19.

at Atlantic City in Commission 1 and emerged in the final agreement uncontested and without alternative drafts through Commission I.⁶⁴ A similar clause was inserted in the Bank Agreement by Commission 2.⁶⁵ The Agreements also assumed the institutions would be linked to other Agencies within the UN system.⁶⁶

Commission III of the conference also discussed a draft resolution prepared by Peru, Chile, Bolivia and Brazil for a wider economic conference to discuss issues not covered at Bretton Woods, such as commodity control.⁶⁷ This resolution was subsequently softened in committee and reference to a specific conference removed, but a call for other economic measures to supplement the work of the Bank and Fund received wide support, including from the UK Delegation, and assumed integrated international management of the economy would include both the IMF and IBRD.⁶⁸ A revised resolution eventually became Article VII of the Bretton Woods Final Act.⁶⁹

Although the IMF and IBRD were only required to 'cooperate' with any general organisation it was expected this cooperation would be close, though in the absence of clear plans for the world organisation the precise nature of the relationship was left open. It is also clear from UK preparations for Dumbarton Oaks and San Francisco that the Bretton Woods institutions were expected to form an integral part of the UN System and be subject to the governance structures of the world organisation. Marcus Fleming's February 1944 paper on co-ordination of the

⁶⁴ The original draft agreement is in *Bretton Woods Proceedings, Vol 1*, Doc 32, p21ff, relevant article, Article VII section 8 in the original, p50-1; this was 'discussed extensively and recommended for approval without change' at Committee 4 of Commission I July 6, 1944, Proceedings Doc 174, p219; accepted unanimously without comment, Commission I Plenary meeting, July 14, 1944, Proceedings Vol 1, Doc 393, p629; Transcripts for this meeting confirm there was no debate, *The Bretton Woods Transcripts*, 57.

⁶⁵ *Bretton Woods Proceedings, Vol 1*, Final Act, Document 492, Article V, Section 8, p999-1000.

⁶⁶ Article X of the Fund Agreement also assumed cooperation with 'any public international organisations having specialised responsibilities in related fields'; while Article V Section A of the Bank Agreement covered 'Relationship to Other International Organisations' *Bretton Woods Proceedings, Vol 1*, Final Act, Doc 492.

⁶⁷ *Bretton Woods Proceedings, Vol 1*, report of Committee 3 of Commission III. Doc 428, pp731-2.

⁶⁸ See comments by the UK Delegate, 3rd meeting of Commission III, July 17, 1944 *The Bretton Woods Transcripts*, 27-28.

⁶⁹ *Bretton Woods Proceedings, Vol 1*, Final Act, Document 492, Resolution VII, p941.

economic agencies, part of the Dumbarton Oaks preparation, singled out the Monetary Fund, the Commercial Organisation (ITO), the Commodity Organisation and the Investment Bank as requiring oversight and coordination, both in terms of function and policy, due to the interrelated nature of their activities.⁷⁰

Although it was not explicitly stated in the Dumbarton Oaks proposals, at San Francisco the UK delegation assumed ECOSOC would coordinate policy for all economic agencies. They justified proposals to ensure all major powers were represented on ECOSOC on the grounds that "it would make the Economic and Social Council a more suitably constituted body to co-ordinate the work of the agencies such as the proposed World Bank and Monetary Fund which had governing bodies which reflected the economic importance of Member States."⁷¹ Attlee assumed ECOSOC would coordinate "tariff or currency questions" and the official records of UNCIO makes it clear that the term 'economic' included trade and finance, meaning the Bretton Woods institutions, and the proposed ITO, would also fall within the direct remit of ECOOSC.⁷²

This is further evidence that the UN System was seen as a single project during the founding of the UN. As Bevin wrote in November 1945: "Many organisations are being created, those dealing with food, labour, economics, health, education, &c., and each organisation that is established [is] under this World Organisation..."⁷³ It was only after 1945 that the Bretton Woods institutions themselves, jealous of their own position, sought to distance themselves from the UN System and the coordinating influence of ECOSOC, a story that will be picked up in the next chapter.

⁷⁰ Paper by Fleming, 'Co-ordination of International Economic Institutions and Their Relation to Political Organisation', February 1944, FO371/40685 U2038/180/70.

⁷¹ UK delegation meeting on Commission 2 of UNCIO, General Assembly, April 30, 1945, CAB 21/1611.

⁷² For Attlee, see his comments at the British Commonwealth Prime Ministers', April 11, 1945, BCM(45)10th meeting, CAB 99/30; for UNCIO see record of meeting of Committee 2/3, 14th meeting, May 29, 1945 'UNCIO, Vol X', 127; and Rapporteur's report, June 6, 1945, UNCIO, vol 10, p228-242, doc 823, II/3/55, para 8.

⁷³ 'The Foreign Situation', November 8, 1945, FO800/478, MIS/45/14.

4.2 Policymaker Contention and Consensus: Attlee's Internationalism and ECOSOC

There were differences of opinion between policymakers more supportive of internationalism and officials who took a more traditional and pragmatic approach in policy debates over ECOSOC, but consensus was relatively easy to achieve. The internationalists, with Attlee most prominent, advocated a strong directing ECOSOC with coordinating responsibility to promote the social and economic agenda of the UN, while officials, including those in the Treasury, acknowledged the need for effective coordination on practical grounds and recognised ECOSOC as the most appropriate body even when they did not share Attlee's enthusiasm. Those more sceptical of a general international organisation argued against a strong central body, sometimes using functionalist arguments to justify limiting the powers of the world organisation, but they did not see this as a significant issue and their influence on policy was limited. This left the way for a consensus between the internationalism of Attlee and the more pragmatic officials who could accept a coordinating ECOSOC on the grounds of efficient administration and effective management of the international system.

Strong support for an active and powerful coordinating ECOSOC came from the internationalist Labour leadership. The most enthusiastic advocate for ECOSOC at ministerial level was Attlee. He had chaired the 1943 War Cabinet committee which first seriously addressed the coordination of technical agencies and the relationship between the new organisation's political and economic and social machinery. In December 1943, after the Washington Talks had proposed an Economic Advisory Staff in the new organisation, Attlee wrote to Law asking for more detail on how it was to be related to the International Political Authority "as a matter of personal interest".⁷⁴ At San Francisco, in recognition of this personal interest, Cadogan ordered that all economic and social papers were to be routed through Attlee

⁷⁴ Letter Attlee to Law, December 28, 1943, Law Papers, FO800/431 doc 43/39.

personally.⁷⁵ Attlee took the lead on economic and social issues in UK delegation meetings at UNCIO and reminded the delegation that “at the Dominions talks in London the wish had been generally expressed that the Economic and Social Council should receive an emphasis equal to that of the Security Council.”⁷⁶ He also told the House of Commons shortly before UNCIO that ECOSOC “might prove one of the most important parts of the whole organisation.”⁷⁷

Shortly before UNCIO Attlee intervened to expand the role of ECOSOC and strengthen UK commitment to the body. Attlee was unhappy at a Foreign Office brief on ECOSOC prepared for the meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers in London in April 1945 and he asked Marcus Fleming to draft an additional annex to the paper.⁷⁸ The Dominions, especially Australia and New Zealand, strongly supported the economic and social agenda of the new organisation and Attlee, sympathetic to their views, believed the Foreign Office summary was not sufficiently supportive. Fleming attempted to introduce a requirement for UN members to commit to effective coordination and consistency of economic policy, including special cooperation to secure full employment, a variant of what became known at UNCIO as ‘the Pledge’, championed by Australia, which eventually became Article 56 of the Charter. This was stymied by the Foreign Office on the weak grounds there was no time to get the agreement of all Whitehall departments with an interest in the various agencies which, as Fleming noted, were “apt to be most jealous of their independence”.⁷⁹ However, Attlee’s support was sufficient to induce the Foreign Office and Treasury to accept another of Fleming’s suggestion for a requirement for the Agencies to ‘consider’ ECOSOC recommendations (not just ‘receive’ them) and a more general exhortation to closer cooperation between Agencies. Fleming’s draft

⁷⁵ Note by Cadogan on processes for the UK delegation at UNCIO, May 1945, Webster Papers, Webster 14/2, LSE Archives.

⁷⁶ UK Delegation meeting, May 1, 1945, CAB 21/1611.

⁷⁷ Reported in *The Times*, "House Of Commons." *Times*, 18 Apr. 1945, p. 2. *The Times Digital Archive*, Accessed 1 July 2022.

⁷⁸ Cranborne to Attlee, April 3, 1945; minute by Attlee, CAB 123/237. Fleming was working in Attlee’s office of Lord President of the Council in April 1945.

⁷⁹ Minute by Fleming to Attlee April 6, 1945, CAB 123/237.

annex was added to the briefing paper under Attlee's sponsorship and duly put forward as UK policy.⁸⁰

At the April 1945 Commonwealth meeting itself the combined pressure of Dominions' support for a strong economic and social role for the UN and the leading role played on the UK side by Bevin and Attlee (who chaired the main meeting on ECOSOC) confirmed British support for ECOSOC. The UK agreed to accept ECOSOC as a principal organ of the UN, with Attlee apparently surprised that this was not already the case.⁸¹ At UNCIO Attlee encouraged the UK delegation to support a strong and active ECOSOC as part of a "progressive policy of international cooperation in economic and social matters."⁸²

It was not only internationalist Ministers who supported a strong coordinating role for ECOSOC, though. Across Whitehall pragmatist officials recognised the need for an effective coordinating body to ensure the disparate Agencies operated as efficiently as possible and delivered against agreed objectives relevant to their own departmental interests. The Foreign Office argued in terms of bureaucratic convenience and administrative efficiency rather than better policy outcomes, such as improved growth or higher employment. They appeared most concerned with issues of practicality and administrative efficiency and argued that ministerial oversight was needed because "if left to themselves they [the Agencies] might seek to extend their activities beyond what is desirable." The August 1943 Foreign Office paper suggested a supervisory body was necessary to "check demands for superfluous organisations...[and]...control the civil servants and experts who will, in the main, whatever machinery be set up, direct the work of the various technical organisations".⁸³ This was international coordination as a means of bureaucratic

⁸⁰ Fleming to Attlee April 6, 1945, CAB 123/237; Memo April 7, 1945, BCM(45)12 CAB 99/30.

⁸¹ Commonwealth Prime Ministers meeting, April 11, 1945, BCM(45) 10th meeting, CAB 99/30; Foreign Office Paper, 'War Cabinet and Armistice and Post-War Decisions on questions which may arise at the San Francisco Conference', April 18, 1945, CAB 123/237, para 16.

⁸² UK delegation meeting, UNCIO, April 30, 1945, CAB 21/1611.

⁸³ August 19, 1943: 'Relationship of the Proposed World Economic Organisations to the World Council', paper by Richard Law, PS(43)6 CAB 87/65.

control. It is noteworthy, though, that the Foreign Office opted for a multilateral structure of centralised international control as the most 'practical' solution, rather than attempt to limit intergovernmental cooperation in favour of bilateral agreements. It also suggests an awareness by policymakers that international organisations may seek autonomy and not simply act as agents of their state creators, and a desire to create structures to manage this. The internationalist economists, such as Keynes and Meade, also supported international coordination of the economic agencies but expressed their arguments in terms of the effectiveness of economic policy and the achievement of economic objectives, as seen in the Washington Talks (see above), rather than administrative control of potentially autonomous Agencies.

There was a large element of departmental politics in these debates. The Foreign Office preference for political control of the agencies was partly motivated by protection of the department's control of foreign policy, which could be threatened by independent technical Agencies.⁸⁴ As Webster admitted to Jebb in January 1944: "Some recognition of the final control at the political centre of the economic organisations is essential if the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs is to maintain final control of Foreign Policy."⁸⁵ Parallel motivations are apparent in the lobbying of the Ministry of Labour which, under Bevin's influence, sought to retain autonomy for the ILO.⁸⁶ Note, though, that Bevin always regarded the ILO as part of the UN System and simply sought to increase its status within the UN, trying to place it on an equal footing with ECOSOC.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ See for instance Webster diary entry December 2, 1943, vol 11, LSE Archives.

⁸⁵ Webster diary entry January 21, 1944, Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 28–29.

⁸⁶ September 1, 1943, paper by George Tomlinson, Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry Of Labour, PS(43)12, CAB 87/65; Letter, Leggett to Webster, November 13, 1944, Webster 13/2, LSE Archives; Webster diary, entry November 14, 1944, Webster diary vol 12, LSE Archives; Meade diary, entry December 22, 1944 Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 19; Webster diary, entry January 31, 1945, vol 12, LSE Archives; War Cabinet paper by Bevin, 'Relation of ILO to World Organisation', March 26, 1945, WP(45)194 CAB 66/63/4.

⁸⁷ For ILO equality with ECOOSC see letter Bevin to Eden, March 5, 1945, in which Bevin says: "Unless equality with the Economic and Social Council is conceded, the ILO is likely to come to an end. This would be a most retrograde development." FO371/50682 U1719/12/70; see also Bevin speech to House of Commons, July 26, 1944, in which he says "Personally I am opposed to independence in the

The Treasury argued for greater independence for the economic bodies and equality of status with political bodies. Assheton's August 1943 paper may have been a Treasury attempt to protect financial bodies from political oversight, and through the debates over Bretton Woods the Treasury favoured autonomy for the institutions, albeit still within the wider confines of the UN System. During policy debates prior to Dumbarton Oaks the Treasury accepted World Council oversight of both economic and political affairs but, within this, advocated separate political and economic "wings" of the organisation, with both given equal standing.⁸⁸

However, the Treasury supported the principle of policy coordination of the economic Agencies. In February 1944 Treasury officials responded positively to a proposal from Alexander Loveday (of the League's EFO) for such a coordinating body. While they argued that "...individual bodies should certainly not become appanages of a centralised organ...", they recognised "...the need for some central body equipped with a first-rate Director and staff to prevent overlapping of function and inconsistency of policy between the individual bodies."⁸⁹ The Treasury did not join the widespread criticism of Fleming's original draft of Memo D, which followed similar lines to those proposed by Loveday.⁹⁰ After Dumbarton Oaks the Treasury described ECOSOC as "a very important feature" of the new organisation but complained it has "been somewhat ignored in the recent discussions" at

I.L.O. I think it would be fatal if it were not a part of the world organism [sic]..." HC Debates, 5s, vol 402, cols 850-1.

⁸⁸ "...underneath the World Council there might be a political and economic wing and we attached some importance to the status of the economic wing being the same as that of the political wing." Letter, Eady to Jebb, February 14, 1944, FO371/40685 U1338/180/70.

⁸⁹ Letter Eady to Ronald, March 22, 1944, FO371/40746 U1474/809/70. The Loveday paper, dated February 9, 1944, is in the same file. Note though Treasury Minister Asheton maintained his opposition to multilateral structures and was especially critical of Loveday's suggestion that each member should have one vote, without weighting to give Britain greater power, minute by Assheton, February 29, 1944, *ibid*.

⁹⁰ Paper by Fleming, 'Co-ordination of International Economic Institutions and Their Relation to Political Organisation', February 1944, FO371/40685 U2038/180/70. The first draft of Fleming's paper, January 1944, predates Loveday's paper, but it is clear Loveday was in contact with Robbins, Fleming's departmental superior and ensured Robbins received a copy of his own paper. There are clear similarities in their ideas. Letter, Loveday to Frank Roberts, February 9, 1944, FO371/40746 U1474/809/70.

Washington, arguing for it to be taken more seriously.⁹¹ The Treasury demanded representation at San Francisco to protect their interests with respect to ECOSOC which was expected to play a significant role in economic policy.⁹² Following the discussions with the Americans in Washington in 1943 and at Bretton Woods, the Treasury acknowledged that coordination of economic policies between the various technical Agencies was essential for the effective management of the international economy.

The strongest support amongst officials for active centralised coordination of the social and economic Agencies came from the Economic Section of the War Cabinet Office, especially from James Meade and Marcus Fleming. Fleming's long paper circulated in February 1944 formed the basis of the policy debate amongst officials in advance of Dumbarton Oaks and set the internationalist tone for the subsequent policy debate, though his suggestion that the coordinating Central Economic Council should be directly subordinate to the World Council and possess mandatory powers of decision was rejected following opposition from other departmental officials.⁹³ Meade and Fleming, who had both worked in the economics section of the League in the 1930's, worked to increase the profile of economic and social issues in post-war international planning. They were supported by Lionel Robbins, head of the department during the war, though Robbins was always more wary of active interventionism than his team. After San Francisco, Fleming, and Meade (now head of the Economic Section of the Cabinet Office) worked with like-minded officials and Ministers, such as Noel-Baker in the Foreign Office, to position ECOSOC as the central coordinating body for multilateral cooperation between the UN's wider

⁹¹ Waley to Ronald, September 21, 1944; see also Keynes to Waley, September 15, 1944. Keynes called the Dumbarton Oaks proposals on ECOSOC "flimsy and not particularly well considered"; both in FO371/40719 U7662/180/70; minute by ADK Owen, September 26, 1944, FO371/40714 U7409/180/70; meeting of interdepartmental committee November 1, 1944, FO371/40722 U8058/180/70.

⁹² Letter, Waley to Hall-Patch, March 24, 1945; minute by Jebb, March 26, 1945, both FO371/50691 U2240/12/70.

⁹³ Paper by Fleming, 'Co-ordination of International Economic Institutions and Their Relation to Political Organisation', February 1944, FO371/40685 U2038/180/70. J.M. Fleming worked in the Economics Section of the League of Nations in the 1930s, and later went on to work for the IMF. He was asked to write the paper by his superior, Lionel Robbins.

family of Agencies, including the IBRD and IMF as well as the proposed ITO. In this they pursued economic policy management as part of an agenda of full employment and economic expansion.⁹⁴

Policymakers who rejected a general international organisation, or who sought to protect their own functional areas from international oversight, still had reservations. Most notably, Churchill opposed an economic and social role for the world organisation right up until San Francisco, but he did not mount a challenge to the principle of ECOSOC and had little influence on policy in this respect.⁹⁵ His opposition primarily took the form of lack of interest and engagement in economic and social aspects of the new world organisation, which enabled those more committed to these issues to determine policy.

4.2.1 Political Leadership of Technical Agencies

Internationalist Ministers wanted the World Council to direct economic and social affairs because of the significance they attached to these issues. This political leadership, though, was contested. The August 1943 Foreign Office proposal, taking its lead from the Bruce Report, reasoned that social and economic issues were ‘technical’ and should not be politicised, which would be inevitable if governance was through a political body. Social and economic questions should be “removed as far as possible” from political issues.⁹⁶ This argument was made most often by policymakers more sceptical of active multilateral management,⁹⁷ but it was also

⁹⁴ For an account of the role of the Economic Section see Cairncross and Watts, *The Economic Section 1939-61* especially chapters 7 and 8.

⁹⁵ For Churchill’s opposition to the inclusion of social and economic responsibilities in the scope of the world organisation during early 1945 see Stettinius, *Roosevelt and the Russians: The Yalta Conference*, 16–17, 62, 316; see comments made by Churchill to Stettinius at Yalta, Stettinius Diary, February 1, 1945 ; and to Baruch, entry for March 12, 1945 Stettinius, *Stettinius Diaries*, 232, 298.

⁹⁶ Paper by Law to the Post-War Settlement Committee, ‘Relationship of the Proposed World Economic Organisations to the World Council’, August 19, 1943, PS(43)6, para 3, PS(43)6, CAB 87/65.

⁹⁷ See comments by Oliver Stanley, Secretary of State for the Colonies, who “...thought that the work of the functional agencies, e.g., the ILO, or some Colonial organisation, should be left to the experts.” APW Committee 16th meeting, September 7, 1944, CAB 87/66.

attractive to departmental officials who were resistant to political interference in their functional responsibilities.⁹⁸

This argument assumed that the ‘technical’ functions of Agencies, be they economic (IBRD, IMF), social and cultural (WHO, UNESCO) or a combination of the two (FAO, UNRRA) were somehow non-ideological and outside politics. Officials argued international economic and social questions “should be debated and solved in an atmosphere of technical expertise”.⁹⁹ Political oversight would be a form of contamination and would only undermine Agencies’ effectiveness as “progress in economic and social questions is often held up by political differences between states”.¹⁰⁰ It reflected the view widely held by British pragmatists that the Agencies were instruments of international administration performing tasks that were ‘technical’ in the sense that they facilitated the operation of their own domestic administration without challenging their national autonomy. Setting standards, sharing information, and agreeing and policing cross-border rules were regarded as essential for effective administration but also simply ‘practical’ in nature. This argument gained even greater support after 1945 when the political functions of the UN were deadlocked by the breakdown of relations of the Great Powers.

It was an argument rejected by more internationalist (and political) Labour Ministers. For them, the importance of Specialised Agencies, and the centrality of economic and social responsibilities to the world organisation’s role, meant political direction was essential.¹⁰¹ Bevin saw the economic and social activities of delivering “common services” as a fundamentally political undertaking.¹⁰² Philip Noel-Baker, perhaps the

⁹⁸ The original Dumbarton Oaks Memo D, the version rejected by Ministers but which in practice formed the basis of UK policy from Dumbarton Oaks onwards, was amended to meet the concerns of departmental officials and warned against any ‘undue supervision from any overriding body’ to enable agencies to discharge their technical functions without interference. Paper for Armistice and Post-War War Cabinet Committee, ‘Future World Organisation’, APW(44)4, Memo D, ‘Co-ordination of Political and Economic International Machinery’, April 19, 1944, CAB 87/67.

⁹⁹ Ibid, para 3(d).

¹⁰⁰ Paper by Richard Law, ‘Relationship of the Proposed World Economic Organisations to the World Council’, August 19, 1943, PS(43)6, para 4, CAB 87/65.

¹⁰¹ APW(44)1st meeting, April 22, 1944, CAB 87/66.

¹⁰² Bevin to Eden, December 8, 1942, FO371/31525 U1798/742/70.

most internationalist of the senior Labour figures and a key person in UN policy in the immediate post-war period, sent a paper on his own initiative to the Foreign Office in January 1944 strongly arguing for centralised political control of the technical agencies on the grounds that economic and social questions were inevitably also political.¹⁰³ Though Noel-Baker was excluded from official wartime planning and had little direct influence on policy during the war, his views were representative of wider internationalist opinion.¹⁰⁴ This identification of economic and social activities as central to the UN's political role was a feature of the internationalists' position.

All UK policymakers remained committed to a state-led structure of governance in economic and social affairs, though. Internationalists and pragmatists agreed that Agencies should be state-led rather than supranational authorities of technical experts. Both the 1943 Foreign Office proposals and the version of Memo D proposed by officials in April 1944 assumed representatives on the proposed Central Economic Council would be political Ministers.¹⁰⁵ The extension of international technical Agencies was a way of enhancing the governance capabilities of the state rather than supplanting it. Structures were intergovernmental not supranational.

Internationalist Ministers expected Agencies to act and argued only government representatives could commit their governments to act. In October 1945 when members of the UK delegation to the first FAO Conference suggested FAO should operate as a purely technical body without the involvement of politicians, Noel-Baker was adamant that political oversight was essential: "there must be co-ordinated action on a Governmental level if existing vested interests were to be induced to co-operate...FAO must be made part of a big machine reporting through

¹⁰³ Noel-Baker sent a long and short version of his paper, January 26 and 31, 1944. In both he wrote: "No real division can be made between economic, technical and political subjects. They all overlap in International, as they do in National politics." FO371/40686 U2198/180/70.

¹⁰⁴ For Noel-Baker's distance from the planning process see minute by Webster, January 29, 1944, FO371/40686 U2198/180/70. For similar views see comments by representatives of the LNU in a meeting with Eden, March 13, 1945, FO371/50685 U1913/12/70.

¹⁰⁵ Paper by Richard Law, August 19, 1943, PS(43)6, para 4, CAB 87/65; Memo D, April 19, 1944, APW(44)4, para 6, CAB 87/67.

the Economic and Social Council which in turn would report to the General Assembly, which alone could enforce action on the part of governments."¹⁰⁶

Effective action was a political act which required national government ownership.

Pragmatist departmental officials, concerned at retaining jurisdiction over their own policy areas, agreed that control by governments was essential. Even those supporting autonomous Agencies outside close oversight by a central coordinating body were not trying to establish supranational authorities of technical experts with their own authority and independent capability for action. Decision-making powers were still to be in the hands of national representatives who owed their allegiances to their home governments rather than independent experts whose allegiance lay with the Agency and the technical function. Policymakers justified this position not on grounds of national sovereignty and the right of member states to decide on Agency policy but the more 'practical' consideration that only national representatives could commit states to action, and without such commitment action would not follow. As UK officials argued with respect to the FAO, government representatives should sit on the FAO Executive Committee "not in the sense of representing their respective interests, but in order to secure their backing for the work to be done."¹⁰⁷ Also, it was argued that if there was deadlock in the Agencies only governments could make the compromises necessary to ensure a resolution, as the Foreign Office paper expressed it, "in the national capitals by discussions within the governments concerned".¹⁰⁸

This was also evident in the UK response to proposals for a larger role for independent experts in the work of ECOSOC and the Agencies. ECOSOC was always envisaged as a state-only body but, at the suggestion of the Americans, the Dumbarton Oaks proposals assumed Commissions of ECOSOC would consist only of

¹⁰⁶ UK FAO delegation, 7th meeting, October 22, 1945, Gen 8/193 CAB 78/8.

¹⁰⁷ Instructions to UK delegate to the Inaugural FAO Conference, October 22, 1944, Gen 8/163 CAB 78/8, para 14. Note, though, that FAO was an example in which the Executive Committee was initially staffed by expert individuals not government representatives, though this had been overturned on UK initiative by 1947.

¹⁰⁸ Paper by Richard Law, August 19, 1943, PS(43)6, para 4, CAB 87/65.

expert representatives (Chapter IX (D)). However, at San Francisco the British challenged this assumption and formally proposed that Commissions may include government representation. At UNCIO the UK effectively won the argument, against US opposition, and the Dumbarton Oaks proposal for expert representation only was dropped from the Charter, leaving ECOSOC itself to determine the composition of commissions.¹⁰⁹ Expert advice was valued, but alongside government representation, and executive decisions were to be made by bodies consisting of government representatives.

There was, however, an underlying assumption that governments, acting in good faith, could reach agreement on policy through the coordinating forum of ECOOSC. In practice, though, such agreement proved elusive. As we'll see in Chapter Six, differences of perspective led to charges of politicisation of the work of ECOSOC and disappointment at its performance.

4.3 ECOSOC as Economic Security Council?

On American insistence ECOSOC was to report to the Assembly, not the Security Council, but this still left open the nature of the relationship between ECOSOC and the Specialised Agencies, and in particular the extent of the powers of ECOSOC. Childers and Urquhart (1994) claim the UN founders intended ECOSOC to be an Economic Security Council, analogous to the political Security Council, but that this intention was subsequently subverted.¹¹⁰ The literature underestimates support for ECOSOC by UK policymakers, who expected it to play a significant coordinating role in the UN's important social and economic responsibilities. However, the claim policymakers gave it the same status as the Security Council is overstating the case. Although policymakers referred to ECOSOC as equal with the Security Council during planning, UK policy suggests a less executive role for the body.

¹⁰⁹ Paper by Foreign Office, 'Economic and Social Council', April 7, 1945, BCM(45)12 CAB 99/30, para 9; Amendments to Dumbarton Oaks Proposals. May 1, 1945, FO371/50709 U3583/12/70; meetings of the UK Delegation to UNCIO, May 1 and 4, 1945, para 5, CAB 21/1611; Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 794.

¹¹⁰ Childers and Urquhart, *Renewing the United Nations System*, 57.

Shortly before and during UNCIO UK policymakers did claim that ECOSOC should be considered equal with the Security Council. Attlee explicitly instructed the UK delegation at UNCIO that “at the Dominions talks in London the wish had been generally expressed that the Economic and Social Council should receive an emphasis equal to that of the Security Council”, and both Jebb and Cranborne expressed similar views.¹¹¹ However, the British declined to give ECOSOC the same executive powers as the Security Council and made it an organ of the Assembly which further limited its status.¹¹² They expected that, as a body of the Assembly, all important decisions of ECOSOC would need to be ratified by the Assembly.¹¹³

Importantly, UK policymakers saw ECOSOC’s role as coordination rather than direction of the Agencies. This coordinating role was implicit in the Dumbarton Oaks proposals.¹¹⁴ During preparations for Dumbarton Oaks officials had explicitly rejected mandatory powers for any economic council.¹¹⁵ Before UNCIO in April 1945, UK policymakers agreed with the Canadians and Australians that the Agencies (ILO,

¹¹¹ UK delegation meeting, UNCIO, May 1, 1945, CAB 21/1611; Jebb to Cadogan, May 17, 1945, “...the functions of the Security Council will be limited in scope as they were not under the League, and there will be co-equal bodies such as the Economic and Social Council and the Trustee Council.” Webster Papers 14/5, LSE Archives; and Cranborne told the House of Lords that ECOSOC “in its way was as important as the Security Council”, reported in *The Times*, *Times*, 18 Apr. 1945, p. 2. *The Times Digital Archive*, Accessed 1 July 2022.

¹¹² Letter, Webster to Leggett, November 6, 1944, makes it clear it was a deliberate decision at Dumbarton Oaks, under US pressure, to place ECOSOC under the Assembly and not the Security Council, Webster Papers 13/2, LSE Archives.

¹¹³ Meeting of British Commonwealth Prime Ministers, BCM(45) 10th meeting, April 11, 1945, CAB 99/30. The Dominions, especially Canada, were adamant that the Assembly was “the complete master” rather than ECOSOC, though they maintained the formal position that sovereignty resided in the individual states rather than the international body. *Ibid* p7.

¹¹⁴ For Dumbarton Oaks see Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 797. The original draft of Memo D identified the functions of central governance of the Agencies to be ‘co-ordination’ of Agency scope and jurisdiction, policies and purposes. Memo D, April 22, 1944, APW(44)4, CAB 87/67, para 3(e). See also ADK Owen memo March 1945, stating ECOSOC would only work by “by ‘consultation’ and ‘recommendation’” with the Agencies. FO371/50682 U1719/12/70. Even Fleming, the official most supportive of a strong ECOSOC, envisaged ‘co-ordination’ not control. See his revised annex to the April 1945 FO paper on ‘Economic and Social Council’, April 7, 1945, BCM(45)12, CAB 99/30.

¹¹⁵ Fleming’s draft paper of February 1944 gave such powers but was overturned by officials, FO371/40685 U2038/180/70; March 8, 1944, Law Committee meeting; although the plans were rejected by Ministers in April 1944, when the UK accepted America’s ECOSOC at Dumbarton Oaks they reverted to the position previously agreed.

IBRD, IMF were specifically mentioned) had their own governance procedures, and often differing voting rules. They agreed with Herbert Evatt, the Australian Minister of External Affairs, when he said: "There could be no question, therefore, of giving the Assembly power to issue orders to the other specialised bodies."¹¹⁶ In practical terms this falls short of establishing ECOSOC as an Economic Security Council, analogous to the Security Council. It is clear, though, that the UK, driven by Attlee and (to a lesser extent) Bevin, supported an active and effective ECOSOC, and a significant social and economic role for the UN, and their understanding of 'coordination' was one of close oversight rather than distant 'consultation', especially with respect to full employment.

Both Bevin and Attlee expected ECOSOC to play a more interventionist oversight and planning role than eventually materialised. Bevin believed ECOSOC would have the power of review and decision over the policies of the Specialised Agencies, a prospect from which he sought to protect the ILO in March 1945.¹¹⁷ The Foreign Office assured him that ECOSOC would have no such powers and would only 'consult' and 'recommend'.¹¹⁸ In April 1945 Attlee told the House of Commons that ECOSOC would be "a small operating body to meet more frequently to implement decisions of the assembly and carry out the day-to-day work of coordination."¹¹⁹ In May 1945 Attlee told the Labour Party Conference that ECOSOC's "enormous contribution to peace" will come partly through "the co-ordination of the activities of all kinds of international organisations" but also "some of its activities will be direct".¹²⁰ This implies a more executive and active role than intended in the

¹¹⁶ Meeting of British Commonwealth Prime Ministers, BCM(45) 10th meeting, April 11, 1945, CAB 99/301, p10. See also comments by Wrong (Canada), *ibid*, p7.

¹¹⁷ Letter, Bevin to Eden, March 5, 1945, FO371/50682 U1719/12/70; War Cabinet paper by Bevin, 'Relation of ILO to World Organisation', March 26, 1945, WP(45)194 CAB 66/63/4.

¹¹⁸ See FO minutes on Bevin's letter to Eden in FO371/50682 U1719/12/70.

¹¹⁹ Speech by Attlee, April 17, 1945, reported in *The Times*, Reported in *The Times*, "House Of Commons." *Times*, 18 Apr. 1945, p. 2. The Times Digital Archive, Accessed 1 July 2022. It is worth noting that this statement was made just days after the meeting of the British Commonwealth Prime Ministers had discussed the economic and social role of the UN in detail so Attlee would have been aware of the plans for ECOSOC.

¹²⁰ Attlee's speech to the Labour Party Conference, May 23, 1945, Attlee and Jenkins, *Purpose and Policy*, 142. Attlee had returned from San Francisco just days before this speech so was fully aware of the position on ECOSOC and its powers.

Dumbarton Oaks proposals, and indeed in the final Charter. However, it is consistent with Attlee's expectation of an active UN with ECOSOC an integral body. Attlee's view was ahead of many UK policymakers, however, although Meade's Economic Section did pursue an active role for ECOSOC.

In the absence of a direct controlling relationship through ECOSOC, Agencies were to be "brought into relationship" with the UN through agreements between each Agency and ECOSOC as equal parties.¹²¹ Some UK policymakers were reluctant to make this mandatory for the Agencies¹²² despite Attlee's clear expectation that such agreements must be entered into and a dissenting paper from Fleming.¹²³ The UK delegation at UNCIO accepted a permissive interpretation in the Charter that Agencies "may" reach agreement, not "will", in Article 63 but as we'll see in the next chapter the UK government interpreted this as an obligation. Whatever the legal position in the Charter, though, UK policymakers expected the agreements to be concluded quickly and without difficulty.¹²⁴ However, this implies a weaker relationship than the directing Economic Security Council described by Childers and Urquhart.

4.3.1 Setting the Rules

While the UK, as a Great Power, secured special rights of membership and voting in the Security Council they did not achieve the same privileged position in ECOSOC. The Charter does not give Great Powers automatic membership of ECOSOC and Kennedy (2006) argues that UK acceptance of this proves they did not value the body.¹²⁵ However, the UK clearly made efforts to gain such a position but failed against US opposition. The UK attempted to set the rules in the most significant Specialised Agencies, including privileged membership of the governing bodies and

¹²¹ Dumbarton Oaks Proposals, Chapter IX, Section A2; Charter, Articles 57, 63.

¹²² Letter, Webster to Leggett, November 6, 1944; Ronald to Twentyman (FAO Interim Commission), November 27, 1944, covering paper by Webster on 'Relations of FAO to the World Organisation', both in Webster Papers 13/2, LSE Archives.

¹²³ UK Delegation Meeting on Work of Commission 2, UNCIO, April 30, 1945; paper by Fleming, May 4, 1945, both CAB 21/1611.

¹²⁴ See Attlee's comments at the UK UNCIO delegation meeting, April 30, 1945, CAB 21/1611.

¹²⁵ Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 114–15.

weighted voting giving them greater formal influence over decisions in, for instance, the IBRD, IMF and the abortive ITO. Kennedy compares the situation in ECOSOC with this privileged position in the Bretton Woods bodies but the British did not acquiesce without argument. There is, though, evidence that UK policymakers were prepared to sacrifice their position in ECOSOC to protect and legitimise their position in the Security Council.

UK efforts to set governance rules were especially significant because UK policymakers expected the new Specialised Agencies to be more powerful than their pre-war equivalents in the League, with more executive powers than previous Agencies.¹²⁶ This reflected widespread acceptance of an interventionist approach to international management of economic and social affairs, and expectations of a corresponding increase in both the extent of activity and the power of the institutions created to manage it. As Webster wrote in November 1944, "it was hoped that there would be a great expansion of international economic and social activity" in the new world organisation.¹²⁷ The need to create structures that suited UK interests was acknowledged in the draft Dumbarton Oaks preparatory Memo D which concluded it would be necessary to be "careful" with "constitutional arrangements" since: "Any institutions set up to deal with these problems effectively would, as at present conceived, have powers which exceed those given to international bodies in the past."¹²⁸

UK policymakers considered giving smaller states a greater role in the governance of economic and social bodies, including any coordinating body such as ECOSOC,

¹²⁶ Minute by Webster, December 14, 1943, which warned: "...the analogy with League practice must not be pressed too far. If the new bodies come into existence they will have, within the limits laid down for them, much greater executive power than the old ones, and the struggle for control may, therefore, be much more intense." FO371/35398 U3919/402/70.

¹²⁷ Letter, Webster to Leggett (Ministry of Labour), November 6, 1944, Webster Papers 13/2, LSE Archives.

¹²⁸ Draft Memo D, April 22, 1944, para 3(b), APW(44)4, CAB 87/67. This section referred specifically to FAO and other economic bodies.

arguing this would legitimise the general organisation.¹²⁹ The Foreign Office, though, were more cynical about using representation on the economic bodies to buy-off small state opposition and legitimise the dominant role of the Great Powers in the political bodies. In correspondence with Keynes in summer 1943 Jebb explicitly used arguments of 'Canadian functionalism',¹³⁰ which argued for representation based on contribution, to make his case: "...we have always said that in economic organisations the 'functional' principle should solely apply, and this is one of the means whereby we hope (vide the United Nations Plan) to induce the smaller states to accept Great Power political leadership."¹³¹ More cynically, he told Keynes: "Our view is that one of the ways in which the world Powers would attempt to achieve political dominance would be to apply a perfectly democratic system in the composition of the other world bodies other than political ones. The representation of smaller Powers on the economic bodies is thus a sort of window-dressing, which will do something to obscure and facilitate the dominance of the Great Powers in the field which is properly their own."¹³²

However, UK policymakers still expected permanent representation for the UK on ECOSOC, as well as the executive bodies of the economic Agencies. Planning through 1943 assumed the Great Powers would have permanent representation on the economic bodies "by reason of the great role they play in international life."¹³³ For ECOSOC, the original Memo D argued for rules similar to those for the ILO, with a

¹²⁹ War Cabinet Paper by Attlee, 'The United Nations Plan', January 28, 1943, CAB 66/33/44 WP(43)44; Paper by Cripps, 'Relationship of the Proposed World Economic Organisations to the World Council', August 31, 1943, PS(43)8 CAB 87/65.

¹³⁰ The idea of 'Canadian functionalism' was defined by Hume Wrong in 1942 to justify Canadian demands for membership of the Combined Boards and a greater say in the management of the war. He defined it as follows: "Each member of the grand alliance should have a voice in the conduct of the war proportionate to its contribution to the general war effort. A subsidiary principle is that the influence of the various countries should be greatest in connection with those matters with which they are most directly concerned." H.H. Wrong to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs (Robertson), January 20, 1942, DEA/3265-A-40, Document 135 in Hilliker, *DCER Vol 9*, pp106-9. It appealed to the British who saw it as supporting their own claim to a privileged position in post-war security bodies. Note that this idea of 'functionalism' is not used in the sense employed by David Mitrany.

¹³¹ Letter, Jebb to Keynes, June 29, 1943, FO371/35397 U2626/402/70.

¹³² Letter, Jebb to Keynes, August 7, 1943, *Ibid*.

¹³³ Minute by Jebb, June 11, 1943, FO371/35397 U2626/402/60.

membership of 16 states of which 8 would be selected on the basis of “international economic importance”, guaranteeing a seat for the UK.¹³⁴ At Dumbarton Oaks the UK delegation argued for the “ILO formula” to ensure the largest economic powers would be represented on ECOSOC but the Americans rejected any privileged membership in order to make ECOSOC “as democratic as possible” and the British were obliged to concede.¹³⁵ These British attempts to ensure permanent representation for the Great Powers on ECOSOC, even if they were ultimately unsuccessful, challenges Kennedy’s argument (2006) that the absence of a privileged position for Britain as a Great Power indicates their lack of interest in ECOSOC.

Despite concerns, the British made no attempt to challenge the position after Dumbarton Oaks.¹³⁶ Although it was raised by other delegations at San Francisco the UK accepted that Great Powers would have no privileged position in ECOSOC at UNCIO.¹³⁷ The UK delegation was tempted to support a French amendment to adopt ILO-style selection criteria, ostensibly on the grounds that the presence of the Great Powers would increase ECOSOC’s credibility and be consistent with the position in the IBRD and IMF, but were unwilling to take the lead against the US.¹³⁸

UK policymakers, especially those sceptical of the world organisation, were also critical of equal voting rights in ECOSOC, arguing it would give too much influence to smaller states.¹³⁹ Some Foreign Office officials also acknowledged this as a

¹³⁴ Draft Memo D, April 22, 1944, para 6, APW(44)4, CAB 87/67.

¹³⁵ Minute by Webster, October 10, 1944, FO371/40719 U7662/180/70; see also Webster’s summary of the Charter, Webster diary, entry June 26, 1945, Reynolds and Hughes, *The Historian as Diplomat*, 70.

¹³⁶ See Treasury concerns after Dumbarton Oaks that the UK would not be guaranteed representation on ‘such an important body’, letter, Keynes to Waley, September 15, 1944; letter Waley to Ronald, September 21, 1944, both FO371/40719 U7662/180/70.

¹³⁷ For policy at UNCIO see paper, ‘Economic and Social Council’, prepared by Foreign Office for the meeting of British Commonwealth Prime Ministers, April 7, 1945, BCM(45)12, CAB 99/30, paras 3-5.

¹³⁸ UK delegation meeting, April 30, 1945, CAB 21/1611; Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, 789–90.

¹³⁹ See comments by Assheton on a proposal for one member one vote by Loveday, February 1944, which he called ‘dangerous’ as ‘the result would be that the small countries Liberia and Salvador [sic] would be placed indirectly in the position of influencing the policy of the Clearing Union or the Commodity Organization.’ Minute by Assheton February 29, 1944, FO371/40746 U1474/809/70.

problem.¹⁴⁰ Keynes was also concerned at the voting arrangements in the economic bodies, fearing that even rules based around economic quotas would not provide sufficient power to the UK “unless the quotas were in effect largely ‘cooked’.”¹⁴¹ However, although weighted voting was adopted in the rules for the IBRD and IMF (and was proposed for the abortive ITO) it was never suggested for ECOSOC which remained one member one vote.

4.4 Expectations of ECOSOC, 1945

In the summer of 1945 ECOSOC was widely welcomed by internationalists, especially Ministers in the incoming Labour Government. It was regarded not simply as integral to the concept of the UN as a general international organisation but as one of its most important components. In public, Attlee routinely highlighted the importance of ECOSOC as an active forum for international planning. In his speech recommending the Charter for approval in the House of Commons he described its role in expansive terms: “It is charged with promoting higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development, as well as solutions of international economic, social, health and related problems, international cultural and educational co-operation and a universal respect for the observance of human-rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without any discussion as to race, sex, language or religion.” It was to achieve this through the coordination of the Specialised Agencies.¹⁴² Ellen Wilkinson, speaking for the government in the same debate, made the link to international planning explicit. “The I.L.O., the Food and Agricultural Organisation, U.N.R.R.A., the proposed International Monetary Fund, are all forms of planning, which will help us on these lines. The Council [ECOSOC] will also have the task of co-ordinating their activities...”¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ Ronald of the FO shared his concern: “I need only point to the danger which equal voting rights of all countries on the Council might entail to the carefully weighted votes our other schemes are likely to contain.” Letter, Ronald to Eady, March 9, 1944. See also minute by Coulson, March 3, 1944, Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Minute by Jebb of conversation with Keynes, July 17, 1943, FO371/35397 U2626/402/70.

¹⁴² Speech by Attlee, HC Deb 22 August 1945 5s, vol 413, cols 666-7.

¹⁴³ Speech by Wilkinson, HC Deb 23 August 1945 5s, vol 413, col 867 .

Both Attlee and Wilkinson repeated the argument that economic and social problems caused conflict, and security depended upon the eradication of these causes. As Attlee argued: "There must be constructive action to remove the causes of war. World economic anarchy between the wars gave Hitler his chance."¹⁴⁴ Wilkinson argued international planning was essential to resolve issues that caused war. "One of the great weaknesses of the League of Nations was that it did not succeed in dealing with those, essential economic problems, which lie at the root of war. Had positive international planning been in existence to prevent that world economic crisis, the circumstances which enabled Hitler and his fellow dictators to rise to power might never have arisen." The world's "enormous social and economic problems" must be "tackled on an international, and a planned, basis." This was ECOSOC's role: "Here we have, in this Economic Council, the possibility of laying the axe on some of the economic roots of this foul thing called war."¹⁴⁵

Amongst officials, the Economic Section of the Cabinet Office, led by Meade from the second half of 1945, were the strongest supporters of an active ECOSOC. Fleming, who worked in the department, described ECOSOC to the UK delegation at UNCIO as "by common consent one of the most hopeful departures of the new organisation...".¹⁴⁶ In July 1945 he wrote to Webster that "I feel rather strongly that any effective work in the economic and social field is to be expected...from the Economic and Social Council, and that it is in our interest to emphasise the importance of this body."¹⁴⁷ For Meade, ECOSOC was the body to coordinate international efforts toward full employment: "...our main idea [is] to make the Council a reality from the point of view of international co-ordination of national and

¹⁴⁴ "Labour Case For Socialism." Times, 6 June 1945, p. 2. The Times Digital Archive. Accessed 22 Sept. 2020; see also Attlee's speech to the Labour Party Conference, May 23, 1945, Attlee and Jenkins, *Purpose and Policy*, 141–43.

¹⁴⁵ Speech by Wilkinson, HC Deb 23 August 1945 5s, vol 413, cols 864-5, 872.

¹⁴⁶ Note by Fleming to UK Delegation, May 4, 1945, CAB 21/1611.

¹⁴⁷ Letter, Fleming to Webster, July 20, 1945, Webster Papers 15/1, LSE Archives. Fleming complained to Webster that the latter had downplayed the role of ECOSOC in relation to the Assembly in his draft of the official UK commentary on the Charter that emerged as Cmd 6666.

international policies on such questions as the maintenance of employment and the restoration of equilibrium to balances of payments."¹⁴⁸

In other departments, the Ministry of Labour continued to favour the ILO as an alternative forum for international economic and social planning, which was to lead to disagreements with Meade and the Cabinet Office, but they supported the principle of planned coordination of the Agencies.¹⁴⁹ In November 1945 the Cabinet decisively confirmed ECOSOC as the lead body for international full employment when the Ministry of Labour again promoted the ILO.¹⁵⁰ The Treasury were more ambivalent in 1945 when the key Bretton Woods institutions still awaited formal national approval and took an increasingly sceptical view of ECOSOC whilst acknowledging its potential importance.¹⁵¹

Officials in the Foreign Office, more interested in the UN's political and military responsibility, were reserved but still supportive. Webster claimed the new governance structure ('the machinery') of the UN and Specialised Agencies "are sufficient to transform the world, if they are carried out with even a modicum of goodwill and common sense", and he called ECOSOC a "notable advance on all previous organisations" though this was more because of the equal representation given to smaller states than the implied significance of economic and social activities.¹⁵² Even Jebb, in an example of his familiar claims to British authorship of the UN Charter, approvingly claimed ECOSOC as a British initiative as "it is modelled on the Bruce Report, which was in accordance with British ideas".¹⁵³

¹⁴⁸ Meade diary, entry September 1, 1945, p126; also the entry for August 26, 1945, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 126, 118–21.

¹⁴⁹ Meade Cabinet Office Diary, entries December 22, 1944, January 7, 1945 Meade, 19, 27.

¹⁵⁰ Cabinet paper by George Isaacs, Minister of Labour, CAB 139/3/38 CP(45)238; Cabinet meeting, November 6, 1945, CAB 128/2/2 CM(45)49; Meade diary entry November 3, 1945, Meade, 166–67.

¹⁵¹ Meade Cabinet Office Diary, entry December 22, 1944, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 19. Letter, Waley to Hall-Patch (FO), March 24, 1945, FO371/50691 U2240/12/70; paper by Eady, March 26, 1945, FO371/50689 U2178/12/70.

¹⁵² Webster, 'The Making of the Charter of the United Nations', 37, 29.

¹⁵³ Paper by Jebb, 'Reflections on San Francisco', FO371/50732 U5998/12/70, para 3.

However, ECOSOC was not simply important as a forum for cooperation but signified a UN that would provide a better world for all, especially for the new Labour Government. It had meaning beyond its instrumental value. It was an expression of the belief that peace was not simply the absence of war, but a Positive Peace, responsible for improving the lives of people around the world through international planning and cooperation. Wilkinson placed ECOSOC in the context of wider efforts to improve living standards: "The main thing about that Council is its tremendous possibilities for the future if properly used."¹⁵⁴ Attlee was clear of his expectations of the UN. In a broadcast of June 1945, without using the phrase, he invoked the idea of Positive Peace: "But it is not enough to prevent war...I hold that it should be a principal object of the United Nations to wage war on hunger, poverty, disease and ignorance, and to promote the greatest measure of economic cooperation between all nations in order to raise the standard of life of the masses of the people."¹⁵⁵ He explicitly referred to Positive Peace in his Commons speech introducing the Charter, saying the San Francisco conference "...was very conscious of the need for dealing with the economic and social causes of war, through international co-operation I think there was a general feeling that peace is not negative, but positive."¹⁵⁶

Attlee was the most willing to invest the UN with meanings of humanitarian welfare. He went further than arguing this was simply a means to prevent future international conflict and extended the meaning of the UN to encompass broader humanitarian goals. In April 1945 he drew an explicit link between peace and welfare when he told the House of Commons: "I think we have also learned that peace and human welfare are not divisible."¹⁵⁷ He also invoked global development goals as an objective for the UN. In his broadcast of June 5, 1945, citing the UN conferences already held, he envisaged "world economic cooperation" with the aim to "advance

¹⁵⁴ Speech by Wilkinson, HC Deb 23 August 1945 5s, vol 413, col 866.

¹⁵⁵ "Labour Case For Socialism." Times, 6 June 1945, p. 2. The Times Digital Archive. Accessed 22 Sept. 2020. .

¹⁵⁶ Speech by Attlee, HC Deb 22 August 1945 5s, vol 413, col 666; see also Attlee's speech to the Labour Party Conference, May 23, 1945, speaking of ECOSOC, he referred to "...the positive work for peace, which must be done." Attlee and Jenkins, *Purpose and Policy*, 142.

¹⁵⁷ Speech by Attlee, April 17, 1945, reported in The Times, "House Of Commons." Times, 18 Apr. 1945, p. 2. The Times Digital Archive, Accessed 1 July 2022.

the standards of life of the less developed peoples of the world, holding that economic progress, education, and increasing self-government must go forward together...for our prosperity depends on the prosperity of other nations."¹⁵⁸ In a press conference in July 1945 he promised "a world economic policy which is based on an endeavour to raise the standards of life of the masses all over the world."¹⁵⁹ To the UN Association in October 1945 he declared: "What is needed is an active spirit of co-operation in constructive work for humanity..." and the role of the UN is "...to promote the welfare of all peoples by international cooperation."¹⁶⁰ These were calls not only for improvements for UK citizens but assumed a global responsibility for the welfare of all peoples.

Attlee also emphasised the UN's role in a new conception of human rights in the Charter. "Here we have a very notable extension from the consideration of the rights of nations to the rights of human beings within the nation...[W]e are seeking not merely good relations between nation and nation but good relations between the human beings within the nations." He acknowledged the lack of 'machinery' to enforce this, but repeated publicly his expectation that the UN would be bound to intervene to prevent a future holocaust: "It is true that the exact way in which this is to be secured is not specifically laid down, and I must admit there is a limitation as to the intervention of the United Nations in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, but can anyone deny that the kind of treatment that was meted out by Hitler and the Nazis to the Jews is a matter that far transcends a question of mere domestic jurisdiction? I am certain that if there should arise, which God forbid, anything like this persecution in other lands that the new organisation will take note of it and I believe take action."¹⁶¹ The proposed Human Rights Commission was the responsibility of ECOSOC.

¹⁵⁸ "Labour Case For Socialism." Times, 6 June 1945, p. 2. The Times Digital Archive. Accessed 22 Sept. 2020 .

¹⁵⁹ "Spirit of the Age" Times, 27 July 1945, p. 4. The Times Digital Archive. Accessed 22 Sept. 2020 .

¹⁶⁰ Speech, October 10, 1945, Attlee and Jenkins, *Purpose and Policy*, 129.

¹⁶¹ Speech by Attlee, HC Deb 22 August 1945 5s, vol 413, col 663-4. See also Attlee's speech to the opening session of the General Assembly in which he made the same point about the Charter's concern with "fundamental human rights" and claimed "the freedom of the individual in the State as

Attlee also linked ECOSOC to the idea of social justice, a concept he regularly referred to in both domestic and international contexts.¹⁶² In perhaps his most explicit statement of the significance of ECOSOC he told the opening session of the General Assembly in January 1946: "Without social justice and security, there is no real foundation for peace for it is among the socially disinherited and those who have nothing to lose, that the gangster and the aggressor recruit their supporters. Important as is the work of the Security Council, no less vital is to make the Economic and Social Council an effective international instrument. A police force is necessary for part of the civilised community, but the greater the social security and the contentment of the population, the less important is the police force."¹⁶³ This not only emphasised the significance of ECOSOC but the wider social and economic role of the UN it embodied.

These were public pronouncements and due caution should be applied when interpreting politicians' statements, especially during an election campaign. The next two chapters test whether this was only political rhetoric by examining policymakers' actions in the early years of the UN. The next chapter demonstrates that UK policymakers followed through on their public statements by examining the policy pursued in ECOSOC during the first years of its existence. The following chapter examines ministerial assessments of the role and performance of the UN in its wider economic and social responsibilities in its early years.

an essential complement to the freedom of the State in the world community of nations." Attlee speech, January 10, 1946, Attlee and Jenkins, 132.

¹⁶² : "...social justice and the best possible standards of life are essential factors in promoting and maintaining the peace of the world...", Attlee speech to General Assembly, January 10, 1946, Attlee and Jenkins, 132.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

5 Chapter Five: Policy in Practice: ECOSOC and the UN System 1945-47

“We want to endorse the agreements with the specialised agencies which the Economic and Social Council has proposed. But we shall want also progressively to weld those bodies into a single system of United Nations institutions...[We] declare again the basic principle of international economic interdependence, on which so much of the Charter has been based. We have set up a great system of international economic institutions to concert a long term policy of cooperation...We have agreed, by the Charter, that our common welfare is the test by which economic policy must be tried...Our job now is to make this great new system work.”¹

Speech by Philip Noel-Baker to the 37th Plenary Session of the General Assembly, October 25, 1946

The argument that UK policymakers favoured a weak ECOSOC and independent agencies (Rosenthal, 2005; al-Huq, 1995; Singer, 1995; Kennedy, 2006; Pallavi Roy, 2016) suggests British policy in the early years of the UN would encourage the autonomy of Agencies over the co-ordinating role of ECOSOC.² This chapter argues that, during what one contemporary observer called “the hopeful one-world period” of 1945-47, the UK instead followed through on their stated policy to support a strong coordinating ECOSOC at the heart of an integrated UN System.³

UK policy toward ECOSOC and the specialised Agencies in these early years of the UN has been neglected in the literature. Douglas (2004) mentions ECOSOC just twice, only once relating to post 1945, and Williams (2007) not at all. Where it is discussed,

¹ Record of 37th Plenary Session of the General Assembly, October 25, 1946, UN doc A/PV.37.

² Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations: An Issues Paper*, 15 : Occasional papers-New York:38; Rosenthal, ‘Economic and Social Council’; Haq, ‘An Economic Security Council’, 22; Singer, ‘Bretton Woods and the UN System’; Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 115–17.

³ Sharp, ‘The Specialized Agencies and the United Nations’, 1948, 252.

Goodwin (1957) and H.G. Nicholas (1975) argue that the UK's strategy had always been for a loose functional structure of autonomous agencies loosely coordinated and operating independently.⁴ Rosenthal (2005), Kennedy (2006) and Roy (2016) go further and accuse the UK government of deliberately undermining ECOSOC from the outset in favour of the Specialised Agencies because the latter were more malleable, especially those such as the Bank and Fund in which weighted voting gave the UK greater control than in the independent ECOSOC.⁵

They argue not from archival evidence but read back from the later autonomy of the Agencies, overlooking the different expectations of the early years of the UN and assuming UK policy mirrored that of America. Toye and Toye (2004, 2006) acknowledge the significance of ECOSOC as a forum for debate, and the UK's use of the UN to counter US pressure for free trade, but they overlook UK support for ECOSOC's coordinating role.⁶ In their work on ITO and GATT, Zeiler (1999), Toye (2003) and McKenzie (2018, 2020) treat ECOSOC as irrelevant.⁷

This chapter first demonstrates the continuity of policymaker support for a strong ECOSOC and defines what policymakers meant when they referred to ECOSOC's role as 'coordinator'. It then challenges the arguments of Rosenthal and Kennedy by showing firstly how British policy in 1945-47 was to place new UN bodies under the direct control of ECOSOC and the General Assembly rather than as independent Specialised Agencies; and secondly that the UK favoured agreements between the

⁴ Goodwin, *Britain and the United Nations*, 37–39, 312–14; Nicholas, *The United Nations as a Political Institution*, 5–6; The history of ECOSOC itself has also been neglected, Speich Chasse, 'Technical Internationalism and Economic Development at the Founding Moment of the UN System', 25.

⁵ Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations: An Issues Paper*, 15 : Occasional papers-New York:9; Rosenthal (2018) argues the framers of the Charter intended a 'decentralised' relationship, which was not the intention of UK policymakers, Rosenthal, 'Economic and Social Council', 168; Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 115–17; Roy, 'Economic Growth, the UN and the Global South', 1284–85.

⁶ Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*; Toye and Toye, 'How the UN Moved From Full Employment to Economic Development', 21; see also Toye, *Labour Party and the Planned Economy*, chap. 7.

⁷ Zeiler, *Free Trade, Free World*; Toye, 'Developing Multilateralism'; Toye, 'The Attlee Government, the Imperial Preference System and the Creation of the Gatt'; McKenzie, 'Peace, Prosperity and Planning Postwar Trade, 1942–1948'; McKenzie, *GATT and Global Order in the Postwar Era*.

UN and the Agencies that protected ECOSOC's coordinating role. When the IBRD and IMF resisted reaching such agreements, the UK supported the position of ECOSOC over the Agencies. It then uses the example of full employment to show that, in policy debates, the British expected ECOSOC to coordinate policy, and again supported ECOSOC over Agency autonomy. In 1945-47, in debates between autonomous Agencies and a centralised UN System, UK policymakers consistently took the side of the UN and ECOSOC.

The focus is on ECOSOC's role in economic affairs. This is not to suggest ECOSOC's social responsibilities were not significant, but ECOSOC's economic agenda was important domestically for the UK government, especially full employment and balance of payments issues, which gave these issues added saliency. It is further evidence that, for UK policymakers, the UN was not simply about political or military security but was expected to contribute to the delivery of domestic economic and social goals.

5.1 Ministers Reaffirm Support for Centralised UN System

After Labour took office in July 1945 policymakers continued to support a centralised UN System coordinated by ECOSOC. This was reaffirmed by Ministers in November 1945. This challenges claims that the UK government encouraged a loose system with weaker central coordination of autonomous specialised Agencies. Officials in the Cabinet Office, now led by Meade, remained the strongest supporters of an active ECOSOC. Although officials in the Treasury and Bank of England sympathised with Agencies seeking more independence from the UN, they accepted that UK policy favoured a centralised UN System coordinated by ECOSOC.

Support for a strong ECOSOC was strengthened in August 1945 with Attlee's appointment of Philip Noel-Baker as Minister of State at the Foreign Office with special responsibility for the UN. Noel-Baker was a veteran internationalist who had

worked at Geneva in the 1920's and held strong liberal internationalist views.⁸ He was the most ardent supporter of the UN amongst senior Labour Party figures. His appointment was welcomed by internationalists and demonstrated Government support for a strong UN and ECOSOC.⁹ Bullock (1983) suggests Noel-Baker had little influence on policy, but while that may be true for general policy his influence over UK policy in the UN was considerable.¹⁰ He regularly attended Cabinet, especially when UN matters were discussed. A combination of Noel-Baker's energy and enthusiasm for the UN, the respect in which he was held for his internationalism and Bevin's focus on other aspects of policy gave Noel-Baker considerable latitude.

In November 1945 the Cabinet reconfirmed ECOSOC's responsibility to coordinate the UN System for economic and social issues. When the Ministry of Labour suggested a larger role for the ILO in the coordination of policy on full employment Ministers concluded this was "one of the primary duties" of ECOSOC.¹¹ Ministers were concerned that creating too many international bodies may make the UN inefficient and they instructed Noel-Baker to ensure effective coordination of Agencies through ECOSOC to prevent duplication and policy confusion.¹² As we'll see in the next chapter, Ministers became frustrated with ECOSOC's slow progress and perceived inefficiencies during 1945-47 but they remained supportive of a strong and active ECOSOC, suggesting Rosenthal and Kennedy's contention that the British opposed ECOSOC's coordinating role are incorrect.

Noel-Baker was supported on ECOSOC by James Meade's Economic Section of the Cabinet Office, which continued to regard the economic and social role of the UN as central and ECOSOC as the key coordinating body for a planned international

⁸ Whittaker, *Fighter for Peace*; Lloyd, 'Philip Noel-Baker and Peace through Law'.

⁹ The major disappointment with Noel-Baker's appointment for supporters of the UN was that it was not a Cabinet role. Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*, 145.

¹⁰ Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.3, Foreign Secretary, 1945-1951*, 73-74.

¹¹ Cabinet paper by Isaacs, October 20, 1945, CAB 129/3/38 CP(45)238; Cabinet meeting, November 6, 1945, CAB 128/1/32 CM(45)47; for resistance to attempts by the ILO leadership to claim a larger role see Meade diary entry, November 3, 1945 Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*.

¹² Cabinet Meeting November 6, 1945, CAB 128/2/2 CM(45)49, CAB 195/3/67; Cabinet meeting November 8, 1945, CAB 128/2/4 CM(45)51.

economy, especially in support of full employment. Meade was also heavily involved in creating a centralised domestic planning capability in the peace-time British state, working with Herbert Morrison within the Labour Government to create what Meade termed 'liberal-socialism', linking domestic and international management of the economy.¹³ Marcus Fleming, who now worked directly for Meade, remained an advocate of a strong ECOSOC and was also heavily involved in British policy toward ECOSOC for the early years of its existence.¹⁴ The Foreign Office, under immense pressure of work, especially during the Preparatory Commission and early UN meetings, left much of the detailed work on economic and social issues to Meade and Fleming.¹⁵

Ministers' internationalism ran ahead of the views of some of their officials. Some departmental officials, especially in the Treasury, preferred more autonomous Agencies particularly in their own departmental fields, but they acknowledged the preference of Ministers for a strong centralised UN System. The Board of Trade were concerned at overlaps of responsibilities of the proposed ITO with ECOSOC but supported a coordinated approach to international economic management. Other Ministries which regularly argued for more autonomy for Agencies in their functional area included Food (FAO), Health (WHO), Education (UNESCO) and Civil Aviation (ICAO). After Keynes' death in April 1946 the Treasury, and the Bank of England, were sympathetic to attempts by the IBRD and IMF to assert their independence. However, even the Treasury accepted that "it is the policy of HMG to build up the position of the Council and make it a body with real influence and activities."¹⁶

¹³ For the post-war role of the Economic Section during Meade's tenure as Director in 1945-47 see Cairncross and Watts, *The Economic Section 1939-61*, chap. 8; Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*.

¹⁴ Cairncross and Watts, *The Economic Section 1939-61*, 287.

¹⁵ For Fleming's input see Webster diary, entry September 11, 1945, vol 14, LSE Archives; for Webster's complaints that neither the Foreign Office, nor Ministers other than Noel-Baker, had time for the Preparatory Commission see Webster Diary, December 16, 1945, vol 15, LSE Archives. Webster was retained as adviser to Noel-Baker until April 1946.

¹⁶ Draft Treasury paper for IOC on the relationship of the Bank and Fund with ECOSOC, June 27, 1946, FO371/59746 UN641/57/78.

This policy was applied at the London Preparatory Commission¹⁷ and early meetings of the General Assembly and ECOSOC. UK delegates led arguments for a strong ECOSOC and a centralised UN System and a British paper formed the basis for discussion in the Preparatory Commission Executive Committee.¹⁸ At the first meeting of the ECOSOC Council in January 1946 Noel-Baker argued for a level of central control within the UN System analogous to a state: "We have to help to create, and ourselves to create, a machine which will be the international equivalent in a vast domain of the administrative and legislative organs which national States possess...We shall often find ourselves, I hope, led to discard the old ideas and the old practices of national sovereignty." Using full employment as an example, he argued many bodies would need to play their role, naming the ILO, FAO, IBRD, IMF, the proposed ITO, the Economic and Employment Commission and a Statistical Commission. ECOSOC's task "is to ensure that they act together."¹⁹ It provoked other delegations to complain the UK had "an excessively centralist view of the relationships" between ECOSOC and the Agencies.²⁰

5.2 The Meaning of 'Co-ordination'

UK policymakers described ECOSOC's role as 'coordination' of the economic and social responsibilities of the specialised Agencies and the UN System. However, the

¹⁷ The work of the London UN Preparatory Commission was in two parts. Firstly an Executive Committee of 14 states, which began work on August 16, 1945, headed by Jebb as its Executive Secretary; followed by a full Commission of all members states, which convened from November 1945 to January 1946. Its Report provided the basis for the practical operation of the new organisation. For the Report see UK Parliament, 'Cmd 6734, Preparatory Commission Report Commentary'. There is no systematic account of the Preparatory Commission, but see Luard, *A History of the United Nations, Vol 1*, 69–72.

¹⁸ UK Parliament, 'Cmd 6734, Preparatory Commission Report Commentary', para 25, p7; Meade Cabinet diary, entry August 26, 1945 Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 120–21; Fleming's original paper was titled 'Some Points Affecting the Economic and Social Council and the Relations with Specialised Agencies. Note by the Economic Section.' This was redrafted as 'Commissions of the Economic and Social Council, Draft Memorandum for Submission by HMG to Sub-Committee 3', September 4, 1945. T236/428. See also Webster diary, entry September 1, 1945, vol 14, LSE Archives.

¹⁹ First meeting of ECOSOC, January 23, 1946, Official Journal record, pp16-17; Economic and Social Council official records, 1st year, 1st session, from the 1st meeting (23 January 1946) to the 14th meeting (18 February 1946), E/1st sess./PV.1-14; Noel-Baker papers, NBKR 4/719, Churchill Archives.

²⁰ Hume Wrong to Secretary of State for External Affairs, January 31, 1946, Documents on Canadian External Relations, Volume #12 - 520. CHAPTER VIII, UNITED NATIONS, PART 4, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL, 520, DEA/5475-B-40. .

term 'coordination' is capable of varied interpretation, and it is important to be clear what UK policymakers understood by the term in relation to ECOSOC. The Charter was unclear on ECOSOC's powers. The Specialised Agencies were to be "brought into relationship with the United Nations" (Articles 57 and 63), but this phrase was not defined.²¹ As we saw in the previous chapter, UK policymakers assumed ECOSOC would have strong influence over the Agencies, even if it lacked directing powers, but it was not to be an Economic Security Council, analogous to the Security Council in its own sphere. The Agencies would not be subordinate to ECOSOC and the relationship between the Council and the Agencies was to be one of equals.²² In this sense, it was to act as a forum for policy coordination in an international policy sphere without formal sovereign authority, but it was not itself the seat of that authority.

Policymakers regarded the Council as a facilitator of co-operation rather than providing formal direction. As A.D.K. Owen advised Bevin before UNCIO, ECOSOC's intended role was for coordination through 'consultation' and 'recommendation' rather than direction.²³ It was expected to function as a clearing house for ideas and information, though with the expectation that Agencies and governments would follow policy recommendations arising from the consultation process. As Meade expressed it, ECOSOC was to be a "central clearing-house for general principles."²⁴ A UK brief of January 1947 on full employment defined ECOSOC's role: "The general conception is that the Council should be responsible for making or sponsoring

²¹ The phrase emerged well before San Francisco and appeared in both the UK and US proposals for Dumbarton Oaks, which suggests it emerged in a wider discourse. War Cabinet paper April 22, 1944, WP(44)220 CAB 66/49/20, Memo D, para 2a; US Tentative Proposals, section VIII, para A.2, US Department of State, *FRUS 1944, Vol I*, 663.

²² In summer 1947 when the ILO submitted a report requested by ECOSOC on Freedom of Association and Trade Union Rights, UK officials clarified that this was not for review as that would imply the Agencies had a subordinate role to ECOSOC. They were clear that this was not the case. IOC(47)167, para 13, CAB 134/384; IOC(47)20th meeting, August 7, 1947, CAB 134/379; Simma et al., *The Charter of the United Nations: A Commentary*, 1:1697–98.

²³ Owen response to letter from Bevin to Eden, March 12, 1945, FO371/50682 U1719/12/70. Owen worked in the FO in March 1945.

²⁴ Letter Meade to Waley. June 14, 1946, FO371/59746 UN627/57/78; see also meeting at the Treasury, June 11, 1946 in T230/1168; Meade diary, entry June 30, 1946, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 288–91.

arrangements for an international exchange of information regarding policies and problems and consultation with a view to concerted action on the part of government and inter-governmental organisations in the field of employment policies."²⁵

However, ECOSOC was expected to play a vital role in the management of the international economy through undertaking "measures to secure appropriate concerted action on the part of the various international agencies concerned." These were left largely unspecified, but the UK looked to ECOSOC to agree "the allocation of functions between international bodies", for instance in respect of economic development.²⁶ It was intended to be far more than a talking shop. In June 1946 officials described it as "a body for co-ordination of activities and policy" and "not a forum for general discussions".²⁷ Cadogan described ECOSOC as not only a "forum of international opinion" but also "an effective piece of technical and organising machinery in the field of economic and social administration".²⁸ For policymakers who valued planning and expert multilateral management of international issues, ECOSOC was central to the vision of an integrated UN System.

Although the UK did not have privileged voting rights, either weighted voting or a veto, it was a forum in which policy debates could be mediated and consensus reached overseen by the major powers. In 1949 in the debate on the World Economic Survey, circulated to ECOSOC by the Secretariat, Cadogan spoke of "a new evolution of international parliamentary procedure", which enabled critical discussion of key issues.²⁹ ECOSOC could act as a global agora for the agreement of policy. This permitted a degree of control in the setting of the international economic policy agenda.

²⁵ Draft Brief for the UK Representative on the Economic and Employment Commission, January 13, 1947, IOC(47)10 CAB 134/380, pp11-12.

²⁶ *Ibid*, 8.

²⁷ 'Second Session of the Economic and Social Council', brief for McNeil, June 15, 1946, IOC(46)6 CAB 134/377, para 32.

²⁸ Cadogan to Bevin, May 12, 1948, FO371/72676 UN1033/32/78.

²⁹ Cadogan to Bevin, May 31, 1949 *DBPO Ser 1, Vol VII*.

5.3 Application of Policy

5.3.1 Opposition to Specialised Agencies

The argument of Rosenthal (2005), Kennedy (2006), and Goodwin (1957) that the UK wanted independent Agencies and a weak ECOSOC is challenged by UK opposition to the creation of new Specialised Agencies in 1945-47. This has not been recognised in the literature. The UK argued that new intergovernmental bodies should instead be established directly as commissions of ECOSOC or subsidiary organs of the General Assembly under Article 22 of the Charter. They feared Specialised Agencies would be too independent from the UN System and that the UN “ought instead to develop international cooperation in economic and social fields by developing appropriate integrated machinery directly under the Economic and Social Council.”³⁰ This policy emerged during the formation of new international bodies in the UN System in 1945-47.

The UK argued the case in the Preparatory Commission and during the establishment of UNESCO,³¹ WHO,³² ITO³³ and the IRO³⁴ through 1945-46. On each occasion they

³⁰ This surprised the Americans. Stevenson (Acting US Prep Comm Rep) to Byrnes, November 1, 1945, US Department of State, *FRUS, 1945, Vol I*, 1469 (doc 342).

³¹ Webster diary, November 8, 1945. Policymakers favoured a Commission but felt it was too late to oppose a Specialised Agency. Webster diary, October 30, 1945, vol 15, LSE Archives. State Department to UK Embassy, November 9, 1945, US Department of State, 1519–20, and Benton to Byrnes, *ibid*, 1527. Addison to Commonwealth Government [Australia], October 20, 1945, DFAT, vol 8, doc 328. The Australians acknowledged the British were 'trying to strengthen the UNO' and supported the UK approach. Hasluck to Department of Foreign Affairs, October 29, 1945, DFAT vol 8, doc 351.

³² Addison, Dominions Secretary, to Australian Government, February 23, 1946, DFAT, vol 9, 1946, doc 108. The Australians had suggested the main relationship should be with the Assembly. Noel-Baker argued for an Assembly resolution at the second ECOSOC Council meeting, June 1946, see paper June 15, 1946, IOC(46)6 CAB 134/377.

³³ The US wanted the ITO Preparatory Conference under UN auspices but it was the British who proposed ECOSOC, rather than the Assembly. Meade diary, December 2, 1945, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 180; UK delegation paper ACU(46)34, January 19, 1946, FO371/ 57119 U947/33/70. See also memo by Escott Reid, December 28, 1945, in Reid, *On Duty*, 129.

³⁴ See Bevin to Byrnes, Jan 8, 1946, Yasamee et al., *DBPO, Ser. 1, Vol. 7*, doc 3; Bevin to Inverchapel, May 29, 1946, *ibid*, doc 48. For cost issues see Dalton to Noel-Baker, May 6, 1946, saying establishing the IRO outside the UN “is a blow”, and Dalton to Noel-Baker, May 22, 1946, both FO371/52882 WR1483/1337/48. Makins (Washington) to Tyler Wood, State Department, May 20, 1946 US Department of State, *FRUS, 1946, Vol V* Note by British Embassy Washington to State Department, May 13, 1946, *ibid*, doc 104, 158-163; see also note of meetings of McNeil, Rendel and Makins with State Department, June 10/11, 1946, FO371/57714 WR1755/6/48.

failed, primarily due to American opposition, who insisted on the creation of Agencies through intergovernmental treaty to meet constitutional requirements for Senate ratification of new commitments, and Russian reluctance to increase the economic and social role of the UN.³⁵ Noel-Baker was the most prominent supporter of this policy, but it was confirmed by Cabinet,³⁶ and Morrison, Bevin, and Hector McNeill (Foreign Office Minister of State from October 1946) all argued the same case.³⁷ They committed to these positions publicly and expended political capital arguing a losing case, demonstrating their preference for a centralised UN System and a strong coordinating ECOSOC.

5.3.2 Bringing Agencies into Relationship with the UN: ECOSOC Agreements

The argument the UK favoured a loose system is also contradicted by British insistence that Agencies quickly sign agreements “bringing the Agencies into relationship with the UN”, as required in the Charter (Articles 57 and 63), that recognised ECOSOC’s coordinating role. Although the Charter is ambiguous - Article 57 says agreements “shall” be concluded while Article 63 says they “may” - the Preparatory Commission report, prompted by the British, regarded them as an obligation.³⁸ As a Cabinet paper of March 1947 expressed it, the Charter “does not simply permit or encourage these agreements, it enjoins them.”³⁹ Agreements were to be between the UN and the Agencies but negotiated on behalf of the UN by ECOSOC, which established a negotiating committee for the purpose at its first meeting in February 1946.

³⁵ The British proposal for UNESCO to be created by a resolution of the General Assembly received just 7 votes. US Department of State, *FRUS, 1945, Vol I*, 1523; Cabinet paper by Wilkinson, November 27, 1945, CAB 129/5/7 CP(45)307.

³⁶ For IRO Noel-Baker proposed a body “brought within the framework of the United Nations Organisation and administered as part of that body’s normal work.” Agreed by Cabinet Committee, October 3, 1945, minute by McKillop, April 30, 1946, FO371/57706 WR1156/6/48; January 8, 1946, Bevin to Byrnes, Yasamee et al., *DBPO, Ser. 1, Vol. 7*, doc 3; tel no 4483 Bevin to Halifax, May 10, 1946, *ibid*, doc 40.

³⁷ For Morrison see Cabinet Meeting, November 6, 1945, verbatim record in CAB 195/3/67; for Bevin see Bevin to Byrnes, January 8, 1946, Yasamee et al., doc 3; for McNeill, Meade diary, December 10, 1945, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 180.

³⁸ Simma et al., *The Charter of the United Nations: A Commentary*, 1:1627–28; *Report of the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations*, 40.

³⁹ Cabinet paper, ‘Report of Working Party on International Organisations’, March 28, 1947, CAB 129/18/14 CP(47)114, Report C, para 6(iii).

The British wanted rapid conclusion of agreements, beginning with the FAO, ILO, World Bank, and IMF.⁴⁰ They favoured terms that tied Agencies closely to the UN, recognised ECOSOC's "primary responsibility for co-ordinating the policies and activities of the specialised agencies", contained commitments to consolidated budgets and an international civil service, and to locating Agencies together at the main UN headquarters to facilitate coordination. Agencies were also expected to commit that "Recommendations of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council should receive immediate attention".⁴¹

During 1946 ECOSOC quickly concluded satisfactory agreements with FAO, ILO, and UNESCO, and, with more difficulty, the PCAO, but the Bank and Fund proved more difficult. Singer (1995), Kennedy (2006) and Wilenski (1993), arguing back from the subsequent evolution of their relationship with the UN and their greater separation from the rest of the UN System, suggest the IMF and IBRD were deliberately constructed by the founders of the UN to be separate from the rest of the UN System and outside the coordinating influence of ECOSOC.⁴² However, as we saw in Chapter Four, at Bretton Woods they were always assumed to be part of the UN System. It was the Bank and the Fund who insisted on their independence, which was opposed by the British. The Bank especially argued they were unlike other Agencies as they operated in a commercial environment and objected to requirements to submit budgets to the UN and to share information, which they

⁴⁰ Paper 'Committee on Relationships with Specialised Agencies', January 1946, drafted by Gore-Booth, ACU(46)22, copy in Noel-Baker papers, NBKR 4/770, Churchill Archives. See also paper 'Specialised Agencies', January 19, 1946, ACU(46)32, *ibid*; Preparatory Commission of the United Nations, 'Report of the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations', 40.

⁴¹ Paper on coordination of Specialised Agencies for ministerial approval, January 8, 1946, ACU(46)12, copy in Noel-Baker papers, NBKR 4/770.

⁴² Singer, 'Bretton Woods and the UN System'; Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 115–17; Wilenski, 'The Structure of the UN in the Post-Cold War Period', 459–60; See also Roy, 'Economic Growth, the UN and the Global South', 1287.

argued was commercially sensitive.⁴³ The Bank encouraged the Fund to take a similar position.⁴⁴

Far from welcoming these efforts at independence, as Rosenthal suggests, the UK opposed them. The Foreign Office defended ECOSOC's coordinating role.⁴⁵ The Treasury and the Bank of England, now deprived of Keynes' influence, were more sympathetic to the Bank's arguments, provoking scathing criticism from Meade, but even though they regarded the Agreements as "foolish" the Treasury accepted they were necessary under the terms of the Charter and acknowledged it was Government policy to strengthen the role of ECOSOC.⁴⁶ Under pressure from Noel-Baker and other Ministers the Treasury instructed the UK Executive Directors of the Bank and Fund to support formal agreements because the UK was publicly committed to ECOSOC's role "even if in the cold light of day they seem to you and to us rather foolish provisions."⁴⁷

When, in September 1946, Eugene Meyer (President of the IBRD) and Camille Gutt (Managing Director of the IMF) sent coordinated letters to Secretary-General Trygve Lie declaring it premature to conclude formal agreements with the UN, while

⁴³ Mason and Asher, *The World Bank since Bretton Woods*, 53–59; Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 25. Staples is supportive of the Bank's insistence of independence from the UN, which she regards as 'political' while the Bank sought independent internationalism.

⁴⁴ Horsefield, *The International Monetary Fund. 1945 - 1965 Vol. 1*, 145–47.

⁴⁵ Hall-Patch (FO) to Waley, June 14, 1946, FO371/59746 UN627/57/78.

⁴⁶ Meade diary, entry June 30, 1946, Meade Collected Papers Vol IV, 288–90; see also meeting June 11, 1946, with Meade, Waley, Cobbold of the Bank of England, Hall Patch and George Bolton, the UK Executive Director at the Fund, T230/1168; and Fleming to Gore-Booth, August 28, 1946, FO371/59747 UN2047/57/78; Treasury paper on relationship of the Bank and Fund with ECOSOC, June 27, 1946, FO371/59746 UN641/57/78; meeting between FO and Treasury, June 17, 1946, at which Bolton (Fund) was present, FO371/59746 UN627/57/78; Alexander (UK UN delegation) to Gore-Booth, August 16, 1946, confirming Grigg agreed with Meyer, FO371/59747 UN2234/57/78; June 13, 1946, IOC(46)1st meeting, CAB 134/277; draft Treasury tel to Washington, June 13, 1946, as brief for UK Bank and Fund representatives. FO371/59746 UN627/57/78. This draft was not sent because ECOSOC postponed consideration of the Bank and Fund agreements until the 3rd session in September 1946, but it represented the Treasury view. Treasury paper on relationship of the Bank and Fund with ECOSOC, June 27, 1946, FO371/59746 UN641/57/78.

⁴⁷ Waley to Grigg, August 10, 1946, FO371/59746 UN1354/57/78.

expressing general intentions to collaborate, the British were alarmed.⁴⁸ Dalton and Noel-Baker were reluctant to push the issue to the point of rupture, though, especially since the Americans supported the Bank. They accepted a delay, on the basis the letters from Meyer and Gutt to Secretary-General Lie promised informal cooperation.⁴⁹ The delay was agreed at the ECOSOC Council's 3rd meeting in September 1946, on the understanding that attempts would be made to conclude the agreements in time for ratification at the 1947 General Assembly.⁵⁰ The British expected cooperation to continue until agreements were concluded the following year as UK policymakers still sought to limit the autonomy of the IBRD and Fund rather than encourage their separation from the UN System. Acceptance of the delay did not mean the British supported autonomy for the Bank and Fund.

When agreements for the Bank and Fund were finally reached and ratified by the Assembly in November 1947 UK officials were highly critical of the degree of independence they implied from the UN. When the draft agreements were circulated in summer 1947 the Ministry of Labour suggested it was better to have no agreement and acknowledge their separation from the UN than one that "greatly over-emphasised the Bank's independence" and which crystallised "a situation which was fundamentally unsatisfactory." For instance, the Bank wished to prevent other bodies from proposing loans and UK officials were concerned this would prevent ECOSOC from making recommendations to the Bank relating to "the financial implementation of a full employment policy".⁵¹ Despite British misgivings, US support meant the final agreement with the Bank obliged the UN to refrain from

⁴⁸ Note from UN Secretariat to ECOSOC Negotiating Committee, September 18, 1946, Doc E/CT.1/1, copy in NBKR 4/768, Churchill Archives; Cadogan to FO, October 5, 1946, FO371/59748 UN2600/57/78.

⁴⁹ Meeting between Dalton and Noel-Baker; minute by Gore-Booth, September 6, 1946; minute by Noel-Baker, September 11, 1946, all in Noel-Baker Papers, NBKR 4/751; see also in FO371/59746 UN1888/57/78; Phillips to Gore-Booth, September 8, 1946, FO371/59746 UN1931/57/78. UK policymakers were consulted on drafts of the Meyer and Gutt letters before they were sent.

⁵⁰ See ECOSOC Report to General Assembly, UN document Doc A/125, pp46-7; Report on Third Session, paper by HM Phillips, October 1946, section 3(c), Noel-Baker papers NBKR 4/115. .

⁵¹ IOC(47)20th meeting, August 7, 1947, CAB 134/379; Paper on Relationship Agreements between the Bank and Fund and the UN, August 1947, IOC(47)168 CAB 134/384.

making recommendations to the Bank with respect to loans.⁵² British acceptance of the final agreement was reluctant. Throughout the negotiation of the Agreements the British opposed Agency attempts at independence, rather than encourage it. At the end of 1947 UK policymakers still viewed the IBRD and IMF as integral components of an integrated UN System, coordinated through ECOSOC, and UK policymakers were disappointed the agreement did not reflect this relationship.

5.3.3 ECOSOC and Policy Coordination: the UN System, Bretton Woods, and Full Employment

For UK policymakers the purpose of ECOSOC as a coordinating centre was to make policy more effective through alignment across member states and Agencies. It enabled planning without a sovereign planning body. As ECOSOC was not a sovereign decision-making body it required the cooperation of the actors (primarily states and Agencies) to play this coordinating role. Policymaker fears that independent Agencies would undermine policy coordination and challenge the planned management of the world economy was evident in arguments over international responsibilities for full employment.

UK policymakers looked to the UN to help deliver the domestic political priority of full employment and had helped insert a commitment to full employment into the Charter (Article 55, see Chapter Four). Full employment was a major preoccupation for ECOSOC during its early years, building on the work of the League and the lessons learned from the 1930s, and the British played a significant role in putting it at the top of ECOSOC's agenda.⁵³ For instance, although the literature on the ITO has concentrated on negotiations on tariffs and trade and the formation of GATT, the conference to create the ITO, convened by ECOSOC, was called the conference on Trade *and Employment* after pressure from smaller states, supported by the UK.⁵⁴

⁵² Article IV (3) of the Agreement, UN doc A/P.V.115; 'General Assembly', 70, 123, 198–201.

⁵³ Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*; Toye and Toye, 'How the UN Moved From Full Employment to Economic Development'.

⁵⁴ Emphasis added. Zeiler, *Free Trade, Free World*; Toye, 'Developing Multilateralism'; Toye, 'The Attlee Government, the Imperial Preference System and the Creation of the Gatt'.

ECOSOC initiated work on full employment, including the establishment of an Economic and Employment Commission at its first session, and in 1948 commissioned a questionnaire on full employment, the results of which were presented to the 9th session of the ECOSOC Council in July 1949.⁵⁵ It then commissioned a further study on possible action to maintain international demand and full employment which reported at the end of 1949.⁵⁶

The UK argued that effective international action on full employment required policy coordination across multiple Agencies, which was the responsibility of ECOSOC as the UN's coordinating body. In November 1945 the Labour Government reaffirmed the 1944 ILO Philadelphia Declaration, including the commitment to full employment, and Ministers agreed this should be a "primary duty" of ECOSOC, which should coordinate the activities of other Agencies in this respect.⁵⁷ Keynes also made the case for ECOSOC's coordinating role at Savannah in March 1946 when he argued the Fund and Bank should be located in New York to facilitate coordination with ECOSOC.⁵⁸ In June 1946 Meade, working on a request from Morrison for plans to counter a world slump, circulated a paper jointly drafted with Fleming which continued to argue that full employment required maintaining total international demand. The Bank and Fund had a central role to play in this, but policy should be coordinated with other Agencies through ECOSOC.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ 'National and International action to achieve or maintain full employment and economic stability: a report prepared by the Secretariat of the United Nations', July 7, 1949, UN Archive doc E/1378.

⁵⁶ December 1949, National and international measures for full employment: report by a group of experts appointed by the Secretary-General. UN doc E/1584. The primary author of the report was the Anglo-Hungarian economist Nicholas Kaldor, who worked in the UN ECE in the late 1940s; Toye and Toye, 'How the UN Moved From Full Employment to Economic Development', 21; Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*.

⁵⁷ Cabinet paper by Minister of Labour, 'ILO', October 20, 1945, CAB 129/3/38 CP(45)238; Cabinet meeting, November 6, 1945, CAB 128/1/32 CM(45)47. Meade fought an ongoing battle with both the Ministry of Labour and the ILO leadership to ensure ECOSOC was the coordinating body for economic policy and not the ILO. Meade diary, November 3, 1945, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 166–67.

⁵⁸ Keynes, summary of Savannah Conference, March 29, 1946, Keynes, Johnson, and Moggridge, *Collected Writings Volume 26*, 220–38; Dormael, *Bretton Woods*, 295–302; Steil, *The Battle of Bretton Woods*, 244; Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 466.

⁵⁹ Meade diary, entry June 7, 1946, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 277–79.

In October 1946 the Cabinet again recommitted to international action for full employment, and to ECOSOC's coordinating role, when it agreed UK employment policy in advance of the ITO Preparatory Conference that opened later that month. A Cabinet paper drafted by Meade and circulated jointly by the Treasury, Board of Trade and Economic Section argued that full employment was an international responsibility requiring the cooperation of multiple agencies, including the Bank and Fund, and that "the most essential feature of international employment policy" is cooperation "under the sponsorship of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations Organisation." Full employment remained a national state responsibility, but international coordination was necessary to maintain the "high and stable demand" on which full employment depended. The shadow of the 1930's hung over UK policy in fears of another world-wide depression, but this could be averted through effective cooperation. This was agreed by the Cabinet on October 3, 1946.⁶⁰

This was regarded not as an idealist project of world government but a practical way to manage the interdependent international economy, under the direction of technocratic experts. Coordinated international action was necessary to achieve domestic goals. Effective planning was both necessary and possible, and the UK state bore special responsibility as a socialist exemplar. As the September 1946 Cabinet paper argued, "this country has an important role to play in showing that a free society can engage in sufficient economic planning to prevent serious economic depressions."⁶¹ This was not a liberal free trade position. As Richard Toye (2000, 2003) has argued, the British and American visions for the post-war economic system were at odds, with the British Labour government sceptical of free markets and favouring more planned economies.⁶² The British explicitly rejected the

⁶⁰ Cabinet paper, International Employment Policy, September 30, 1946, CAB 129/13/14 CP (46) 364; Cabinet meeting, October 3, 1946, CAB 128/6/22 CM(46)84; Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy*, 146–48.

⁶¹ Cabinet paper by Morrison, 'International Employment Policy', September 30, 1946, CAB 129/13/14 CP (46) 364, para 4.

⁶² Toye, 'The Labour Party's External Economic Policy in the 1940s'; Toye, 'Developing Multilateralism'; Toye, *Labour Party and the Planned Economy*; See also Miller, 'Origins of the GATT: British Resistance to American Multilateralism'.

American contention that full employment could be achieved through free trade. Full employment created increased trade, not the other way around. The proposed policy specifically allowed for quotas, currency depreciation and discriminatory tariffs if economic conditions required, to support the planned maintenance of demand.⁶³ It was not a liberal international order as later understood and ECOSOC was to coordinate governance of the world economy.⁶⁴

Autonomous Agencies implied absence of planning. UK policymakers were alarmed that, in asserting their independence, the Bank and Fund not only rejected ECOSOC's coordinating role but questioned the Agencies' own role in efforts to secure full employment, and even the maintenance of full employment as an international responsibility. The new IBRD President Eugene Meyer, an American financier and proprietor of the Washington Post, believed a close association with the UN would make the Bank "semi-political in its nature" whereas he thought it should operate on a purely commercial basis, funded through New York financial markets which were hostile to the IBRD's original purpose.⁶⁵ James Grigg, the UK's Executive Director at the IBRD, confirmed that Meyer "... is determined that the first Bank ventures shall be entirely sound commercially so as to gain the confidence of the money markets."⁶⁶ Meyer rejected responsibility for demand management, which British Ministers thought essential to maintain full employment, as outside the Bank's remit.

Differences between the UK and US over management structures in the Bank and Fund during 1946 have been extensively covered in the literature but less has been

⁶³ Cabinet paper by Morrison, 'International Employment Policy', September 30, 1946, CAB 129/13/14 CP (46) 364, para 5(ii).

⁶⁴ For the argument that international governance of the world economy was a received wisdom even amongst free marketers, including Hayek, in the 1940s see Slobodian, *Globalists* especially chapter 3.

⁶⁵ The 'semi political' comment was reported by Grigg, meeting of Treasury delegation to ECOSOC, Washington, September 18, 1946. At the same meeting Treasury officials concluded: "New York bankers do not accept that the Bank is necessary to the US interests..." Noel-Baker Papers, NBKR 4/760. Vinson, 'After the Savannah Conference'.

⁶⁶ Alexander (UK UN delegation) to Gore-Booth, August 16, 1946, FO371/59747 UN2234/57/78.

said about the implications for policy coordination.⁶⁷ Staples (2006) argues that Meyer's objective was to make IBRD a genuine international Agency and prevent political interference from national governments in the Bank's 'technical' role.⁶⁸ However, defining full employment as a 'political' rather than 'technical' objective was a retreat from the assumptions of Bretton Woods. James Grigg and George Bolton reported that both the Bank and Fund suffered political infighting between the American New Dealers associated with Bretton Woods, represented by Emilio Collado (IBRD) and Harry Dexter White (IMF), and the New York banking interests, represented by Meyer, who were now dominant.⁶⁹ Meyer's approach was endorsed by Will Clayton (Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs), Fred Vinson (US Treasury Secretary) and the US Administration in summer 1946 and represented a major shift in US policy away from the New Deal inspired priorities of Bretton Woods, a political dynamic recognised by UK policymakers.⁷⁰ The retreat from the assumptions of Bretton Woods amongst US policymakers was emphasised by the removal of both Collado and White in 1947.

Meade especially was concerned the Bank and Fund would not cooperate to agree "a coherent international economic policy". He also saw potential differences of interest between the Fund and the ITO over exchange rate policy which ECOSOC was best placed to mediate.⁷¹ Complaints from the Treasury that the Bank and Fund should not be used to counter world depressions forced Meade to tone down his

⁶⁷ Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 465–68; Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 20–21; Steil, *The Battle of Bretton Woods*; Dormael, *Bretton Woods*, 299; Horsefield, *The International Monetary Fund. 1945 - 1965 Vol. 1*, 122–35; Mason and Asher, *The World Bank since Bretton Woods*, 37–40.

⁶⁸ Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 23–27.

⁶⁹ Bolton "... pointed out the great change which had occurred since the time of the Bretton Woods Conference. At that time the Bretton Woods project was started by the New Deal element in the administration who were trying to destroy the New York financial power...[T]he political scene was changed by the time of Savannah..." Meeting of Treasury Delegation to ECOSOC, September 18, 1946, Noel-Baker Papers, NBKR 4/760.

⁷⁰ Ibid. For the American administration view see article by US Treasury Secretary Vinson, Vinson, 'After the Savannah Conference'; Grigg confirmed Meyer was very suspicious of the American New Dealers in the IBRD, especially Collado and White, Treasury meeting, September 18, 1946, NBKR 4/760; Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy*, 267.

⁷¹ Letter Meade to Waley. June 14, 1946, FO371/59746 UN627/57/78; see also meeting at the Treasury, June 11, 1946 in T230/1168; Meade diary, entry June 30, 1946, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 288–91.

August 1946 paper for Morrison on how to manage a world slump but he insisted that “our major objective [is] to use the international institutions as far as possible to prevent world booms and depressions.”⁷² Meade’s frustration at what he called Grigg and Bolton’s “hysterical...reactionary condemnation” was clear.⁷³

Ministers, whose views were more internationalist than those of the Treasury officials, sided with Meade. Morrison’s cover-note to the September 1946 Cabinet paper on international employment policy explicitly addressed the reservations of the Bank and Fund and Grigg’s contention that the “international monetary machinery” should not be used to stimulate demand to maintain full employment. Morrison, clearly angered at Grigg’s intervention, told the Cabinet: “I feel strongly that we should assert the obligation of the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to co-operate to the fullest extent in making international full employment policy effective...”.⁷⁴ Morrison complained in Cabinet on October 3, 1946 that Grigg had “dangerous views”.⁷⁵ Ministers approved Meade’s ITO brief for international employment, which called for international institutions to take measures to maintain international demand, including buffer stocks for primary products, capital projects in times of “deficient world demand” and increased lending to countries maintaining domestic employment during world depressions.⁷⁶ They agreed it would be “inexpedient” to push the reluctant “infant financial institutions” at the ITO Preparatory Committee given the dangers of rupture, but this was a tactical calculation only and the principle of IMF, IBRD and ITO responsibility, coordinated through ECOSOC and the UN was confirmed.⁷⁷ It was a comprehensive rejection of autonomous Agencies.

The UK pursued this policy at the ITO Preparatory Committee, which convened in October 1946. The delegation circulated a draft ‘Convention on International

⁷² Meade diary, entry August 15, 1946, Meade, 309.

⁷³ Meade diary, entry July 27, 1946, Meade, 302.

⁷⁴ Cabinet paper, ‘International Employment Policy’, CAB 129/13/14 CP(46)364.

⁷⁵ Cabinet meeting, October 3, 1946, verbatim Notebook CAB 195/4/63.

⁷⁶ Cabinet meeting, October 3, 1946, CAB 128/6/22 CM(46)84.

⁷⁷ Ibid; Cabinet paper CAB 129/13/14 CP(46)364, para 6.

Employment Policy' based on the policy agreed by Ministers. It stressed the UN's coordinating role and the responsibility of the specialised Agencies: "International action to promote full employment cannot be the responsibility of any one specialised agency but will call for close co-operation and concerted action, under the general co-ordination of the United Nations, of the specialised agencies concerned with commerce, commodities, restrictive practices, finance, investment and labour, as defined in their basic instruments and as recognised in their agreements with the United Nations."⁷⁸ It called for international action: "first, action of many different kinds by a number of different international specialised Agencies...; and, secondly, some international co-ordinating body which can provide a centre both for the exchange of information about domestic problems and policies for full employment and also for the co-ordination of the activities in this field of the various international Specialised Agencies...The functions assigned to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations clearly indicate it as the appropriate body to perform this second function."⁷⁹ The paper also assumed the use of balance of payment measures to maintain demand and support employment policy. It was a clear statement of the British assumption that ECOSOC would act as the central coordinating body for integrated Specialised Agencies.

This paper was shared in advance with representatives of the IMF and IBRD at the Preparatory Committee who reacted very negatively. The IMF repeated the argument that the Fund had its own 'charter' (the Articles) and could not take external direction on policy priorities: full employment was not defined as an objective in the Fund's Articles of Agreement. They were especially concerned that ITO should not be given any role in balance of payment policy to maintain employment, as suggested by the British.⁸⁰ The UK made minor amends, but the version submitted to the Preparatory Committee retained the substance of their

⁷⁸ International Employment Policy: Memorandum by the United Kingdom Delegation, October 26, 1946, ECOSOC doc EPCT/CI-W3, Annex A, section (c), GATT documents, WTO Archives.

⁷⁹ *ibid*, Annex B, paras 28 and 29.

⁸⁰ Letter George Luthringer, IMF Representative to the ITO Preparatory Committee, to Gutt, IMF Managing Director, October 28, 1946, Executive Board Document No 106, IMF Archives; Horsefield, *The International Monetary Fund. 1945 - 1965 Vol. 1*, 171–75.

original draft. Rather than supporting autonomy for the Agencies the UK consistently opposed them when they asserted their independence.

The Fund also opposed proposals for a balance of payment sub-Commission of the ECOSOC Economic and Employment Commission, which the UK had made at the UN Preparatory Commission in 1945 and renewed at the ECOSOC Council in June 1946.⁸¹ The Fund was alarmed at the potential overlap with its own responsibilities, but the UK argued that other Agencies also had a role to play in balance of payments issues and required coordination: “our view has always been that this necessary work of consultation to facilitate coordination should take place under UNO auspices” through ECOSOC.⁸² IMF opposition, combined with limited support from other members (especially the US, who sided with the Fund), plus the pressure of other priorities meant the proposal was eventually dropped in early 1947.⁸³ Although the Fund won this battle, the UK was again ranged on the side of ECOSOC against the Fund, contrary to the arguments of Rosenthal (2005), Wilenski (1993) and ul-Haq (1995).

Evidence the UK continued to promote a strong ECOSOC to coordinate Agencies into 1947 is seen in their persistent promotion of ECOSOC and the Economic and Employment Commission as an economic policy coordinator.⁸⁴ In February 1947, in an indication of UK intent, Ministers approved submission of a UK resolution to ECOSOC calling for it to begin work on coordination of measures to maintain full employment, despite Board of Trade concerns this would cut across work at the ITO and “spook the Americans” and the Agencies.⁸⁵ It was introduced at the fourth

⁸¹ ECOSOC Report to the General Assembly, October 21, 1946, UN doc A/125, p9; ‘International Organization, 1947, Vol 1, Issue 1’, 104; Summary of 2nd ECOSOC Council, July 7, 1946, IOC(46)11, CAB 134/377.

⁸² Brief for McNeil for 2nd Council session, June 8, 1946, IOC(46)6 CAB 134/377, para 27.

⁸³ Brief for Economic and Employment Commission, January 13, 1947, IOC(47)10, pp3-4. .

⁸⁴ Brief for delegate to Economic and Employment Commission, January 13, 1947, IOC(47)10, CAB 134/380.

⁸⁵ Comment by Helmore, Board of Trade, January 15, 1947: IOC(47)1st meeting, CAB 134/379; report of working party on full employment resolution at ECOSOC Council, February 13, 1947, IOC(47)46 CAB 134/381; February 18, 1947: IOC(47)6th meeting, CAB 134/379.

ECOSOC Council in March 1947.⁸⁶ Progress was slow, though, and although ECOSOC continued debating full employment and producing reports, by the end of the 1940s the internationalist moment had passed and little action resulted.⁸⁷

The 1948 Havana Conference, convened by ECOSOC to create the ITO, is outside the scope of this work, but the UK continued to argue for the UN, through ECOSOC, to play a significant coordinating role. The UK cooperated with smaller states in the ITO negotiations to retain a commitment to full employment and cooperation with ECOSOC in the ITO Charter, often against America. The agreed (but not ratified) ITO Charter not only included a commitment for the ITO to be “brought into relationship with the United Nations” as a Specialised Agency (Article 86) but committed members to treat full employment as an international issue and for national efforts to be supplemented by “concerted action under the sponsorship of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations” (Article 2). Members were also required to support ECOSOC efforts to concert action to promote employment and economic activity (Article 5) and “cooperate with one another, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, with the Organisation and with other appropriate inter-governmental organisations, in facilitating and promoting industrial and general economic development” (Article 10).⁸⁸ Although Havana was a failed coda to that “hopeful one-world period” of the immediate post-war years, UK policy during negotiation of the ITO Charter illustrates continuing commitment to ECOSOC’s coordinating role in economic policy and challenges the argument that the UK wanted a weak ECOSOC and independent Agencies.

5.4 Policymaker Assessments of ECOSOC Performance

British assessments of ECOSOC’s performance in 1946-47 reveal more support than suggested by the claims of Goodwin (1957) that it was considered insignificant from the start. In his 1946 review of the UN Cadogan described ECOSOC’s record as “not

⁸⁶ March 4, 1947, UK delegation to Lie, UN Archives, DEA, 4th Session, doc S-0991-0001-13-00001.

⁸⁷ Toye and Toye, ‘How the UN Moved From Full Employment to Economic Development’, 21–27.

⁸⁸ Copy of the Havana Agreement in WTO Archives, https://www.wto.org/english/docs_e/legal_e/havana_e.pdf

unimpressive” for the scope of its efforts and establishment of its organisation, concluding “the machinery is there, and there is a general willingness for all quarters to use it.”⁸⁹ In his annual report the following year Cadogan reported that ECOSOC “grew in stature as a business-like body...[and]...an effective piece of technical and organising machinery in the field of economic and social collaboration”, producing “substantial work of value”.⁹⁰ Ministerial assessments of the Council’s sessions were also positive. Noel-Bakers’ glowing account of the 2nd Council session in 1946 may be discounted as slightly rose-tinted, but in 1947 Hector McNeill, Noel-Baker’s successor as Foreign Office Minister of State, told the Cabinet that the 4th session of the Council, held in March 1947, was the “most successful” held so far, and the 5th, held in July and August 1947, even better.⁹¹ UK Ministers continued to praise ECOSOC publicly, though often to offset negative news on the security functions of the UN. As Attlee said in a broadcast in June 1947, on the second anniversary of the Charter: “We must not pay too much attention to the controversial discussions in the Security Council, thereby overlook the constructive work which the United Nations is performing in the economic and social fields.”⁹² In September 1948 Bevin told the General Assembly that, despite “political differences”, ECOSOC had made “great progress” and the work of the Agencies was “tremendous”.⁹³

ECOSOC failed to live up to the hopes of UK internationalists, though, and became increasingly marginalised in the coordination of economic policy. There was no dramatic endpoint and no single issue, analogous to the Security Council veto, around which a narrative of failure was constructed. By mid-1947 American policy, as expressed in the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Aid, had shifted the centre of

⁸⁹ Cadogan to Attlee, March 27, 1947, FO371/67509A UN2345/18/78.

⁹⁰ Annual Review for 1947, Cadogan to Bevin, May 12, 1948, FO371/72676 UN1033/32/78.

⁹¹ For Noel-Baker, Cabinet meeting, June 17, 1946, CAB 128/5/59 CM(46)59; McNeil and 4th Session, Cabinet paper, May 29, 1947, CAB 129/19/16 CP(47)166; for 5th session, McNeil Cabinet paper, September 6, 1947, CAB 129/21/6 CP(47)256.

⁹² The Times, June 27, 1947, p4, The Times Digital Archive; draft in FO800/509, pp10-11. See also Attlee speech to the UN Association, March 1, 1947, reported in the Times, ‘Cause For Hope In The U.N.’, March 3, 1947, p6, *ibid*.

⁹³ Speech by Bevin to the 144th Plenary meeting of the General Assembly, September 27, 1948, UN doc A/PV/144; Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.3, Foreign Secretary, 1945-1951*, 604–6. See also Bevin to House of Commons, January 22, 1948, 5s, vol 446, cols 401-2.

gravity for management of the international economy away from ECOSOC and the United Nations. The failure of the US to ratify the Havana Agreement and the still-birth of the ITO further marginalised the UN. This made ECOSOC increasingly irrelevant as a coordinating centre of global economic policy. As we'll see in the next chapter, this was a matter for regret for UK policymakers, not satisfaction as suggested by those who argue the UK did not want a strong centralised UN.

UK policymakers themselves blamed the increasing American preference to handle economic cooperation outside the UN. As Cadogan wrote in his 1948 annual report, "During the year [1947] the economic work of the Council was completely overshadowed by events outside the United Nations, such as the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan."⁹⁴ The following year he noted the preference of both east and west for "regional economic cooperation outside the United Nations" which "deflected the major energies and resources of the powers so as to by-pass the Council."⁹⁵

Ikenberry (2009) argues "management of the world economy moved from the Bretton Woods vision to an American dollar and market system" due to the Cold War, though others have identified an American shift to a more free market approach as early as Bretton Woods itself.⁹⁶ The British attributed the American change to the incipient Cold War. The Russian decision to remain outside many of the Agencies (by 1948 they had joined only the highly technical ITU, UPU and the Interim Commission of WHO) initially insulated the economic and social functions from the direct Cold War pressures experienced in the Security Council and related bodies. However, by 1948 Cadogan was complaining at Russian propaganda in ECOSOC against "dollar diplomacy, Western imperialism and monopolistic interests."⁹⁷ The Americans increasingly operated outside the UN. As Cadogan

⁹⁴ Cadogan to Bevin, May 12, 1948, FO371/72676 UN1033/32/78, para 57.

⁹⁵ Cadogan to Bevin, May 31, 1949, FO371/ UN1115/274/78, para 95.

⁹⁶ Ikenberry, 'Liberal Internationalism 3.0', 76; Williams, *Failed Imagination?*, 232–33; Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy*, 77.

⁹⁷ Cadogan to Bevin, May 31, 1949, FO371/ UN1115/274/78, para 3.

observed, the “United States was understandably chary of bringing to bear the main impact of its economic power upon the European situation through the United Nations, which was vulnerable to Soviet sabotage.”⁹⁸ This effectively made ECOSOC redundant in the management of the international economy. Despite this, as late as 1950 the British still sent Ministers to ECOSOC meetings and took the body seriously, both for its hoped-for role in full employment and as a coordinator of the UN System of Specialised Agencies.⁹⁹ However, it never met the high hopes invested in it in 1945.

5.5 Conclusion

In the early years of the UN the UK backed up verbal commitments to ECOSOC by pursuing policies aimed at strengthening its role as a coordinator of international economic policy. Contrary to the arguments of Rosenthal and others that the UK favoured a decentralised structure of autonomous Agencies, UK policymakers pursued policies intended to create a strong ECOSOC as a centralising and coordinating forum. Although ECOSOC failed to fulfil the hopes of internationalist policymakers this was not due to lack of effort by the UK.

Rosenthal (2005), Kennedy (2006) and Singer (1995) work backwards from the later impotence of ECOSOC and subsequent British support for autonomous Agencies to argue that from the creation of the UN the British opposed a significant role for ECOSOC in favour of independent Agencies. The later weakness of ECOSOC has led others (Douglas, 2004; Williams, 2007) to ignore British policy toward it altogether. The archival record reveals this is misleading. Through the early years of the UN, UK policymakers took ECOSOC seriously and consistently tried to establish it as the coordinating body of an integrated and centralised UN System.

⁹⁸ Ibid, para 99.

⁹⁹ See comments by Gaitskell, 1950, cited in Toye and Toye, ‘How the UN Moved From Full Employment to Economic Development’, 25–26.

UK policymakers saw planning as essential but autonomous Agencies implied an absence of planning. The British wanted an effective UN System, and in the absence of a sovereign authority on the model of the Security Council, an Economic Security Council, this required a forum in which to debate, agree and legitimise policy. This was ECOSOC. UK policy to establish UN bodies as directly responsible to ECOSOC and the Assembly, and support for agreements between the Agencies and the UN confirming ECOSOC's coordinating role are evidence that policymakers expected ECOSOC to play this role. The issue of full employment illustrates how that translated into policy issues.

This chapter has focused on British policy toward ECOSOC and the relationship between the UN and the Agencies, arguing that the British actively supported a centralised and coordinated UN System. The next chapter takes this further by examining ministerial reaction to the performance of the UN in its wider economic and social responsibilities in these first two years. It argues that ministerial disappointment at the failure of ECOSOC and the UN to deliver quick results shows they expected an active and interventionist UN to assist delivery of their domestic policy priorities. Its failure to do so did not change their hope it would do so as it matured but their dissatisfaction with UN performance did begin to erode faith in the new organisation.

6 Chapter Six: Policy in Practice: Ministerial Reaction.

"I am much concerned over the piecemeal and untidy state of the international machinery for handling the supply and economic side of winning the peace."

Herbert Morrison, Cabinet meeting, July 22, 1946. ¹

The previous chapter dealt specifically with British policy within ECOSOC, its relationship with the Specialised Agencies and British active encouragement for a centralised and coordinated UN System in 1945-47. This chapter extends this to outline the response of UK Ministers to the performance of the UN in wider economic and social issues in 1945-47. It argues Ministers remained committed to the UN's centralised coordinating role in economic and social affairs despite frustration at the UN's record. The understandings that animated wartime planning for the post-war order still influenced Ministers in the early years of the UN. This is apparent through a series of Cabinet level debates held during late 1946 and early 1947, not covered in the literature, which illuminate ministerial attitudes toward the UN. As with policy within ECOSOC, the literature ignores ministerial consideration of the UN's economic and social role after the signing of the Charter and assumes the UK implements policies to undermine ECOSOC in favour of autonomous Specialised Agencies. As we saw in the previous chapter, this was not the case. This chapter shows that Ministers were disappointed and frustrated that the UN and ECOSOC was not more effective but reconfirmed their support for international management of the economy through the UN System. Ministers wanted a stronger UN, not weaker. They made the connection between effective international management and the achievement of domestic policy goals.

¹ Cabinet Meeting, July 22, 1946, CAB 128/6/9 CM (46) 71.

The impact of the incipient Cold War, which stultified the Security Council and the military provisions of the Charter, was less evident in economic and social functions, and the vision of the UN as a seat of international governance within a multipolar system, though challenged, remained intact during this interregnum before 1948-49. The immediate post-war years saw a rapid increase in new international Agencies as governments turned to multilateralism to manage a broad range of international issues. Most were intended to be part of the UN System. In addition to the long-established Agencies brought into relations with the UN (ILO, ITU, UPU) and specialised Agencies established during the war, which began operation in 1945 and 1946 (FAO, IBRD, IMF, PICAQ, ICJ), other bodies created included UNESCO, WHO, IRO and an International Maritime Organisation, and great efforts were made to create the eventually abandoned ITO.²

In addition, ECOSOC itself got off to a fast start. In his review of UN activity in 1946 Cadogan identified 10 commissions formally established in 1946, including the Economic and Employment Commission, Social Commission, Human Rights Commission and Commission on the Status of Women.³ ECOSOC also initiated the transfer of non-political functions from the League, including the highly regarded narcotics work, and the advisory welfare functions of UNRRA which, as Cadogan's 1946 review pointed out, "represents the first undertaking by the United Nations to provide Governments with services in kind financed from the United Nations budget".⁴ The 1946 Assembly also accepted an ECOSOC recommendation to establish an International Children's Fund, the forerunner of UNICEF.⁵ Cadogan's 1946 review highlights the scope of the work undertaken by the UN by listing other economic and social subjects addressed during its first months existence: freedom of information, housing and town-planning, the world food shortage, the work of the

² Armstrong, Lloyd, and Redmond, *International Organisation in World Politics*, chap. 1; Jacobson, *Networks of Interdependence*.

³ Yasamee et al., *DBPO, Ser. 1, Vol. 7*, Appendix 2.

⁴ Yasamee et al., Appendix 2. The health functions of the League were transferred separately to the fledgling WHO. Other UNRRA functions were transferred to the newly established International Refugee Organisation; 'International Organization, 1947, Vol 1, Issue 1'.

⁵ 'International Organization, 1947, Vol 1, Issue 1'.

Red Cross, political rights of women, provision of expert advice by the United Nations to member Governments, the establishment of United Nations research laboratories, translation of the world's classic literature and passport and frontier formalities.⁶

The UK government initially supported this expansion of international bodies but by the end of 1946 Ministers expressed concern at the pace of growth fearing it undermined the effectiveness of the economic and social functions of the UN. Reservations were expressed primarily in terms of efficiency and cost rather than opposition to internationalisation as such, though there was also increasing frustration at what was seen as the politicisation of technical issues, which itself was suggestive of a fear of loss of control over the system. Ministers looked to the UN not only to manage international relationships but also to contribute to their domestic goal of 'winning the peace'. Significantly, UK policymakers did not challenge internationalism and multilateral cooperation, but its execution and the UK's capacity to contribute.

This was against a backdrop of severe and worsening domestic economic crisis and a resulting focus on cost in all areas of government expenditure which led to attempts to reduce the number of international Agencies and Conferences, and to criticism of the increasing costs of the UN Secretariat. This view was expressed most clearly by Herbert Morrison, Lord President of the Council, who was the effective economic overlord in 1945-47 with planning responsibility across domestic departments. However, it was widely shared amongst Ministers, including the internationalist Attlee. It was expressed in a debate through successive Cabinet meetings in July and November 1946 and April 1947. These ministerial debates do not appear in the literature, but they are important in showing both the continuing centrality of the

⁶ Cadogan's 1946 Annual Review Yasamee et al., *DBPO, Ser. 1, Vol. 7*, Appendix 2. Cadogan's annual reviews of the United Nations, submitted to the Foreign Office each year, are a useful summary of developing UK views.

economic and social functions in UK understanding of the concept of the UN but also the limitations.⁷

This chapter first demonstrates the breadth of domestic departments impacted by the UN through the way these departments organised to engage with the UN System and the increased international engagement in domestic issues. It then shows how Ministers debated the performance of the UN during 1946 and 1947, seeking ways to make the UN System more effective but reconfirming their commitment to work through, not around, the organisation. It argues Ministers remained convinced that a multilateral technocratic planning approach was needed and worked actively to protect the role of experts from what they regarded as politicisation undermining the UN efforts. The following chapter uses the FAO and the World Food Board proposals of 1946 to illustrate how these dynamics worked in a specific policy area.

6.1 Organising Domestic Policymaking to Manage International Organisations

The expansion of intergovernmental bodies reflected policymakers' perception of the need for international cooperation for the daily management of a wide range of state responsibilities, not just political relations between states but also the activities of what were predominantly domestic departments. These enabled state managers to manage their own domestic responsibilities more effectively. The UN System therefore quickly became a factor in UK domestic governance and the separation between foreign and domestic policy was increasingly blurred. The sheer breadth of issues within scope of the UN forced UK policymakers to establish structures to coordinate action across the growing number of departments involved with international bodies.

⁷ Douglas, *The Labour Party, Nationalism and Internationalism, 1939-1951*; Toye, 'The Labour Party's External Economic Policy in the 1940s'; Toye, 'Developing Multilateralism'; Toye, 'The Attlee Government, the Imperial Preference System and the Creation of the Gatt'. The relevant works based on primary sources, do not mention this ministerial debate at all. Nor does it feature in the relevant volumes of DBPO.

As soon as the Charter was signed policymakers recognised that the breadth of the UN's scope would require improved cross-departmental cooperation. At the beginning of the Preparatory Commission in August 1945 Noel-Baker established an informal multi-departmental coordinating committee, the Advisory Committee on United Nations Affairs, which operated for the remainder of 1945.⁸ However, by early 1946 a combination of Noel-Baker's lack of organisational ability and the growing UN agenda forced officials to establish a more robust coordination framework.⁹ Attlee, prompted by Cabinet Secretary Norman Brook, established an International Organisation Committee (IOC) of senior officials of departments with day-to-day interaction with international bodies, primarily but not exclusively the UN, to coordinate policy. There was no equivalent ministerial committee, officials referring issues to existing Cabinet Committees when ministerial input was required.¹⁰

The IOC was chaired by the Foreign Office but in an indication of how deep into the machinery of domestic government multilateral cooperation reached the paper establishing the committee named 22 departments directly impacted by relations with international organisations, each of which sent representatives to the Committee.¹¹ In addition, there was a system of interdepartmental advisory committees for specific bodies. Those for FAO (Ministry of Food), ILO (Ministry of Labour) and the United Maritime Consultative Council (Ministry of Transport) had already been established by June 1946, and an Economic and Social Group was set up by July 1946.¹² The IOC meetings proved effective and popular. From its introduction in June 1946 there were 10 IOC meetings in the remainder of that year,

⁸ ACU(45)1st meeting, August 25, 1945, FO371/50878 U6500/5202/70.

⁹ Letter from Norman Brook, Cabinet Secretary, to Civil Service departments, April 1946, FO371/57327 U4424/4424/70; see also Meade Cabinet diary, February 10, 1946 Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 217–18.

¹⁰ Letter, Norman Brook to Attlee, April 5, 1946, and Attlee's approval, April 6, CAB 21/2994; Cabinet paper by Attlee, April 12, 1946, CAB 129/9/3 CP(46)153. The commentary in the DBPO volume on the UN in 1946 describes the IOC as a Cabinet Steering Committee, suggesting Ministers attended, but this is incorrect. Yasamee et al., *DBPO, Ser. 1, Vol. 7*, 213, 243, 255.

¹¹ Paper by Norman Brook, Secretary to the Cabinet, May 28, 1946, Steering Committee for International Organisations, IOC(46)1 CAB 134/377. See also IOC(46)7, June 1946, CAB 134/377.

¹² IOC(46)18, July 17, 1946, CAB 134/377.

and 31 in 1947. Although initial expectations were that actual attendance would be small, in practice meetings were heavily attended and grew over time rather than diminished as the IOC established itself as the main clearing house for UK policy across international organisations. The Cabinet Office complained at the sheer volume of papers and other material they needed to prepare for the IOC and “the very large number of people who persist in attending IOC meetings.”¹³ So popular did the meetings become that its chair, Jebb, was forced to limit attendance in early 1947 to make them more manageable.¹⁴

This broad membership and regular attendance are evidence of the extent to which intergovernmental management of cross-border issues reached into domestic governance. As Morrison pointed out in a response to Attlee’s Cabinet paper establishing the IOC, the extent to which the scope of the new international bodies intruded on domestic policy was unprecedented: “These bodies will presumably make all sorts of question which have hitherto been mainly parts of our domestic policy (e.g., trade, agriculture, education, employment policy, health) become matters of United Nations’ concerns.”¹⁵ Partly this was departmental manoeuvring. Morrison, supported by Dalton, wanted domestic coordination of commercial policy in ECOSOC led by the economic departments.¹⁶ As we’ll see below, Morrison later challenged the growth of international agencies, but his main concern in early 1946 was the effectiveness of these bodies to support UK domestic objectives.

6.2 Cabinet Concern 1946-47

During 1946 and 1947 the Cabinet repeatedly debated the performance of the UN System, debates that have not previously been covered in the literature. Ministers were uneasy at overlaps between bodies in the UN System even before it began functioning. In November 1945, when Ministers reconfirmed ECOSOC’s primary

¹³ Letter R. Morrison (Cabinet Office) to Gore-Booth, January 30, 1947, FO371/67563 UN769/190/78.

¹⁴ IOC(47)7th meeting, February 25, 1947, CAB 134/379.

¹⁵ Morrison to Attlee, April 25, 1946, CAB 21/2994.

¹⁶ Cabinet meeting, May 9, 1946, CAB 128/5/44 CM(46)4; see also the verbatim record in Cabinet Notebooks, CAB 195/4/32.

responsibility for policy coordination on full employment in response to concerns that the ILO's interest in the subject may conflict with other Agencies, they also asked Noel-Baker to work with Whitehall departments to prevent duplication.¹⁷ Ministers worried primarily about potential policy confusion and duplication of effort but at a further Cabinet meeting on November 8, 1945, in a debate on the location of the UN, Bevin complained there were already too many international organisations, and there was a "danger that the success of the United Nations Organisation might be prejudiced through the establishment of an excessive number of international bodies". As a result, Noel-Baker was additionally tasked to report on the bodies to be created and "the steps which were being taken to prevent duplication amongst them".¹⁸

Noel-Baker had failed to report back to the Cabinet before the issue was raised again by Herbert Morrison in May and June 1946.¹⁹ Morrison's willingness to involve himself in UN issues is an indication of the significance of the UN for Britain's domestic agenda given Morrison's planning role in domestic affairs, though Morrison's rivalry with Bevin was also a factor in his criticism of the UN.²⁰ Morrison criticised the lack of coordination and ineffectiveness of the new international bodies. In a Cabinet paper of June 24, 1946, he wrote: "I am much concerned over the piecemeal and untidy state of the international machinery for handling the supply and economic side of winning the peace." This was not directed at the political and security organs (though these were increasingly deadlocked), but the bodies responsible for reconstruction and supply of food and other essentials.²¹ Morrison's use of the phrase 'winning the peace' not only recalled the language of

¹⁷ Cabinet Meeting November 6, 1945, CAB 128/2/2 CM(45)49.

¹⁸ Cabinet meeting November 8, 1945, CAB 128/2/4 CM(45)51. For Bevin as instigator see verbatim Cabinet Notebook, CAB 195/3/69.

¹⁹ A Cabinet paper was drafted by the FO by January 1946 but had not been circulated to Ministers. For the draft see paper dated January 8, 1946, a revised conclusion that was expected to go to Ministers, ACU(46)12, in Noel-Baker papers NBKR 4/770. In April 1946 Cabinet Secretary Norman Brook referred to Noel-Baker's paper as still outstanding in a Cabinet paper announcing the establishment of the IOC, CP(46)153 CAB 129/9/3.

²⁰ Hennessy, *Never Again*, 198–202; Morgan, *Labour in Power, 1945-1951*, 49–52.

²¹ Cabinet Paper by Morrison, 'Notes on Some Overseas Economic and Publicity Problems', June 24, 1946, CAB 129/10/15 CP(46)215.

post-war planning but also evoked the wartime control machinery which was still highly regarded. Morrison acted because he expected action from the UN to assist with domestic priorities, including food supply, employment, and balance of payment support, and he worried the new UN System was not effective enough to achieve the results expected. He was not challenging the principle of international cooperation but the effectiveness of its implementation.

Morrison's preference for international bodies with executive power was evident in debates over the world food crisis of 1946.²² The food crisis was a political priority for the UK government in 1946, given their direct responsibility for food supplies in occupied Europe and continued shortages domestically.²³ Prompted by Noel-Baker, supported by Attlee and Aneurin Bevan, Ministers used the UN General Assembly in January and February 1946 to raise awareness of the crisis, introducing a formal Assembly resolution, though Bevin favoured working through the permanent Council members.²⁴ The world food shortage reinforced Attlee's internationalism and the connection in his thinking between social and economic problems and international

²² Europe, especially Germany, was badly affected but there were also serious shortages in India and the Far East, with simultaneous shortages of both wheat and rice. See Shaw, *World Food Security*, 15–16; Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 82; Judt, *Postwar*, 28–29.

²³ It was a frequent agenda item in Cabinet throughout the year and Attlee created a standing ministerial committee on World Food Supplies. In April and July 1946 the UK government also published white papers on the crisis. The British response included the introduction of bread rationing in July 1946, which had not happened at all during the war and was a major domestic political issue. For the political response in Britain see Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin Vol.3, Foreign Secretary, 1945-1951*, 232–33; Hennessy, *Never Again*, 276–77; Addison, *Now the War Is Over*; Jay, *Change and Fortune*, 140–42; The World Food Supplies Cabinet committee documentation is in CAB 134/729-731. This Committee was chaired by Attlee personally and was attended by senior ministers, underlining the seriousness with which the food crisis was viewed. Harris, *Attlee*, 327–29; U.K. Parliament, Ministry of Food, 'Cmd 6785, World Food Shortage'; UK Parliament, Ministry of Food, 'Cmd 6879, Second Review of World Food Shortage, 1946'.

²⁴ For Bevin's preference for dealing directly with the other permanent members see Cabinet meeting, January 15, 1946, Cabinet notebook CAB 195/3/88; and note Norman Brook to Attlee, February 1, 1946, PREM 8/211. For Noel-Baker's suggestion see Cabinet meeting January 1, 1946, CAB 128/5/1 CM(46)1. The verbatim cabinet notebooks make it clear this was Noel-Baker's suggestion, CAB 195/3/84. For Bevin's January 17, 1946, speech see A/PV.11, In: Plenary meetings of the General Assembly, verbatim record, 10 Jan.-14 Feb. 1946, A/PV.1-33. - [1946]. - p. 161-168. - (GAOR, 1st part, 1st sess.). <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/482330?ln=en>. Cabinet meeting, January 15, 1946, CAB 128/5/5 CM (46) 5, and Verbatim Cabinet Notebook, CAB 195/3/88. For Bevan's support see Cabinet meeting January 31, 1946, CAB 128/5/10 CM(46)10, and Cabinet Notebooks CAB 195/3/93. For the resolution see Res 27(1), 33rd Plenary Session. ['https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/27\(1\)'](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/27(1)) and UN document A_PV-33-EN, In: Plenary meetings of the General Assembly, verbatim record, 10 Jan.-14 Feb. 1946, A/PV.1-33. - [1946]. - p. 483-544. - (GAOR, 1st part, 1st sess.).

conflict. In January 1946 he wrote to Truman that it "would undoubtedly make infinitely more difficult the work to which we shall be setting our hand when the UNO meets."²⁵ It reinforced his belief that planning, at the international and national level, was necessary to manage the shortage and ensure fairness and social justice. On April 4, 1946, in a debate on the world food shortage, he told the House of Commons that: "The lesson of the war is that international, as well as national, planning and control are necessary if we are to get full nutrition for all...I think the moral is the same, internal or international: in times of scarcity, planning is the only means of providing fair shares for all and avoiding the coincidence of starvation on the one hand, and lavish consumption on the other."²⁶ Efficiency and social justice both required international planning.

However, Ministers were reluctant to entrust operational responsibility for short term food supply to FAO due to reservations over its operational capability and its leadership. They regarded FAO as an expert body whose role was to increase long term food supply, not deal with a short-term emergency, which should be left to UNRRA and the Combined Food Board (CFB). Both Noel-Baker and Attlee proposed a new commission of ECOSOC to address global food supply, by-passing FAO, emphasising the role they expected ECOSOC to play coordinating the UN System. However, after objections from other Ministers, who preferred working through the CFB and directly with producers, the idea was dropped.²⁷

Morrison, though, complained the CFB could only make recommendations that could be, and were, later repudiated by governments, especially the US. He wanted a body

²⁵ Attlee to Truman, January 4, 1946, in Truman, *Memoirs Vol 1*, 401–2; Williams, *A Prime Minister Remembers*, 137–38; *DBPO Ser 1, Vol IV*, Doc 22, 82-6.

²⁶ Speech by Attlee, April 4, 1946, HC Deb 04 April 1946 vol 421 col 1410.

²⁷ For 'new machinery' see note by Norman Brook to Attlee, January 30, 1946, PREM 8/211. For the original draft see paper by Noel-Baker, February 2, 1946, CAB 134/730, WFS(46)3. For Attlee's suggestion of a new ECOSOC commission see Cabinet meeting January 31, 1946, CAB 128/5/10 CM(46)10. These proposals were dropped after complaints by Ministers, especially from the Minister of Agriculture, that it might divert food supplies from the UK to Europe, national concerns clearly paramount in their thinking as well as reluctance to undermine the role of the CFB: see meeting of the WFS Cabinet Committee, February 4, 1946, CAB 134/729 WFS(46)1st meeting.

with executive power to direct international food supply.²⁸ The CFB was due to wind-up in June 1946 and UNRRA would also close shortly. When Sir John Orr, the first Director of FAO, put forward FAO's claims to lead international food supply in May 1946 officials in the Ministry of Food tried to head this off by proposing a renewed and expanded CFB independent of UN bodies and outside the UN System.²⁹ Morrison, though, objected that it lacked sufficient executive powers and the Cabinet World Food Situation Committee authorised Morrison to discuss with the Americans and Canadians "the possibility of securing a reorganisation of the Combined Food Board more radical than that proposed" in the Ministry of Food paper on an imminent visit to Washington.³⁰

Morrison did not argue for FAO involvement. His main concern was the effectiveness of intergovernmental planning and delivery and he had concerns at the effectiveness of the UN agencies as well as the CFB. Staples (2006) accuses UK policymakers of lacking support for internationalism, but officials and Ministers reaffirmed their support for multilateralism and intervention.³¹ The British Food Mission proposal for a reformed CFB within the UN System explicitly rejected the "free-for all" of laissez-faire because this "would not only be disastrous in itself (inflation of world prices, inequitable distribution, etc.) but would strike at the roots of the international organisation which is being created..."³² and the Ministry of Food

²⁸ Morrison accused the Americans of repudiating food allocations agreed in the CFB in March 1946. Morrison note to Attlee, May 9, 1946, as brief for his mission to Washington later that month, para 7, in PREM 8/202; World Food Supplies Cabinet committee meeting, May 10, 1946, CAB 134/729 WFS(46)12th meeting.

²⁹ The FAO prepared a proposal but it was not tabled formally. Paper 'FAO Special Meeting: International Organisation', by Wall, secretary to the UK delegation to the Special Meeting, May 16, 1946, reference FAO/SM(46)16 MAF 83/3031; Way, *A New Idea Each Morning*, 290–91. There were multiple versions of the British proposal. The one taken by the Ministerial WFS Committee was: Paper by Ministry of Food, 'Future of the Combined Food Board', May 8, 1946, CAB 134/731 WFS(46)109. See also the version by the British Food Mission in Washington which was shared with American and Canadian officials, British Food Mission Paper, 'Tentative Suggestions as to the Reorganisation of the CFB', May 8, 1946, MAF 83/3031.

³⁰ Morrison did raise the future of the CFB with Truman but with no clear outcome, and the main Anglo-American discussions on the future of the CFB continued to take place between British and American officials in Washington. British record of the meeting in Washington between Morrison and Truman, May 17, 1946, in US Department of State, *FRUS, 1946, Vol I*, Doc 750.

³¹ Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 84.

³² The reference is to the UN. British Food Mission Paper, 'Tentative Suggestions as to the Reorganisation of the CFB', May 8, 1946, MAF 83/3031.

declared the UK was committed to "some form of international machinery" to allocate food.³³ Morrison and other Ministers continued to support multilateral approaches. Morrison wanted a more powerful executive body capable of taking and enforcing decisions on food allocation, but he did not believe the FAO could deliver this. Morrison's efforts failed, though, and a May 1946 FAO Special Meeting on Urgent Food Problems created a new International Emergency Food Committee (IEFC) to replace the CFB, based on compromise proposals agreed between the UK, US, and Canada. Due to the concerns of other delegations and US insistence the CFB should disband, it was closely affiliated to the FAO and lacked clear executive power.³⁴

Morrison returned to the subject of UN effectiveness at Cabinet later in June 1946. He complained the new international bodies were not as effective as the wartime Combined Boards, repeating complaints he made about the effectiveness of the FAO and post-war food distribution in May 1946. During wartime, he said, the Combined Boards reached rapid agreement based on accurate knowledge and decisions were quickly and efficiently acted upon. His ideal model for the UN System was the command-and-control template of the wartime Anglo-American Combined Boards rather than a 'democratic' Atlantic Charter vision. By June 1946 the Combined Board machinery had been dismantled with the last remnant, the Combined Food Board,

³³ British Food Mission Paper, 'Tentative Suggestions as to the Reorganisation of the CFB', May 8, 1946, MAF 83/3031; paper by Ministry of Food, 'Future of the Combined Food Board', May 8, 1946, CAB 134/731 WFS(46)109; and comments by Minister of Food Ben Smith in the World Food Supplies meeting, May 10, 1946, CAB 134/729 WFS(46)12th meeting. See also speech by Broadley (Deputy Head of the UK Delegation) at the Special Meeting, May 21, 1946, as reported in 'The Discussions In Washington.' Times, 22 May 1946, p. 4. The Times Digital Archive, <http://tinyurl.gale.com/tinyurl/BxpmL2>. Accessed 20 Oct. 2019. As evidence of continued wider support for FAO to lead international planning for food issues see also the leader in The Times of May 21, 1946, which says: 'Without such organisations as FAO...there can be no possibility of a world-wide planned economy comprising and completing the various national economies to which Governments are committed by their policies of full employment.' Citation: 'World Food Plans.' Times, 21 May 1946, p. 5. The Times Digital Archive, <http://tinyurl.gale.com/tinyurl/Bxpcv1>. Accessed 20 Oct. 2019.

³⁴ FAO Report of Special Session, Report of the Conference of FAO – Second Session, Section E VII, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/x5583e/x5583e00.htm#Contents> ; For the proposal put before the Special Meeting see May 21, 1946, 'Proposals for the formation of an INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY FOOD COUNCIL', MAF 83/3031; Report by Summerskill on the FAO Special Conference, June 6, 1946, WFS(46)126, CAB 134/731; Roll, *The Combined Food Board*, 299.

dissolved on June 30.³⁵ Now, for Morrison, “such relics of combined machinery as remain...are accordingly crippled in their operation”.³⁶ According to Morrison this left a gap which the UN was not in a position to fill: “No doubt in due course the long-term post-war structure of UNO will fill parts of the gap...At the moment, however, we are in an interregnum which is seriously threatening the winning of the peace.” Morrison proposed the officials of the IOC review the situation and report to Ministers.³⁷

Bevin’s somewhat defensive response, in a Cabinet paper of July 16, 1946, acknowledged the issue but pointed out that dismantling the Combined Boards was at American insistence despite British warnings of reduced efficiency. Bodies such as UNRRA, the Emergency Economic Committee for Europe and the European Coal Organisation, established to aid reconstruction, were cooperating but the Foreign Office were actively considering the relationship of these bodies to the UN. He agreed, though, it would be appropriate for the IOC to review the position.³⁸

When the Cabinet discussed the Morrison and Bevin papers on July 22 there was broader criticism of the growth of Agencies in the UN. Morrison complained there were “too many international organisations” and Cabinet approval should be obtained “before conniving at establishing more.” Noel-Baker’s answer was for more coordination through ECOSOC, but he bemoaned increasing attempts to separate technical and political bodies, establishing autonomous functional agencies separate from the UN, a development welcomed by Aneurin Bevan. The Cabinet asked Bevin to arrange a report on the number and scope of international organisations and their coordination “to promote...efficient working”, essentially a renewal of the action

³⁵ Cabinet meeting, June 27, 1946, CAB 128/5/62 CM(46)62; Roll, *The Combined Food Board*, 300–301; The other Combined Boards had been dissolved in December 1945. Hall, *Studies of Overseas Supply*.

³⁶ Cabinet paper, CAB 129/10/15 CP(46)215.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Cabinet paper by Bevin, July 16, CAB 129/11/24 CP(46)274. The majority of Bevin’s paper was a response to criticisms Morrison made of the Washington embassy and British publicity efforts in the US.

originally given to Noel-Baker in November 1945.³⁹ This inconclusive exchange indicates growing ministerial unease that the UN's economic and social functions would not be as effective as hoped, impacting not only international peace but the delivery of domestic economic objectives.

The IOC had produced no review by the time Morrison returned to the attack in a biting Cabinet paper in early November 1946, this time aimed squarely at the UN. As he put it: "The current mushroom growth of international organisations and the expansion of their agenda suggests that they are working on the dubious principle that the more international problems are tackled at once the more success is likely to be attained." He complained that "any vociferous group in any country...can secure the creation of an international organisation to enshrine its ideals, or at the very worst can secure a separate commission or sub-commission of UNO dedicated to the causes which it holds most dear." Morrison proposed the UK should "impress on all concerned" that the international community should focus on the successful conclusion of the peace settlements, military and political security, and "the creation of a world economic order", for without this any other success of the UN "will be pointless".⁴⁰

Morrison now argued that international action was both a drain on scarce skilled manpower and a diversion of resource from essential work, both international and domestic. He criticised the cost of siting the UN in New York - "the most expensive spot on the earth" - and the disruption of relocation on the hard-pressed Secretariat.⁴¹ He specifically identified the FAO as making minimal progress since Hot Springs in 1943. The UN should concentrate on "essentials" and minimise effort on "questions not of strategic importance for winning the peace". He concluded that "there is grave danger that the United Nations Organisation may fall into discredit as

³⁹ Cabinet meeting, July 22, 1946, CAB 128/6/9 CM(46)71; and verbatim Cabinet Notebooks, CAB 195/4/55.

⁴⁰ Cabinet paper by Morrison, 'International Organisations', November 6, 1946, CAB 129/14/16 CP(46)416.

⁴¹ With typical British exceptionalism Morrison argued the UN Secretariat needed to operate with "the smoothness and efficiency of our own Cabinet Secretariat". Ibid.

a mere talking-shop...". Again, Morrison's criticisms were not directed at the political and military security bodies but the economic and social. It was the most direct challenge to the UN at Cabinet level in the early years of its existence and represented a rapid escalation in disappointment with the performance of the UN.⁴²

It was not only Morrison. Cripps, in a paper on the site of the ITO, questioned the performance of the UN, though in less lurid terms, criticising the cost and pressure on manpower and opposing a single site for all UN Agencies.⁴³ The debate over the performance of international bodies thus became linked with that of their location.

It was a long-standing objective of internationalist policymakers to locate all UN Agencies in a single location, to achieve operational efficiencies but significantly also to symbolise a single integrated UN System.⁴⁴ This was agreed UK policy during 1945-46, confirmed by Cabinet in November 1945.⁴⁵ Under Noel-Baker's influence the UK took the lead in advocating all UN bodies and Agencies be located together to make coordination (and control) more effective.⁴⁶ At the General Assembly in October 1946 Noel-Baker restated UK policy favouring a central location for all Agencies as the best means to "weld those bodies [the Specialised Agencies] into a single system of United Nations institutions"⁴⁷

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Cabinet paper by Cripps, 'Site of the ITO', November 1, 1946, CAB 129/14/13 CP(46)413.

⁴⁴ These ideas were evident during wartime planning. See UN Plan for Organising Peace, July 7, 1943, CAB 66/38/50 WP(43)300, para 28; paper by Fleming, 'Co-Ordination of International Economic Institutions and the Relation to Political Organisation', March 1944, FO371/40685 U2038/180/70, para 23, which argues, to aid coordination, "...it would seem essential that the various bodies should be located in the same place."

⁴⁵ More precisely, the Cabinet failed to object when Noel-Baker proposed centralisation as UK policy. Cabinet meeting, November 8, 1945, CAB 128/2/4 CM(45)51.

⁴⁶ See Noel-Baker's comments at the 20th Executive Committee meeting September 29, 1945, PC/EX/62, copy in FO371/50888 U8721/5202/70; Report of the Preparatory Commission, Chapter III, the Economic and Social Council: Section 5, Observations on Relationship with Specialised Agencies: paragraph 42, Location of HQ, suggested centralisation, but was more circumspect than UK policymakers wanted; ACU(46)12, Jan 8, 1946, para (e), in Noel-Baker papers, NBKR 4/770.

⁴⁷ General Assembly, 1st session: 37th plenary meeting, held on Friday, 25 October 1946, A/PV.37, p743, In: Official records of the 1st session of the General Assembly, plenary meetings 34-67, 1946 - UNA(01)/R3 .

However, a combination of high living costs in America and individual departments' support for the claims of their own relevant Agencies for locations outside America created pressure from Ministers for the more decentralised and functionalist approach supported by Cripps.⁴⁸ The Foreign Office responded to Cripps' paper with a Cabinet paper defending a centralised location but without directly addressing the criticisms of UN performance, though it claimed centralisation would increase efficiency. It also restated the significance of ECOSOC's coordinating role and argued "the United Nations must be treated as an organic whole", reconfirming their understanding of the UN and its Agencies as an integrated system. Notably, the annex to this paper included the statement: "The main argument in favour of centralisation is that His Majesty's Government's declared policy is to treat the United Nations as a step towards the ultimate objective of world government." This raised the stakes considerably.⁴⁹

On November 7, 1946, the Cabinet considered all three papers in an emotive and significant meeting. Morrison led the debate, repeating the accusation that "international collaboration was in danger of being discredited by the proliferation of international agencies, the variety of the questions brought forward for discussion, and the weakness of the secretarial organisation." The Cabinet agreed. The UN and the Specialised Agencies "were attempting to do too much too quickly" and there were too many international conferences with too little to show for it. Even Attlee, a strong supporter of the UN, agreed, complaining that Ministers were attending too many conferences.⁵⁰

The same meeting left the internationalists' policy of locating all Agencies in one place in tatters. Despite McNeil's arguments for centralisation Ministers were increasingly sceptical both of the US as a home for the UN and of the desirability of a single location. Each departmental Minister argued the case for their own Agency to

⁴⁸ Cabinet paper by Cripps, 'Site of the ITO', November 1, 1946, CAB 129/14/13 CP(46)413.

⁴⁹ Cabinet paper by McNeil, 'Location of the Specialised Agencies', November 5, 1946, CAB 129/14/15 CP(46)415. For World Government as policy see Annex para 18.

⁵⁰ Cabinet meeting, November 7, 1946, CAB 128/6/33 CM(46)95, Cabinet Notebooks CAB 195/4/74.

be located away from America and there was general concern at what Attlee described as the “v. heavy financial burden” of basing Agencies in the US. There was some support for the creation of a European UN hub, primarily for economic and social bodies, though Ministers were wary of Geneva due to its League of Nations history. The Cabinet concluded the UK would no longer advocate either centralisation or decentralisation, but then endorsed separate locations for the UPU, ITU, ITO, FAO and WHO, none of which should be in the US. This effectively ended UK attempts at centralisation.⁵¹

The Secretariat came in for special criticism. The UK had supported a strong international secretariat from early planning and the policy of a central location was intended to support this. In October 1946, following widespread criticism of its performance, Gladwyn Jebb produced a report on the Secretariat (which Attlee used in the November Cabinet meeting) in which Jebb blamed Lie’s poor administrative skills exacerbated by the challenges of relocating to the US and creating a new structure.⁵² Ministers agreed that the poor performance of the Secretariat was undermining confidence in the UN. Following recommendations made by Jebb, McNeil proposed growth of the Secretariat should be limited, a new Deputy Secretary-General with administrative experience should be appointed and the UK should make specific suggestions to increase the efficiency of the Secretariat. The Cabinet invited McNeill to convene a small working party to report back to Cabinet on the subject.⁵³

There was also much anti-American feeling in the Cabinet, especially from Attlee who accused the US of dominating the UN. He said there was “too much in US hands: may emphasise breach betw. E & West. Danger of not internatl. but under Eagles wing.” They were especially critical of the US rejection of the FAO’s World Food Board Proposal and international buffer stocks without which, according to

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² ‘Memorandum on the State of the Secretariat and Suggestions for its improvement’, by Jebb, October 26, 1946, FO371/59757 UN3514/64/78.

⁵³ Cabinet meeting, November 7, 1946, CAB 128/6/33 CM(46)95, Cabinet Notebooks CAB 195/4/74.

Minister of Food Strachey, FAO was of “no practical use”. Dalton suggested he would support the “murder of FAO - now that US won’t play”, but the Cabinet felt this was a step too far.⁵⁴

Though there was much criticism of the UN at this meeting and in the associated Cabinet papers it was not anti-internationalist in nature. Ministers did not reject multilateral cooperation and there were no concerns at loss of sovereignty. Rather, there was anger and frustration that the performance of the UN was undermining confidence in the organisation. The discussion was directed at the economic and social bodies rather than those dealing with political and military security, which had their own challenges. Ministers wanted fewer, more effective, Agencies. If anything, they wanted stronger and more decisive action from the UN. This ministerial exchange reveals increasing frustration amongst senior UK policymakers with the performance of the economic and social bodies of the UN. However, multilateralism though the UN remained central to policy. There was, at this time, no attempt to develop alternative strategies.

Even Attlee, an ardent internationalist but also practical about the machinery of government, shared Morrison’s concerns. Attlee raised Jebb’s October 1946 report on the Secretariat in Cabinet. He also complained to Bevin about Noel-Baker “wandering round the world assisting at the birth of a big litter of international organisations” and moved him out of his UN role in October 1946.⁵⁵ Kenneth Younger, Noel-Baker’s Parliamentary Private Secretary, feared this would reduce the influence of internationalism in British foreign policy.⁵⁶

Bevin was absent from the November 7 Cabinet meeting (attending the Council of Foreign Ministers and General Assembly in New York) and he asked Attlee to

⁵⁴ Ibid. See also the FAO case study in Chapter Seven, below.

⁵⁵ Attlee to Bevin, July 1946, Bevin Papers, BEVN II 6/2; for Noel-Baker’s removal from the FO see Whittaker, *Fighter for Peace*, 247–48.

⁵⁶ Younger diary, October 5-12, 1946, cited in Whittaker, 247–48.

suspend final decisions on location until his return, which Attlee agreed.⁵⁷ However, he sympathised with some of Morrison's criticisms, both with respect to the lack of action by international bodies and the inefficiency of their operations. In March 1946 Bevin had complained that relying on the FAO in the food crisis would "lead only to resolutions".⁵⁸ He routinely criticised the UN for attempting to do too much. When he arrived in New York in November 1946 he told the press: "The United Nations would do well not to try to accomplish too much too quickly. It should do what it could as thoroughly as possible rather than try to solve the problems of humanity."⁵⁹ Bevin also approached Lie during the General Assembly in New York two days after the Cabinet meeting to suggest he appoint a Deputy Secretary General for administration, as proposed by Jebb and the Cabinet.⁶⁰

In fulfilment of the actions agreed at the Cabinet meetings of July 22 and November 7, Jebb led an interdepartmental Working Party that included officials from the Foreign Office, Treasury, Morrison's Lord President's Office, Board of Trade and the Ministries of Labour and Food which reported back to Cabinet in March 1947. Their report was in three parts: the Secretariat, coordination of Agencies, and the location of Agencies. It focused on practical issues of efficiency, cost and organisational effectiveness and did not address issues of policy coordination or governance.

The main recommendation in the report on the Secretariat, based on a revised (and gossipy) paper by Jebb, produced whilst attending the General Assembly in New York, was a repeat of the previous proposal that Lie should appoint a Deputy with responsibility for Administration to compensate for the Secretary-General's alleged

⁵⁷ Tel 1640 Bevin to Attlee, November 13, 1946; tel Attlee to Bevin, November 16, 1946; see IOC(47)89, April 25, 1947, CAB 134/382, para 3.

⁵⁸ Cabinet meeting, March 5, 1946, Cabinet Notebook, CAB 195/4/9.

⁵⁹ Our Special Correspondent. 'Foreign Ministers Meeting In New York To-Day.' Times, 4 Nov. 1946, p. 4. The Times Digital Archive, Accessed 14 Mar. 2021. Cited by Morrison in his November 6 Cabinet paper; see also similar statements by Bevin privately, letter to Balfour, Washington embassy, November 7, 1948, FO371/67509B UN5082/18/78.

⁶⁰ Note of Bevin meeting with Lie November 9, 1946, FO800/508 UN/46/40. It was also discussed with other delegations at the General Assembly in November and December 1946 but Lie did not act after resistance amongst his own staff. Paper by Jebb on the Secretariat, January 1947, circulated as IOC(U)(47)1, FO371/67485A UN608/2/78.

organisational deficiencies.⁶¹ Morrison instructed his representative (Nicholson) to suggest the UN Secretariat take the UK Cabinet Secretariat as its model and this also made it into the recommendations despite the reservations of the other members.⁶²

The section of the report on the coordination of the international Agencies was superficial, describing the situation as “complicated”. It suggested the main danger was for Agency functions to overlap but did not mention any requirement to coordinate policies. It placed the main responsibility for prevention of overlap on governments and presented a long list of nine measures, from improving ECOSOC’s performance as coordinator to creation of a single international civil service with its own International Civil Service Commission. During drafting, the leading role of ECOSOC assumed in the Foreign Office’s original draft was questioned by the Board of Trade and Ministry of Labour, who also challenged the need for IBRD and IMF to enter agreements with the UN, though both were retained in the final report.⁶³ ECOSOC “had not yet entered fully upon its role as a coordinating body” but was expected to improve. At the suggestion of the Lord President’s Office, the report also proposed that when deciding on action the UN accept an order of priority which placed world security first, followed by “economic rehabilitation” and only then any “other desirable projects for which time could be found”.⁶⁴

The third section, on the location of UN bodies, was the most contentious and the Working Party failed to reach agreement. The debate revolved around the extent of centralisation (“concentration” as the report phrased it) of the UN and its Agencies. There was general agreement that locating the Agencies at the same site as the UN

⁶¹ Jebb’s report, compiled in response to the November 7 Cabinet meeting, was more forgiving of the Secretariat than his October note, attributing many of the issues to birth pains of the new organisation. Paper by Jebb on the Secretariat, January 1947, circulated as IOC(U)(47)1, FO371/67485A UN608/2/78; Cabinet paper Report A, The Secretariats of the United Nations and Specialised Agencies, CAB 129/18/14 CP(47)114.

⁶² Second Working Party meeting, Feb 26, 1947, IOC(U)(47)2nd meeting, FO371/67563 UN1563/190/78.

⁶³ First Working Party meeting, February 19, 1947: IOC(U)(47)1st meeting, FO371/67563 UN1300/190/78.

⁶⁴ Cabinet paper Report C, ‘International Organisations and their Coordination’, CAB 129/18/14 CP(47)114; for Morrison’s input on ‘priorities’ see Fifth Working Party meeting, March 14, 1947: IOC(U)(47)5th meeting, FO371/67563 UN1996/190/78.

would be most efficient, though Morrison's representative Nicholson did question this, but the site of the UN had now been confirmed as Manhattan which was widely disliked on grounds of cost, logistical difficulties, and the influence of US pressure groups. Also, several Agencies (including the Bank and Fund, but also PICA and UNESCO) had already settled their location outside New York.⁶⁵

The Foreign Office (including Jebb) still favoured a central location in New York, but the Board of Trade and Ministry of Food rejected New York for the ITO and FAO respectively.⁶⁶ If the Agencies were to be located together this should be at a new UN hub in Europe, with Geneva the obvious choice despite reservations. In this case, the economic and social Secretariat and ECOSOC should also relocate to Europe, thus splitting the UN. Unable to reach agreement the Working Party presented three options: to concentrate in New York; 'partial' concentration outside New York but retain ECOSOC and the relevant Secretariats in New York; or to concentrate outside New York and move ECOSOC and the economic and social Secretariats to this new location.⁶⁷

The debates in the Working Party were couched in terms of practicality, cost, and efficiency and not policy outcomes. It was left to Cadogan, when he was asked to comment on the drafts in mid-March, 1947, to point out that creating a second UN hub in Geneva for economic and social functions would undermine previous assumptions of a unified UN.⁶⁸ The record in the Working Party shows no discussion of an integrated and unified UN System, though this may have been assumed.

⁶⁵ Third Working Party meeting, March 5, 1947: IOC(U)(47)3rd meeting, FO371/67563 UN1739/190/78; Fifth Working Party meeting, March 14, 1947: IOC(U)(47)5th meeting, FO371/67563 UN1996/190/78.

⁶⁶ For Jebb's preference for New York see Jebb to McNeil, March 25, 1947, FO371/67564 UN2223/190/78; Helmore of the Board of Trade regarded it as 'fatal if ITO were established in US' as "the Organisation would be subject to strong and continuous pressure from highly organised American political and economic interests", while FAO "would become a tool of American agricultural policy", Third Working Party meeting, March 5, 1947: IOC(U)(47)3rd meeting, FO371/67563 UN1739/190/78.

⁶⁷ Cabinet paper Report B, 'The Location of Intergovernmental Organisations', CAB 129/18/14 CP(47)114.

⁶⁸ New York (Cadogan) to FO (Jebb), March 24, 1947, FO371/67564 UN2149/190/78.

The point was picked up by McNeil, however, who was not involved in the Working Party. He circulated the Report to the Cabinet with a covering note distancing himself from the conclusions. He accepted the recommendations on the Secretariat and coordination of Agencies, but he firmly advocated concentration in New York, restating the internationalist policy of a centralised and integrated UN System. He rejected concentration of the economic and social Agencies and ECOSOC in Geneva: "I can only regard with dismay the splitting-up of the United Nations Organisation which any such scheme would imply." In a few years "...it is quite possible that the Economic and Social work of the United Nations may become much more important than the political." The centre of gravity of the UN would then be shifted to Europe, which the Americans would contest.⁶⁹

The Cabinet quickly accepted the recommendations on the Secretariat but there was considerable debate over coordination and the location of Agencies. On the Secretariat Ministers agreed to revive the proposal for Lie to appoint a deputy but agreed to give the Secretariat more time to settle down before formally criticising Lie, holding off at least until the next Assembly in September 1947. On coordination there was significant resistance to the list of priorities proposed by Morrison. Ministers rejected prioritising political and military security issues and insisted on equal treatment for international cooperation on economic issues, which should be amended to general economic cooperation and not just rehabilitation. The UN, they argued, was about far more than simply political and military security. As Minister of Defence Alexander expressed it, security and economic cooperation were "first and equal." It was also argued that positive economic and social issues may encourage habits of working together. Bevan made the argument that security was about more than political and military issues: "Security won't necessarily be secured by concentratg. on Security ques. May achieve a better climate for Security thro' eg.

⁶⁹ Cabinet paper, Report of Interdepartmental Working Party, Covering note, CAB 129/18/14 CP(47)114.

UNESCO.”⁷⁰ This was a restatement of the ideas of a Positive Peace and the indivisibility of political and economic and social security.

On location of international organisations, the Cabinet decision reflected increasing support for avowedly pragmatic selection of locations to meet the needs of individual Agencies and the downgrading of centralisation to support an integrated UN System. It did, though, reconfirm siting ECOSOC together with other UN organs and locating the UN Secretariat in one place. Despite the failure of the Working Party to recommend any specific policy McNeil asked the Cabinet to reverse their conclusions from the November 7, 1946, meeting and confirm support for centralisation in New York, arguing that dispersal of Agencies would make coordination more difficult and separating the political and economic and social functions of the UN if ECOSOC moved to Geneva would be “most unfortunate”. The Cabinet refused. Noel-Baker predictably supported centralisation, as did Minister of Labour George Isaacs, but other Ministers argued for Agencies in their functional areas to be located away from both New York and Geneva.⁷¹ As Cripps pointed out, the UK had acted on their previous decision and were now publicly committed for sites outside the US for UNESCO, ITO, FAO, PICAQ and WHO. Mostly, Ministers argued case by case for their own Agencies, but Bevan again made the case for dispersal in principle to separate technical Agencies from political influence, supporting a more autonomous functional approach. New York was disliked due to cost, but several Ministers (Tom Williams, Cripps, Bevan) also criticised the influence of American pressure groups on international bodies. However, the Cabinet also decisively rejected Geneva as a UN hub, preferring to distribute agencies around Western European cities, including London (Bevan wanted the WHO in London).

⁷⁰ Cabinet meeting, April 3, 1947, CAB 128/9/35 CM(47)35; verbatim quotes from Cabinet Notebook, CAB 195/5/35.

⁷¹ Isaacs circulated a separate paper before the Cabinet meeting arguing that the ILO needed to be co-located with ECOSOC and other Agencies, and New York was the best location for this: “I believe that the importance of having the specialised agencies in question located at the headquarters of the United Nations and within a short distance of the headquarters of the Bank and the Fund... is an absolutely decisive consideration.” Cabinet paper by Isaacs, United Nations Organisation, April 2, 1947, CAB 129/18/20 CP(47)120.

Ministers agreed to reconfirm the November 1946 decision to disperse Agencies and opposed creating a new hub in Geneva.⁷²

This debate over ECOSOC's location shows Ministers continued to view the economic and social functions as equal to the political and security responsibilities. McNeil repeated the argument that ECOSOC was "...designed to co-ordinate sp. agencies". Arguing for centralisation in New York, he thought economic and social issues may become more important than the political and military functions of the UN if the former were moved to Geneva and allowed to develop separately. However, Ministers were concerned that centralisation could mean the political dominated unduly over the economic and social, indicating continued support for the UN's economic and social governance role. They argued dispersal of Agencies may protect the UN's economic and social functions. Bevan again made the functionalist case for dispersal in principle to separate technical Agencies from political influence. Also, as Attlee, summing up, pointed out, if Agencies were dispersed and not concentrated in a single location outside New York there was no need for ECOSOC to move away from the other UN organs and thereby split the Secretariat. Ministers thus explicitly rejected giving priority to political and military security issues over the economic and social.⁷³

These ministerial debates in 1946 and 1947 show the continued belief by senior policymakers that economic and social functions were integral to the UN. They were a reaffirmation not only of the equality of the economic and social functions of the UN with the political and military security functions but also the belief they were closely linked. For UK policymakers the UN remained an integrated instrument of international governance not simply a collective security body, even if Agencies were to be dispersed geographically.

⁷² Cabinet meeting, April 3, 1947, CAB 128/9/35 CM(47)35; verbatim quotes from Cabinet Notebook, CAB 195/5/35; for functionalist argument of autonomy for Agencies from a centralised and politicised UN as the basis for Morrison's concern, see letter Myrddin Evans (Ministry of Labour) to Jebb, February 1, 1947, FO371/67485A UN841/2/78.

⁷³ Cabinet meeting, April 3, 1947, CAB 128/9/35 CM(47)35; verbatim quotes from Cabinet Notebook, CAB 195/5/35; see also McNeil's covering note in CAB 129/18/14 CP(47)114.

There was no concern that active international bodies would encroach on state sovereignty and undertake action that was the responsibility of the state. On the contrary, policymakers, especially Ministers, wanted more executive action from the UN's Agencies. Of course, this would be subject to the oversight of national governments through Agency governance and ECOSOC, which was always intended to be an intergovernmental body even if it received advice from independent experts, and the British had constructed governance processes within the Agencies and the UN that protected British power. Also, the British had an implicit assumption that their positions were reasonable and non-ideological, and that reasonable people would accept this. Only those looking to politicise international governance, or those acting in bad faith, could fail to see the virtues of the British position when explained clearly.

This is not to argue that the performance of the economic and social functions of the UN were more important to policymakers than the political and security. Ministers and officials poured a great deal of effort into bemoaning and addressing the increasing dysfunction of the Security Council (especially over the veto) and related collective security bodies, and the perceived failings of a General Assembly which exhibited more independence than they felt comfortable with. Rather, the point here is that economic and social responsibilities continued to be seen as integral to the international governance role of the UN, and Ministers continued to care that it should perform this role effectively. UK policymakers invested scarce time and effort into this aspect of the UN System not only during planning for the UN but also once it was operational.

6.3 Follow up to the April 1947 Cabinet meeting

While the April 1947 Cabinet meeting, and the meetings that preceded it, was not a decisive break in UK policy it illustrated the direction of ministerial thinking on the economic and social functions of the UN as the organisation evolved. After April 1947 UK representatives no longer argued for Agencies to be located at a centralised

UN site.⁷⁴ The UK took an ad hoc approach to the location of Agencies, with a bias toward locations in western Europe, including London.⁷⁵ Departments discussed which Agencies they might like to locate in London, but after discussions with the French and other allies it was clear there was little appetite amongst other states for London as a base and nothing came of this, with the exception of the International Maritime Organisation, which was agreed in 1948 but did not meet until 1959.⁷⁶ Meanwhile, the British continued to argue strongly to limit new Agencies or Commissions and reduce ad hoc Conferences. In August 1947, as part of a general cost cutting exercise in response to the balance of payments crisis, the Cabinet directed the IOC to identify meetings that were not “essential” and may be cancelled and Bevin circulated the results to the Cabinet in September 1947.⁷⁷

Criticisms of the Secretariat were also to become a regular feature of public UK comment on the UN. For instance in his speech to the General Assembly in September 1947 McNeil complained at “the growth of the Organisation and its appetite for money” and the “unjustifiable extensions of the Secretariat”.⁷⁸ It should be noted, though, that in 1947 there was little of the anti-communism that later became a feature of criticisms of the Secretariat, though Cadogan criticised Jebb for concentrating too much on efficiency and not enough on “the question of ideological bias, which we have learnt from the past year to be an important factor in Secretariat activities.” Cadogan singled out individuals (the Russian Sobolev, the American Abe Feller and the Norwegian Colonel Roscher Lund) who “seem to us to represent a real danger, rather than merely an element of weakness or obstinacy; and in general there is within the Secretariat a large number of 'starry-eyed' left-wing sympathisers who, while doubtless well-intentioned themselves, are apt to

⁷⁴ For instructions to the IOC to adhere to the Cabinet conclusions see IOC(47)88 and IOC(47)89, April 25, 1947, CAB 134/382.

⁷⁵ Bevan, Minister of Health, lobbied for WHO to be located in London, and the April 3 1947 Cabinet meeting approved attempts to establish at least one Agency in London. CAB 128/9/35 CM(47)35.

⁷⁶ IOC meetings and papers, May 1947; IOC(47)15th meeting, June 19, 1947, CAB 134/379.

⁷⁷ See Cabinet meeting, August 25, 1947, CAB 128/10/25 CM(47)74; paper by Bevin, ‘International Meetings’, September 29, 1947, CAB 129/21/21 CP(47)271.

⁷⁸ General Assembly 88th Plenary meeting, September 22, 1947, UN document A/PV/88.

become instruments of intrigue in the hands of some of their more hard-headed colleagues."⁷⁹

At the 1947 General Assembly the British delegation launched what McNeil termed their "economy drive" in the Fifth (Budget and Administrative) Committee arguing for economies in the Secretariat and limiting international meetings to those that were essential.⁸⁰ They also lobbied Secretary-General Lie and though no formal Deputy Secretary-General was appointed as proposed by the Cabinet, an Australian, Commander Jackson, was appointed to Lie's staff at Assistant Secretary-General level in early 1948 with responsibility for administration, a position approved of, if not engineered, by the UK Government.⁸¹

Ongoing British concern at cost control is evident in policy toward the ECOSOC Co-ordination Committee. Established by ECOSOC in October 1946, the Co-ordination Committee consisted of the Secretary-General and the heads of those Agencies with a formal agreement with the UN and was intended to co-ordinate with the Agencies.⁸² The British strongly supported its role in administrative co-operation. As one commentator wrote of the 6th ECOSOC Council in February/March 1948: "The foremost champion of the Coordination Committee was the UK representative".⁸³ However, the UK saw its role as cost-reduction and operational and administrative efficiency, and opposed American suggestions it also address policy coordination,

⁷⁹ March 24, 1947: letter Cadogan to Jebb, FO371/67485A UN2614/2/78. Feller committed suicide in 1951 during investigations into communist infiltration of the UN. For Cadogan's negativity on the Secretariat see his annual review of the UN for 1946, March 27, 1947, FO371/67509A UN2345/18/78.

⁸⁰ Tel 2820, McNeil to Bevin, October 8, 1947, FO 800/509, doc UN/47/10; IOC(47)29th meeting, October 10, 1947, CAB 134/379; for the UK initiative for 'economy' see also comments by Cadogan in his annual review for 1947, Cadogan to Bevin, May 12, 1948, FO371/72676 UN1033/32/78; and McNeil's review of the 2nd General Assembly circulated to Cabinet, December 17, 1947, CAB 129/22/45 CP(47)335, para 11.

⁸¹ See correspondence between Jackson and Bridges (PUS Treasury) in November 1947, and McNeil to Mayhew (in New York for the Assembly), November 24, 1947, Bevin Papers FO800/509, docs UN/47/17. 18. 24 and 25. Jackson was an Australian national who worked with UNRRA after the war. He spent most of his time at the UN working on Palestine rather than administrative efficiency. For Jackson see Gibson, *Jacko, Where Are You Now?*; Lie, *In the Cause of Peace*, 175–85; Mazower, *Governing the World*, 281–83.

⁸² The Co-ordination Committee was set up at the 3rd Council, October 8, 1946. Report of ECOSOC to General Assembly, Jan 23 to Oct 3, 1946, p48. Document A/125, October 21, 1946.

⁸³ Sharp, 'The Specialized Agencies and the United Nations', 1948, 260.

which the British believed should remain with governments through the full Council and its Commissions.⁸⁴ As the March 1947 Cabinet paper on co-ordination of international organisations put it, the Co-ordination Committee “is intended to co-ordinate machinery rather than policy”.⁸⁵ As the Administrative Committee on Coordination, and later the Chief Executive’s Board, this became a significant part of ECOSOC’s coordinating machinery with the Agencies, but as the British wished it remained focussed on administrative and financial issues and avoided policy co-ordination.⁸⁶

The Secretariat had their own perspective. Much of the UK’s criticism was targeted at the ECOSOC Social Commission, and the Social Department of the Secretariat under Henri Laugier, described by Jebb as a man of “unquestioned brilliance but...of small judgement” and a “great ‘Empire builder’”.⁸⁷ Laugier, though, felt that governments acquiesced too much in the wishes of the Agencies to retain their autonomy preventing the Secretariat from exercising the necessary coordination, and that some degree of overlap was positive. He also complained at coordination by “financial and budgetary experts”, overruling technical experts in economics and social affairs.⁸⁸

It should be noted this was not just a UK concern. There was an exponential increase in the number of multilateral meetings in the years after the war which prompted complaints by many delegations. In April 1947 the UN Conference Division estimated that the number of meetings the UN Secretariat would be called upon to service

⁸⁴ Note by FO, July 31, 1946, ‘ECOSOC: Co-ordination Committee’, IOC(46)30 CAB 134/377; IOC(47)1st meeting, January 15, 1947, and IOC(47)3rd meeting, January 30, 1947, both CAB 134/379.

⁸⁵ Cabinet paper, Report of Interdepartmental Working Party, March 28, 1947, p17, CAB 129/18/14 CP(47)114.

⁸⁶ Sharp, *The United Nations Economic and Social Council*, 20–24; Gordenker, ‘The UN System’, 231. For the ACC as predecessor to the CEB see the CEB’s own website, at <https://unsceb.org/faq>, accessed March 12, 2022.

⁸⁷ Draft report on the Secretariat by Jebb, January 1947, FO371/67485A UN608/2/78, para 16; letter Myrddin Evans to Jebb, February 18, 1947, FO371/67563 UN1297/190/78; for the Social Commission as “a great disappointment” see speech by McNeil, General Assembly 88th Plenary meeting, September 22, 1947, UN document A/PV/88.

⁸⁸ See papers on the subject from Laugier, written in a personal capacity, in February 1947 and January 1948, copies in Mitrany papers, Mitrany 51, LSE Archives.

would be 3000 annually in 1947 and 1948, an average of 60-70 a week.⁸⁹ This did not include international meetings outside the UN, such as inter-regional bodies (e.g. Arab League, Inter-American bodies, the OEEC, etc) which also grew quickly.

Opposition to this expansion grew in ECOSOC and in March 1947 the Council's 4th session rejected proposals for a permanent European Transport Organisation and a new body for travel.⁹⁰ Lie himself raised the issue in his September 1947 address to the General Assembly, suggesting a limit on the creation of "new machinery", and the US, Australia and Canada also raised their concerns in the Assembly. The British received considerable support in the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.⁹¹ Much of the criticism called for more careful ECOSOC coordination of Agency programmes, and the Assembly directed the Council to "give constant attention to the factor of the relative priority of proposals and to consider as a matter of urgency...[steps]...to develop effective coordination of the programs of the United Nations and its subsidiary organs and the specialised agencies."⁹² The Assembly rejected proposals from Greece and Belgium to further increase ECOSOC's role in deciding the priorities of the Agencies.⁹³

Ministerial complaints at inefficiency and cost were also related to the dire economic situation in which the British found themselves in the immediate post-war period. International cooperation was regarded as an additional cost, both in terms of administrative and operational expenses and in staffing delegations to organisations and conferences. As early as August 1945 Dalton warned the UK could not afford additional contributions to UNRRA, and in October 1946 he objected to "improvident

⁸⁹ Sharp, 'The Specialized Agencies and the United Nations', 1947, 472.

⁹⁰ 'Economic and Social Council'.

⁹¹ Sharp, 'The Specialized Agencies and the United Nations', 1947, 473-74; Sharp, 'The Specialized Agencies and the United Nations', 1948, 253-55.

⁹² This was directed at cost-savings rather than a confirmation of the Council's policy role, "to promote the most efficient and practical use of the resources of the United Nations and the specialised agencies". UN document A/497; Resolution 125 (II).

⁹³ Sharp, 'The Specialized Agencies and the United Nations', 1948, 256-57.

good nature expenditure" and told the Cabinet he opposed British "use of dollars for the benefit of others".⁹⁴

Ministers agreed they could ill-afford hard dollars. They were embarrassed when the International Children's Fund sought to raise funds through public donations in member countries in early 1947 as these would be collected in sterling but need to be paid in dollars. The Treasury ruled "restrictions would need to be imposed on the disposal of any contributions raised in this country in order to safeguard our balance of payments".⁹⁵ For the same reason contributions to post-UNRRA relief were made in goods in kind rather than cash, which usually meant dollars, and at much reduced values.⁹⁶

There was also concern at reputational risk. Britain had a position in the international hierarchy to uphold which could be damaged if it were seen Britain could not meet the cost of its role. Dalton specifically warned against committing to international expenditure for reasons of "prestige", but it also encouraged them to prevent initiatives which might entail cost. Dalton told Noel-Baker the UK could not meet demands for large budgets for the IRO "...however strong the case on prestige grounds..."⁹⁷ This did not prevent McNeill acknowledging to the General Assembly in September 1947 "our own temporarily straitened circumstances" when challenging UN costs.⁹⁸

Concerns intensified in summer 1947 when the major balance of payments crisis forced severe cutbacks on overseas expenditure. Cuts in international meetings

⁹⁴ Meeting Bevin, Dalton, Noel-Baker, August 20, 1945, Bullen, *DBPO Ser 3 Vol 1*, doc 12; Cabinet meeting, October 15, 1946, CAB 128/6/24 CM(46)86 and verbatim Cabinet Notebook, CAB 195/4/65.

⁹⁵ IOC(47)8th meeting CAB 134/379. The initial UNRRA proposal was endorsed at the 3rd ECOSOC Council, September 30, 1946 and approved by the Assembly. 'International Organization, 1947, Vol 1, Issue 1', 109, 65. The proposal for a 'pay day' collection was made by Norway and approved at the 4th ECOSOC Council in March 1947.

⁹⁶ For instance, the UK donated wool for Greece and rubber for Hungary. IOC(47)8th meeting CAB 134/379.

⁹⁷ Dalton to Noel-Baker, May 6, 1946. FO371/52882 WR1483/1337/48. See also Dalton to Noel-Baker, May 22, 1946, *ibid*.

⁹⁸ McNeill speech to 88th Plenary meeting, September 22, 1947, UN doc A/PV/88.

demanded by Morrison in August 1947 were part of broader emergency cost-cutting measures.⁹⁹ British attempts to reduce international expenditure needs to be seen in this context of economic challenge and demonstrations of international cost control at a time of domestic austerity. Their public criticism of the UN bureaucracy did not indicate opposition to the UN's role. Nor was it a challenge to international cooperation. It was motivated by concern that the UK could not afford the cost, an admission that could damage its pretensions to Great Power status. Ministers remained committed to a strong and active UN, though one focused on fewer activities and incurring less cost.

6.4 Experts and Politicisation

The continued support of ECOSOC's role and a UN System confirmed by the 1946-47 Cabinet debates also reflected the belief in multilateral scientific management and planning that remained a central assumption of Ministers. At the FAO Conference in September 1946 the Minister of Food John Strachey criticised the human cost of the failure to plan: "There is the inherent and formidable tendency of an unplanned economic system to keep the masses of the population down to as near a subsistence level as it can...All those who believe in planning are sometimes accused of wishing to interfere for interference sake. It is not so. We interfere because we have found by bitter, horrible experience, by experience which has already almost destroyed the world, what happens when the system is allowed to work itself according to its own laws." He advocated reference of the FAO's World Food Plan to ECOSOC which "would bring it [the WFB] into direct relationship with the whole international economic structure which we are attempting to rear. It would bring it into an indispensable relation with the International Bank and the monetary Fund..."¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Cabinet paper by Morrison, 'Administrative Measures for the Emergency', August 22, 1947, CAB 129/20/37 CP(47)237; Cabinet meeting, August 25, 1947, CAB 128/10/25 CM(47)74.

¹⁰⁰ Copy of speech by John Strachey, Minister of Food, September 4, 1946, MAF 83/3207.

Similarly, in October 1946 Cripps opened the ITO Preparatory Commission with a speech arguing: “there is no security in peace unless we can deal internationally with the major social, economic, political...questions... [I]t is an essential part of the work of the United Nations in their endeavour to stabilise peace that they should achieve an agreement as to the manner in which the nations can co-operate for the promotion of the highest level of employment and the maintenance of demand, and can bring some degree of regulation into world trade and commerce...Just as in the political sphere we seek some corporate security for the world; so in the economic sphere we need to regulate the use of economic armaments.”¹⁰¹

These speeches can be dismissed as public rhetoric, but the principles of intervention and planning which animated thinking during the creation of the Bretton Woods and related institutions were not immediately abandoned in the post-war period. The Labour government continued to argue both in private and public for international planning and coordinated interventionist policy through the UN System and during 1945-47 this was backed-up by practical attempts to implement such ideas through UN bodies. This was not simply out of humanitarian concern for human security but rather represented adoption of the apparent idealism of multilateralism to manage the world, an essentially realist endeavour. Ministers believed they needed an effective UN to deliver this.

This belief in scientific management found expression in support for the involvement of individual experts in the UN System. Their faith in experts reduced issues such as food supply and health, and the management of the international economy, to technical problems susceptible to technocratic international governance. It also encouraged UK policymakers to view Agencies as centres of technical expertise, to be managed by experts.¹⁰² UK representatives argued for a significant advisory role for experts in ECOSOC and the Agencies to ensure the UN had access to essential

¹⁰¹ ITO Preparatory Commission First Session, Plenary Meetings, Verbatim Records, E/PC/T/PV/1, p3ff.

¹⁰² For the use of the terms ‘scientific’ and ‘expert’, and ‘technical’ as synonyms by international thinkers in the first half of the 20th Century, see Fritz, ‘Internationalism and the Promise of Science’, 143–44.

technical knowledge. In debates in 1946 over the establishment of ECOSOC Commissions and sub-Commissions the British argued for mixed representation of experts and government representatives rather than simply national delegates.¹⁰³ The UK proposed that sub-commissions of the Economic and Employment Commission of ECOSOC should be composed entirely of experts acting on an individual, not national, basis.¹⁰⁴

The UK attitude to experts, as well as to so-called technical rules, was evident in the debates over the structures of the Bank and Fund at Savannah in March 1946. Rosenthal (2005, 2018), ul Haq, (1995) and Singer (1995) argue that autonomy for the Bank and Fund was engineered to ensure the Agencies could operate under US and British control through the weighted voting systems adopted in both bodies without the interference of the less controllable United Nations.¹⁰⁵ Anglo-American differences at Savannah over the location, operating model and Directors' salaries of the Bank and the Fund have been extensively documented.¹⁰⁶ Staples (2006) argues the UK wanted close government control over the Bank and the Fund whereas the Americans preferred an independent organisation.¹⁰⁷ Benn Steil (2013) also sees a British attempt to politicise the Fund and Bank.¹⁰⁸ However, debates over the composition of the governance of both bodies in early 1946 show that the positions were reversed. Staples' claim that "the British did not want to create a new class of international bureaucrats who had more prestige, authority and money than national leaders" is misleading. As Skidelsky (2001) and Gardner (1980) have shown,

¹⁰³ Meeting of the Economic and Social interdepartmental officials meeting, July 17, 1946, IOC(46)18, CAB 134/377; 'International Organization, 1947, Vol 1, Issue 1'; Loveday suggested this came from the British preference for the wartime model of working parties of officials which underpinned the Combined Boards, Loveday, 'An Unfortunate Decision', 280–81.

¹⁰⁴ ECOSOC Doc E/JC/W1, June 1946; Summary of ECOSOC Council 2nd session, July 7, 1946, para 10, IOC(46)11 CAB 134/377.

¹⁰⁵ Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations: An Issues Paper*, 15 : Occasional papers-New York:38; Rosenthal, 'Economic and Social Council'; Haq, 'An Economic Security Council', 22; Singer, 'Bretton Woods and the UN System'.

¹⁰⁶ Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 465–68; Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 20–21; Steil, *The Battle of Bretton Woods*; Dormael, *Bretton Woods*, 299; Horsefield, *The International Monetary Fund. 1945 - 1965 Vol. 1*, 122–35; Mason and Asher, *The World Bank since Bretton Woods*, 37–40.

¹⁰⁷ Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 20–21.

¹⁰⁸ Steil, *The Battle of Bretton Woods*, 245–46.

having failed to convince the Americans at Bretton Woods that the Executive Directors of the Agencies should be international civil servants the British insistence at Savannah that Executive Directors, who were government appointees and, as one Treasury official expressed it, “primarily a representative of his country”, should be part-time representatives from national Treasuries or Central banks was designed to leave the daily operations of the Agencies in the hands of independent experts in the staff of both bodies applying agreed rules to what they deemed technical questions.¹⁰⁹

Armand van Dormael (1974) correctly argues the British believed the Fund should have limited discretion to determine whether governments were abiding by agreed principles, but this was not to limit the independence of the Fund.¹¹⁰ UK policymakers worked hard through the Washington Talks and Bretton Woods negotiations to agree objective criteria and rules permitting national action in case of predefined balance of payments problems, widely anticipated for the post-war UK economy. They were determined these rules should be applied by disinterested international experts without political (especially US) interference. Keynes also argued the bodies should be in New York rather than Washington as this had the dual advantages of closer cooperation with ECOSOC and the UN and of reducing the direct influence of the US Administration. As a Foreign Office memo of January 1946 put it, the British wanted the Bank and the Fund to be “truly international organisations” with “an accomplished staff of experts chosen almost exclusively on the grounds of ability and experience and as little liable as possible to political pressure from their own governments”.¹¹¹ The Americans, meanwhile, expected daily operations to be managed directly by the Executive Directors appointed by their governments, giving the Administration direct influence. They also favoured separation from ECOSOC. The new IBRD President Eugene Meyer, an American financier and proprietor of the Washington Post, was reported saying that a close

¹⁰⁹ Tel 28 CAMER, Eady (Treasury) to Lee (Washington Embassy), January 12, 1946, FO371/52960 UE158/6/53; Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 465–66.

¹¹⁰ Dormael, *Bretton Woods*, 299.

¹¹¹ Memo by Gandy, undated but January 1946, FO371/52960 UE288/6/53.

association with the UN would make the Bank “semi-political in its nature” whereas he believed it should operate on a purely commercial basis, funded through the New York financial markets which were hostile to the IBRD’s original purpose.¹¹² The British were outvoted at Savannah which only increased British fears of US influence.

American political interference was evident when the US National Advisory Council (NAC) began subjecting the American Executive Director to close supervision, as promised to satisfy an increasingly nationalistic Congress to pass the Bretton Woods Act.¹¹³ This included a requirement to pass all documents circulated to the Executive Directors to the NAC. According to the UK Executive Director of the Fund, George Bolton, this “subjected the US Executive Director to complete national control”, and Gordon Munro, UK Treasury adviser at the Washington Embassy, claimed that “so far as the Bank and Fund were concerned the policy of the US representatives would be dictated by the US National Advisory Council and they could not be regarded as international organisations.”¹¹⁴ In September 1946 H.M. Phillips, economic adviser at the Washington embassy, claimed the American Executive Directors of both the Fund (White) and Bank (Winant) were instructed by the NAC to oppose formal agreements with the UN.¹¹⁵ Staples plays down the significance of the NAC role, calling it normal consultation, but this is not how UK policymakers at the time saw it.¹¹⁶

¹¹² The ‘semi political’ comment was reported by Grigg, meeting of Treasury delegation to ECOSOC, Washington, September 18, 1946. At the same meeting Treasury officials concluded: “New York bankers do not accept that the Bank is necessary to the US interests...” Noel-Baker Papers, NBKR 4/760. Vinson, ‘After the Savannah Conference’.

¹¹³ The American Executive Director was to be ‘accountable’ to the National Advisory Council, which consisted of the Secretaries of State, Treasury and Commerce, plus the Chairmen of the Federal Reserve Board and Export-Import Bank. Keynes described it as “in effect the [US] Cabinet Committee for all questions of foreign finance and lending”. Keynes (Savannah) to FO, March 6, 1946, FO371/52962 UE969/6/53; Horsefield, *The International Monetary Fund. 1945 - 1965 Vol. 1*, 133; See also Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy*, 263–65; Schild, *Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks*, 99–100.

¹¹⁴ Information on the role of the NAC came directly from Harry Dexter White, the US Executive Director of the Fund. Meeting of the Treasury Delegation at the 3rd ECOSOC Council, September 18, 1946, Noel-Baker Papers, NBKR 4/760.

¹¹⁵ Phillips to Gore-Booth, September 8, 1946, FO371/59746 UN1931/57/78.

¹¹⁶ Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 19–20.

However, UK policymakers regarded governmental oversight of decisions as essential. As we saw in Chapter Four, in wartime planning the British were clear that economic and social functions required political oversight. During 1946 the Treasury and other departments insisted that governments needed to approve any of their nationals as 'experts', effectively undermining their independence.¹¹⁷ The need for government oversight was one reason why UK policymakers rejected a role in policy coordination for ECOSOC's Co-ordination Committee, which consisted of the Secretary-General and the heads of the Agencies, reserving this for the intergovernmental ECOSOC Council.¹¹⁸ Meade also argued that representatives of governments and national treasuries and banks were needed in ECOSOC as these alone could commit governments to action.¹¹⁹ This position with respect to experts hardened over time. In 1944 the British had supported an FAO Executive Council of experts, not government representatives, but by August 1946 they informed Orr they wanted this changed to national appointees.¹²⁰ The British, with American support, successfully overturned the constitution and a new Executive Council of government representatives was confirmed at the FAO meeting in Geneva in September 1947.¹²¹ If control was not secured through rules it needed to be assured through representation on decision making bodies.

This assumption that the work of ECOSOC and the specialised Agencies was technical also led UK policymakers, both Ministers and officials, to complain increasingly at the 'politicisation' of ECOSOC and the economic and social functions of the UN. UK policymakers saw economic and social issues as technical and somehow beyond political dispute. In 1946-47 the Cold War did not impinge on ECOSOC to the same

¹¹⁷ Meeting of Economic and Social Group, August 8, 1946, IOC(46)34 CAB 134/377; see also comments by Phillips, UK ECOSOC representative, that as "a Russian was inevitably a representative of his Government", for the UK it would be "unsatisfactory" if UK nationals were appointed and the government was "unable to control their activities", IOC(46)4th meeting, August 1, 1946, CAB 134/377.

¹¹⁸ Paper by FO, 'ECOSOC Co-ordination Commission', July 31, 1946, IOC(46)30 CAB 134/377.

¹¹⁹ Meade cabinet diary, August 26, 1945, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 120.

¹²⁰ Broadley to Orr, August 2, 1946, FO371/58310 UR7155/292/851.

¹²¹ UK brief for FAO Geneva conference, August 1947, IOC(47)170 CAB 134/384. The British argued the Executive Committee "would be a more effective body if its members were Government representatives", IOC(47)21st meeting, August 14, 1947, CAB 134/379; 'Food and Agriculture Organization', 1948.

extent as it did the Security Council, and these criticisms were directed at smaller states rather than Russia. Cadogan commented that in the “economic sphere” (as well as disarmament) there was “no obvious reason why the Soviet Union’s views should differ radically for those of the other Great Powers”, a curious comment given the fundamental ideological differences already apparent between east and west but illustrative of less fractious relations in ECOSOC and the Agencies.¹²²

Cadogan also repeatedly proposed the Security Council take on economic and social tasks in the belief these were somehow apolitical and would enable the Security Council to develop habits of cooperation on “non-political”, and by implication non-controversial, matters.¹²³ However, policymakers rejected this for fear the Security Council would politicise the technical.¹²⁴

In ECOSOC the British faced challenges not only from the Russians and their allies but also from the smaller states, and differences between developed and less developed states emerged from the beginning. As Cadogan complained in March 1947, alignments in ECOSOC “cut across political divisions” with what he dismissively called a “Crazy Gang” of Latin Americans, supported by Middle Eastern states, putting forward “chimerical proposals based on the hope that the United Nations could make them substantial grants of money or services”.¹²⁵ In 1948 Cadogan described disagreements in ECOSOC (and the Assembly) between developed and an increasingly organised ‘under-developed’ group of states, criticising the latter’s proposals as “unpractical”, the worst sin for UK policymakers.¹²⁶ However, by 1949 Cadogan reported that the realisation of the “under-capitalised countries” of Latin America, the Middle East and Far East of their dependence on US investment had made them more amenable to western positions.¹²⁷ In an echo of wartime

¹²² Cadogan to Bevin, May 12, 1948, FO371/72676 UN1033/32/78.

¹²³ Letter, Cadogan to Bevin, April 18, 1946, Yasamee et al., *DBPO, Ser. 1, Vol. 7*, doc 36; Cadogan to Attlee, March 27, 1947, FO371/67509A UN2345/18/78, para 3.

¹²⁴ See minutes by Ward, Beckett, Butler and Warner, June/July 1946 who were unanimous in their rejection; and holding response from Bevin to Cadogan, April 27, 1946, all in FO371/57247 U5636/1043/70.

¹²⁵ Cadogan to Attlee, March 27, 1947, FO371/67509A UN2345/18/78.

¹²⁶ Cadogan to Bevin, May 12, 1948, FO371/72676 UN1033/32/78, para 60. The term ‘under-developed’ was routinely used in the 1940s.

¹²⁷ Cadogan to Bevin, May 31, 1949, FO371/ UN1115/274/78, para 97.

complaints about idealists by the self-identified practical British, Cadogan complained at the “theorists”, both in delegations and the Secretariat, “who want all the world’s social problems settled in a resolution and a day, and resent our more practical approach.”¹²⁸

The accusation of politicisation was directed especially at calls for economic development, invoking Article 55 of the Charter, and the complaints of smaller and less developed states at inequalities in the international economy.¹²⁹ While Toye and Toye (2006) suggest interest in development replaced full employment in the 1950s, economic development featured in ECOSOC from its creation in 1946.¹³⁰ UK policymakers expected ECOSOC to prioritise issues of concern to the UK, such as full employment, so when smaller and less developed states raised economic development this was dismissed as “chimerical”, not simply incorrect but illegitimate. Policymakers were unwilling to accept the legitimacy of the case of less developed states for economic development and criticised them for being, in Cadogan’s words, “unpractical”.¹³¹

Concern at alleged politicisation is also evidence that UK policymakers felt a loss of control over the discourse in ECOSOC and the Agencies. Attempts to challenge UK views were often criticised as bad faith rather than principled objections or legitimate points of view. Assumptions of British moral and intellectual superiority led policymakers to assume that rational and scientific approaches would confirm British understandings of the world. Deviation from this was ascribed to bad faith or illegitimate politicisation of issues, undermining objective technocracy. A technical approach concentrated on improving existing conditions. Calls for structural change challenged the status quo and were thus condemned as political. It also suggested concern about ECOSOC developing its organisational autonomy, undermining the control of member states, a concern also occasionally directed at the Secretariat. It is

¹²⁸ Cadogan to Attlee, March 27, 1947, FO371/67509A UN2345/18/78, para 19.

¹²⁹ Cadogan to Bevin, May 31, 1949, FO371/ UN1115/274/78, para 101.

¹³⁰ Toye and Toye, ‘How the UN Moved From Full Employment to Economic Development’.

¹³¹ Cadogan to Bevin, May 12, 1948, FO371/72676 UN1033/32/78, para 60.

an indication that during this interregnum period, before the Cold War came to dominate the UN, the dynamic of multipolar international governance would still be uncomfortable for the British and foreshadowed North-South fault lines that would be more evident in the coming decades as the UN became a platform for decolonisation. The India/SA dispute of 1946 is outside the scope of this thesis but suggests the same fault lines were intrinsic to the universalist UN from the outset.

Fears of politicisation increased support amongst policymakers for a more functionalist structure, with some policymakers wanting a more detached relationship between Agencies and the UN, including ECOSOC. At Cabinet in July 1946 Bevan had argued for autonomous functional agencies and he returned to the theme in November 1946, arguing that the problem was not with the number of Agencies but “in associating them with the UN...[There was] much to be said for internatl agencies at functional level viz. not with UN when they become playground for international politicians.” International meetings of technical experts, which Ministers supported, might be “exploited for political purposes”, which would reduce their value.¹³² This criticism of the UN represented the first suggestion of a shift from an integrated UN System toward a more functional arrangement of autonomous Agencies. However, during 1946-47 most Ministers, and many of their officials, continued to advocate an integrated UN System of specialised Agencies, with ECOSOC playing a central coordinating role, contrary to the arguments of Rosenthal (2005, 2018), ul Haq (1995) and Kennedy (2006).

6.5 Conclusion

In 1945-47 UK policymakers pursued the policies they had advocated during the creation of the UN, supporting a centralised UN System of economic, social, and cultural Agencies coordinated by a strong ECOSOC. They maintained this position through the 1945 Preparatory Commission and the early meetings of the UN.

¹³² Cabinet meeting, July 22, 1946, CAB 128/6/9 CM(46)71; and verbatim Cabinet Notebooks, CAB 195/4/55; Cabinet meeting, November 7, 1946, CAB 128/6/33 CM(46)95, Cabinet Notebooks CAB 195/4/74. See similar comments by Bevan at the Cabinet meeting, April 3, 1947, CAB 128/9/35 CM(47)35, Cabinet Notebook, CAB 195/5/35.

Rosenthal's argument that the British promoted the Bretton Woods institutions over ECOSOC from the outset is incorrect. Through 1946 UK policymakers grew concerned at the reluctance of IBRD and IMF to sign formal agreements with ECOSOC, and their retreat from the role UK internationalists expected them to play in managing international demand to maintain full employment. Although Ministers became frustrated at the perceived ineffectiveness of the UN's economic and social functions they remained committed to the idea of an interventionist and active world organisation, both to strengthen security and to achieve their domestic objectives. Rather than idealist they regarded this as the most effective means of securing UK interests.

The inherent inequality in the UN structure, and Ministers' insistence on interventionist economic policies over *laissez-faire*, underlined the extent to which this interregnum UN order, liberal internationalism 1.5, remained an illiberal internationalism. Mazower's (2009) argument that UK policymakers used the UN to protect the ideas underpinning the Empire is borne out in the sense that British conceptions of ECOSOC reflected the notion that a central constructor of expertise should dispense planned management of the world and thus reproduced the centre-periphery structure. ECOSOC was useful to the British as long as it affirmed British opinions and expert opinion reflected a British understanding of the world. Deviation from views that coincided with British interests were rejected as political or impractical and therefore not legitimate. This attempt to control the discourse was a projection of British power, seeking to set rules and structures that reproduced their own power. It was, also, as the arguments used by Cripps in his address to the opening of the ITO Preparatory Commission in October 1946 show, an attempt to manage globalisation in a post-imperial world, as suggested by Hopkins (1999). This apparent internationalist idealism was a realist necessity for a modern state with worldwide commitments, and a consensus on this had been achieved between internationalist ministers and their more pragmatic officials.

In one sense concern at politicisation undermined ECOSOC's role as coordinator of an integrated UN System, but this was not at British instigation. ECOSOC and the UN

System lost much purpose, at least in economic issues, when the US decided that it was in their own interests to channel economic assistance for the world economy outside the UN to retain effective control over its use. Fears of Soviet obstruction played a major part in this, but it also represented a retreat from the universal multilateralism represented by the UN. Without American funding, the UN lacked the economic power to make a meaningful contribution to the management of the international economy. Although the British continued to argue the case for international cooperation on full employment in ECOSOC into the 1950's there was little prospect of it playing the coordinating role originally envisaged. The following chapter uses the FAO and the World Food Board proposals of 1946 to illustrate how these dynamics worked in a specific policy area.

7 Chapter Seven: The World Food Board Proposals, July 1946

*"...the only way to keep Governments in line with one another, and to prevent a mere scramble of national self-interest—with all the measures such as dumping, unnatural export subsidies, and restrictionist methods, which would have resulted—was to secure international agreements covering as wide a field as possible of agricultural production and distribution...His Majesty's Government believe...that only by international planning on such a scale, and by cooperation and very great courage in operating the plans drawn up, can these problems be dealt with."*¹

Harold Wilson to House of Commons, February 7, 1947, Debate on World Food Situation

Policymaker concern at the effectiveness of the UN System, but also their fundamental internationalism, was evident in the UK response to proposals by the Director-General of FAO, Sir John Orr, for a World Food Board in the second half of 1946. This chapter uses this as a case study to illustrate key themes of this thesis, including the realist nature of UK internationalism, ministerial concern at the effectiveness of the UN, but their continuing support for an active and interventionist UN System to manage the international system. It shows a commitment to a rules-based order, including terms of trade, but one in which the rules were set, interpreted, and enforced by the UK in their own interests. It also illustrates UK perceptions that changes in American attitudes towards the UN's universalism undermined ECOSOC and coordination of the international economy more than Russian obstruction or the agitation of smaller states.

¹ Wilson to House of Commons, February 7, 1947, Debate on World Food Situation, HC Deb 06 February 1947 vol 432 cc1990-93.

7.1 The FAO World Food Board Proposals

At the May 1946 Special Meeting on the world food crisis the FAO was asked to prepare long term proposals for managing global food supply. In July 1946 Sir John Orr circulated radical proposals for a World Food Board that sought to turn the FAO into an executive body with wide powers over food and agricultural commodities. The failure of Orr's plan marked the end of efforts to enable FAO to play an active and executive role.² The FAO literature suggests joint Anglo-American opposition frustrated Orr's proposal, based on a preference for national, not international, control of food supply and an approach to security which prioritised military security and global alliances over human security and multilateral cooperation, a narrative embraced by Staples (2003, 2006).³ This underestimates the multilateral nature of UK policy and the UK commitment to a UN System. The literature conflates UK and US views or assumes the UK follows US policy, which is incorrect, especially in 1946-47 and misses a serious conflict in their positions.⁴

Orr's 1946 proposal included a buffer stock scheme to hold physical stocks of key commodities (wheat, sugar, certain fats, etc), to set upper and lower price limits on those commodities to stabilise food prices and to encourage greater production by producers assured of a minimum income. This would be managed and administered by a new World Food Board, with the ability to hold and trade food stocks in its own right, as a new international body alongside the existing UN institutions. He also proposed a two-price system to channel emergency food supplies to poorer countries by allowing them to purchase food at lower prices than other importers, or, in extremis, the use of surplus food stocks as free food for the needy.⁵ UK policymakers supported the buffer stocks scheme but had serious reservations at the

² Jachertz, "To Keep Food Out of Politics": The UN Food and Agriculture Organization, 1945–1965', 81.

³ Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 85; See also Staples, 'To Win the Peace'.

⁴ Muir, *The Broken Promise of Agricultural Progress: An Environmental History*, 126.

⁵ For accounts of its origination and a summary of its contents see Jachertz and Nutzenadel, 'Coping With Hunger?', 109–10; Jachertz, 'Stable Agricultural Markets and World Order: FAO and ITO, 1943-49', 183–85; Staples, 'To Win the Peace', 501–5; Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 85–94; Shaw, *World Food Security*, 24–26; Lamartine Yates, *So Bold an Aim*, 80–81.

establishment of a new international body to administer it, and at the proposal for what was known as 'differential pricing'.

The use of buffer stocks to manage international food supply had been UK policy since the 1943 Food Conference and Ministers continued to support the idea.⁶ From 1943 the UK advocated international management of commodities (applicable to multiple commodities, not just agricultural produce) through a multilateral General Commodity Council, to ensure price stability and reliability of supply. The UK policy brief for Hot Springs argued strongly for a continuation of wartime controls into peacetime, especially in the transition from war to peace, with "centralised buying machinery and...pooling and controlling shipping" and "acceptance of the general principle of co-ordinated production, purchase and allocation," a model based on the Combined Food Board (CFB).⁷ Commodity control, though, was to be the responsibility of a new international body overseeing commercial policy, rather than FAO, reflecting the framing of food supply as an economic, not moral or humanitarian, issue. FAO was to be an advisory and scientific body with economic management passed to a separate commercial policy organisation dominated by trading interests, to prevent food producers from creating structures in global food markets that worked against the interests of the UK as the world's largest importer of food. The UK advocated the Commodity Council form part of the proposed International Trade Organisation (ITO).

British support for international commodity control has been missed in the FAO literature, which portrays Britain as opposed to multilateralism in global food supply. Ruth Jachertz (2017) acknowledges the connection between FAO and commercial policy but underestimates UK support for international management of food supply

⁶ The idea of buffer stocks can be traced back to Henry Wallace's 'ever-normal-granary' ideas in the 1930s, also promoted by Frank McDougall, which he was still promoting in 1942, as well as Keynes' own work on UK food security in the late 1930s. Way, *A New Idea Each Morning*, 219–20, 247; Keynes, 'The Policy of Government Storage of Food-Stuffs and Raw Materials'; Similar solutions were floated by Arthur Salter at the League but not progressed, Jachertz and Nutzenadel, 'Coping With Hunger?', 102.

⁷ War Cabinet paper by Anderson, 'Food Conference', April 22, 1943, WP(43)169 CAB 66/36/19.

and misses the link to British attempts to build a coordinated UN System of governance.⁸ Commodity control formed part of Keynes' plans for management of the international economy.⁹ Skidelsky (2001) suggests the buffer stocks plan was never put forward as a British negotiating position in an international forum and was quietly ignored after early 1943,¹⁰ and John Toye (2004) argues the plan was never adopted by the British Government due to Bank of England opposition.¹¹ Ruth Jachertz and Alexander Nutzendahl (2011) even argue the UK opposed buffers stocks and the international control of commodity markets.¹² However, it was discussed informally with the Americans before and during the 1943 Food Conference, and the principles were outlined publicly by Lionel Robbins, who supported the proposal, at the conference itself, with references to buffer stocks included in the final communique of Hot Springs.¹³ It was also directly referred to in a 'Declaration of Principles' circulated by the British at the Conference.¹⁴

⁸ Jachertz, 'Bretton Woods, the International Trade Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization'.

⁹ For Keynes' 'Commod' Plan see War Cabinet paper by William Jowitt, March 5, 1943, 'The International Regulation of Primary Products', WP(43)97 CAB/66/34/47. Jowitt's note covers RP(43)12 of February 5, 1943. See also Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 238–39; Pressnell, *External Economic Policy Since the War. Volume 1*, 86–89; Penrose, *Economic Planning for the Peace*, 67–74; Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*, 22. For Commod, see also Keynes, *Collected Writings Vol 27*, chap. 3.; The idea of buffer stocks itself was not new in this context and can be traced back to Henry Wallace's 'ever-normal-granary' ideas in the 1930s, also promoted by McDougall, which he was still promoting in 1942, as well as Keynes' own work on UK food security in the late 1930s. Way, *A New Idea Each Morning*, 219–20, 247; Keynes, 'The Policy of Government Storage of Food-Stuffs and Raw Materials'; Similar solutions were floated by Arthur Salter at the League but not progressed, Jachertz and Nutzenadel, 'Coping With Hunger?', 102.

¹⁰ Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes. Vol. 3, Fighting for Britain*, 238-9.

¹¹ Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*, 22.

¹² Staples, *The Birth of Development*; Jachertz and Nutzenadel, 'Coping With Hunger?', 111.

¹³ For Robbins' speech see Howson and Moggridge, *Wartime Diaries of Robbins and Meade*, 30-37; For the Anglo-American meetings see May 10, 1945, Robbins discussed buffer stocks informally with Clayton, Howson and Moggridge (1990), p13; May 15, 1943, meeting with Clayton, Appleby and Collado, discussed buffer stocks and agreed the UK delegation would provide a note on commodity control. Redcliffe Maud diary, May 15, papers 3/1, LSE Archives; May 16, 1943, Robbins unofficially gave Pasvolsky a copy of his note on Commodity Controls. Redcliffe Maud diary, May 15, papers 3/1, LSE Archives; Robbins diary Howson and Moggridge (1990), p23. For Robbins' paper handed to the Americans see 'Principles of Commodity Regulation', May 8, 1943, Gen 8/41 CAB 78/6.

¹⁴ 'Declaration of Principles' by the UK Delegation, CAB 78/6 Gen 8/37; 'Stabilizing Post-War Food Supplies.' The Times referred to the UK proposal as a 'world food pool', recalling the 'ever normal granary', Times, 24 May 1943, p. 4. The Times Digital Archive, <http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/BRBk9>. Accessed 26 July 2019.

The most vocal opponents of the policy of buffer stocks and international cooperation on commodities amongst Ministers were the strongest proponents of Empire. Despite challenges by the same individuals, such as Hudson, Wood, Amery, Beaverbrook and Cherwell (aided by the obstructive indifference of Churchill) who favoured Imperial Preference and rejected a world organisation, the strong advocacy of the internationalist Labour ministers, especially Attlee and Dalton succeeded in getting the divided War Cabinet to agree commodity control as the basis of discussion with the Dominions and the Americans in 1943, opening the way for buffer stocks to become a key element in the British position from Hot Springs onward.¹⁵ It remained UK policy into 1946.

The buffer stock element of Orr's proposal therefore received considerable UK support despite Treasury concerns at the cost and officials' complaints that the plan was "impracticable".¹⁶ UK economic weakness reduced the UK's ability to support internationalist solutions as well as their willingness to do so. The capital cost of setting up and operating the buffer stock scheme was a major concern to the Treasury at a time of intense balance of payment pressures, especially as the costs were expected to be in scarce dollars. Sir David Waley noted that Keynes had always argued that financing buffer stocks "would be no insuperable difficulty, but the Treasury and the Bank of England have never been satisfied on this point."¹⁷

¹⁵ War Cabinet meeting, April 8, 1943, WM(43)50 CAB 65/34/4, which took the Paper 'International Regulation of Primary Products', WP(43)97. For accounts of this meeting see Toye, 'The Labour Party's External Economic Policy in the 1940s', 200; Barnes and Nicholson, *Amery Diaries Vol 2*, 880–81; Howson, *Lionel Robbins*, 440; Pressnell, *External Economic Policy Since the War. Volume 1*, 106–7; Dalton Diary, entry April 8, 1943, Pimlott, *The Second World War Diary of Hugh Dalton 1940-45*, 572, 577–78.

¹⁶ Washington (Inverchapel) to FO, tel 4892, August 1, 1946, T236/92 and FO371/58307 UR6627/292/851; Minute by T.H. Wilson, July 26, 1946, T236/92; Minute by Taylor, August 9, 1946, MAF 83/3048; unsigned and undated (but early August 1946) Ministry of Food paper on the World Food Board Proposal, MAF 83/3048.

¹⁷ Note by Waley (Treasury) to Trend, August 8, 1946, T236/92; see also letter from Waley to Liesching (Ministry of Food), August 13, 1946, T236/92. Keynes, who argued financing would not be problematic, addressed the funding of buffer stocks briefly in the original Clearing Union paper and then three further times: in the original 'Commod' Plan paper, in War Cabinet paper by William Jowitt, March 5, 1943, 'The International Regulation of Primary Products', WP(43)97 CAB/66/34/47, covering RP(43)12; in a paper circulated at the talks with the US in Washington in October 1943 [ref]; and in a further paper presented to the Dominions and India in London in March 1944, ASD(Commodities)(44)3, CAB 99/34. This had been firmly rejected by the Treasury in 1943: "The Clearing Union is not a fairy godmother which automatically solves all foreign exchange difficulties of

However, as part of the planning for the proposed ITO in 1946 an interdepartmental Commodity Policy Group of UK officials had concluded buffer stocks were positive for the UK consumer and reconfirmed support for them in principle.¹⁸ The Ministry of Food still favoured them¹⁹ and in the Cabinet Offices both Meade and Fleming welcomed Orr's plan, Meade commenting "the proposals have in fact put life into the Buffer Stock idea, I am glad to say", though Robbins' support for the principle had waned since Hot Springs.²⁰

The new Minister of Food, John Strachey, criticised UK officials in Washington for being "not sufficiently constructive" in their comments and their discussions with the State Department with respect to Orr's plan.²¹ He was attracted to buffer stocks in principle and directed officials in Washington to refrain from committing the UK to a negative response with the Americans until after Ministers had agreed a policy.²² Even Dalton, who shared his Treasury officials' concern at the potential cost of Orr's plan, continued to support buffer stocks in principle, though he criticised the intention to launch them at a time of intense commodity shortage rather than wait until there was the possibility of surplus when basic prices could be set at lower levels.²³

all countries, nor has it any responsibility for financing the foreign purchases made by any particular country." Treasury Comments on Ministry of Food Proposals, March 31, 1943, CAB 78/6 Gen 8/10. For Keynes' optimism that covering the cost of buffer stocks would be 'easy' see diary entry by Meade, September 9, 1943, Howson and Moggridge, *Wartime Diaries of Robbins and Meade*, 98-9. Harold Wilson later explained to Bevin why Keynes' optimism was misplaced: 'It has not been universally recognised that Lord Keynes' proposals were based on the assumption of a wider international economic background including the creation of which would have been an admirable means of financing a fully international scheme. With the end of the bancor proposals, the UK's motives in supporting a full international scheme were surely outweighed by the impossibility of providing our share of the finance.' As will be seen below, the UK selected a more cost effective 'national' scheme to promote at the FAO Preparatory Commission at the end of 1946. Letter Harold Wilson to Bevin, December 31, 1946, PREM 8/501.

¹⁸ Minute by Otto Clarke to Rowe-Dutton and Waley, August 9, 1946, T236/92.

¹⁹ See comments by Broadley, minutes of Interdepartmental Panel on FAO Matters, August 15, 1946, IDP/FAO(46)59, MAF83/3048.

²⁰ Meade Cabinet Diaries, August 15, 1946, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 314-15; Letter Waley to Rowe-Dutton, September 24, 1946, T236/92.

²¹ Note by Waley, August 12, 1946, T236/92. Strachey succeeded Ben Smith in May 1946.

²² Meade Cabinet Diaries, August 15, 1946, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 314-5. Tel FO (Hall-Patch) to Washington (Makins), August 8, 1946, FO371/58303 UR6729/292/851.

²³ Trend to Waley re Dalton views, October 4, 1946, FO371/58315 UR8197/292/851.

Ministers were more concerned at Orr's proposal to establish yet another international agency, competing with those already created in the UN System. The proposal coincided with Morrison's criticism of the effectiveness of international organisations. The proposal for a new agency alongside the existing framework provoked considerable opposition amongst both officials and Ministers. The immediate issue was the conflict between Orr's World Food Board and the proposed ITO, but concerns went wider. Meade noted that: "On the problem of institutions it is universally agreed in Whitehall that Orr has gone off the rails. A world food board would be a fifth wheel in the coach..." alongside the International Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the proposed ITO and ECOSOC.²⁴ At a meeting of the Interdepartmental Panel on FAO Matters on August 15 the chairman "stressed the danger of chaos in the existing and projected international machinery which the proposals were likely to cause. Whilst our attitude should not be negative towards the problems posed by FAO we should make clear the danger of overlapping functions between existing and new organisations."²⁵ Morrison complained "that international collaboration was in danger of being discredited by the proliferation of international agencies".²⁶

The plan was discussed at the FAO Conference at Copenhagen in September 1946. UK policy for the conference highlighted concern at the practicality of the plan and the potential financial cost to the UK, but restated support for the principle of buffer stocks though operated elsewhere within the UN System rather than through FAO. The UK had concerns about both the policies and the "organisational arrangements". It did not oppose the principle of buffer stocks as a tool for price stabilisation as this "is one with which His Majesty's Government has been associated in the past", but it highlighted "considerable practical difficulties particularly with respect to the financing". It explicitly emphasised the impact on other UN agencies with which it

²⁴ Meade Cabinet Diaries, August 15, 1946, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 314–15.

²⁵ Comments by Liesching, Ministry of Food, minutes of Interdepartmental Panel on FAO Matters, August 15, 1946, IDP/FAO(46)59, MAF83/3048.

²⁶ Cabinet meeting, November 7, 1946, CAB 128/6/33 CM(46)95.

would overlap, especially the proposed ITO. The UK was to be “constructive in regard to policy as well as machinery”.²⁷

The UK proposed ECOSOC be asked to examine the proposal since the issues raised involved “the entire economic machinery of the United Nations” and it was the role of ECOSOC to coordinate this work.²⁸ This followed from UK framing of food supply as an economic rather than humanitarian problem and the wider role UK policymakers expected ECOSOC to play. The Labour government linked it with full employment since the best way to improve nutrition is “the maintenance of a high level of employment with its consequences of a higher standard of living”.²⁹ Robbins, who suggested referral to ECOSOC in August 1946, argued it should be linked to the UK’s international full employment agenda, which was simultaneously being pursued as part of the ITO negotiations.³⁰ The link to full employment was also made by Broadley (Ministry of Food) and Meade (Cabinet Office), both of whom were consistently sympathetic to Orr’s objectives, Broadley arguing that his aims needed to be viewed “in their true perspective against the background of the larger issues connected with stabilisation and full employment”, while Meade argued that stabilisation of demand could only come from domestic and international “policies of full employment”, something a World Food Board alone could not do.³¹ Strachey agreed the referral to ECOSOC.³² The US proposed referring the plan to a special ad

²⁷ Tel 8112, FO to Washington (Makins), August 17, FO371/58308 U6685/292/851. A copy of the telegram was also passed to the State Department as an aide memoire, FO371/58310 UR7221/292/851.

²⁸ FO to Washington (Makins), August 17, FO371/58308 U6685/292/851.

²⁹ Paper by Ministry of Food, undated but early August 1946, MAF83/3048.

³⁰ Note of meeting of Lionel Robbins with John Strachey, Minister of Food, and officials of the Ministry of Food, August 9, 1946, MAF 83/3048.

³¹ Comments by Broadley and Meade, 2nd meeting of the officials’ Working Party on FAO Preparatory Commission, September 30, 1946, T236/93. For full employment as a central objective of international cooperation see Cabinet paper by Morrison, ‘International Employment Policy’, September 30, 1946, CAB 129/13/14 CP (46) 364; and Cabinet meeting, October 3, 1946, CAB 128/6/22 CM(46)84. See also Chapter Six above.

³² Note of meeting of Lionel Robbins with John Strachey, Minister of Food, and officials of the Ministry of Food, August 9, 1946, MAF 83/3048.

hoc committee of FAO but the UK opposed this as it would leave the initiative with FAO instead of “with [the] Economic and Social Council where it clearly belongs.”³³

At the FAO Conference in September 1946 Strachey linked Orr’s plan to the need for international planning and management of the international economy in a restatement of the belief in a planned and managed international system through the UN. Strachey praised Orr’s efforts, telling the Copenhagen conference that: “These proposals for a World Food Board lead us towards the attempt to direct and to control our world economy lest it controls and destroys us.”³⁴ He argued that no new international body was needed and that the existing and projected international organisations (IMF, IBRD, ITO, ECOSOC) were capable of achieving the same objectives, leaving FAO to focus on providing statistical, nutritional and agricultural expertise.³⁵ He proposed reference to ECOSOC, arguing the US proposal to refer the plan to an ad hoc committee of FAO meant: “There is a danger that such an ad hoc Committee might become isolated from the general international economic structure which we are seeking to rear [sic] upon the basis of the United Nations.” Reference to ECOSOC’s Economic and Employment Commission “would put the World Food Board proposal squarely upon the international map. It would bring it into direct relation with the whole international economic structure we are trying to rear.”³⁶ However, the Americans, accepting Orr’s plan, persuaded the Conference to refer it to a special ad hoc committee of FAO, which became known as the FAO Preparatory Commission.³⁷

³³ Note by Wall of conversation with US Agricultural Attaché in London, August 20, 1946, MAF 83/3048. Wall took the phrase from the Tel 8112, FO to Washington (Makins), August 17, FO371/58308 U6685/292/851.

³⁴ UK del Copenhagen to FO, September 4, 1946, in T236/92; for the full text of the speech see MAF 83/3207.

³⁵ Ibid; The Cabinet Office Economic Section circulated a paper arguing this as early as May 1946. Meade Cabinet Diary entry, May 12, 1946, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 266.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ UK del Copenhagen to FO, September 5, 1946, T236/92; FO to UK del Copenhagen, September 7, 1946; September 12, 1946, Report of Committee 1 (World Food Board) of Commission C, Doc 78 C/1/12; Resolution A, Resolution establishing a Preparatory Commission World Food Proposals, September 13, 1946, accessed at <http://www.fao.org/3/x5583e/x5583e08.htm#FoodProposals>.

This was to assemble in Washington in October 1946, at the same time as the ITO Preparatory Commission met in London, itself sponsored by ECOSOC. UK policy for the ITO and FAO Preparatory Commission was stated in joint briefs, emphasising the connection between the two. It reaffirmed support for the international control of agricultural commodities through buffer stock schemes but administered through a General Commodity Council as part of the ITO, not FAO.³⁸ However, the policy focused on UK economic interests rather than nutrition and health. UK objectives were that: “policy must be based upon the unchanging consideration that this country is essentially an importer of foodstuffs and industrial raw materials, and the primary objective of our commodity policy as a consuming country must be to secure an assured flow of supplies of primary products at reasonable prices.”³⁹ Importers should not be charged higher prices in order to fund food supplies for poorer nations: producers should meet the cost of any two-price system. Commodity control was framed as an issue of price stability rather than nutrition or health as a moral responsibility. Pointedly, there was no reference to Freedom from Want. This omission was highlighted by R.R. Enfield, the UK’s FAO Executive Committee member, whose experience in the FAO meant he understood that framing the issue in this way would upset many delegates at the Preparatory Commission.⁴⁰ The Foreign Office were also concerned that the naked self-interest of the UK position would be counter-productive.⁴¹ Nor did the brief make the point, common in wartime planning, that economic instability and disparities of wealth were a source of international conflict. The wider understanding of security, that it was not simply a political or military issue but one of human and individual security and the removal

³⁸ Cabinet paper by Cripps and Strachey, October 11, 1946, CAB 129/13/24 CP(46)374.

³⁹ Cabinet paper by Cripps and Strachey, October 11, 1946, CAB 129/13/24 CP(46)374, Appendix 1, brief for UK delegation, para 11. Underlining in original. In 1944 the Ministry of Agriculture calculated that 86% of world exports of beef, 98% of mutton and 95% of bacon were imported by the UK. War Cabinet paper by Hudson, ‘Commercial Policy’, April 13, 1944, WP(44)200 CAB 66/48/50.

⁴⁰ Letter Enfield (Ministry of Agriculture) to Wall (Ministry of Food), October 16, 1946, T236/94.

⁴¹ The Foreign Office attempted to persuade other departments to moderate the language but failed. FO brief for McNeil by Troutbeck, October 14, 1946, which concluded: “While therefore the Foreign Office can agree to the general line of the paper, we should be prepared to see our Delegation criticised (a) for its unemotional approach and (b) for a selfish concentration on purely UK interests at the expense...of the starving...[O]ur case as presented should make some appeal to the common man as well as the trained economist.” FO371/58316 UR8590/292/851; see also Troutbeck to Magowan, October 19, 1946, FO371/58316 UR8601/292/851.

of the causes of conflict, had dropped from the planning discourse. There was no repeat of Noel-Baker's statement to the 1945 FAO Quebec conference that 'Hunger Made Hitler'. Still, though, the policy reflected the continued belief that internationalist approaches were the best strategy in support of UK national interests. Policymakers themselves regarded this as practical rather than an ideological predisposition to internationalism.

UK policy has been accused of deliberately preventing the creation of a commodity control body by insisting the Commodity Commission be placed within the ITO, which was never established.⁴² However, the UK recognised this potential risk and proposed a solution. While the brief argued for a single commission covering all commodities under the proposed ITO, significantly it also proposed "the immediate creation of a temporary Commodity Commission...which should merge into the proposed ITO at a later date."⁴³ Their intention was to avoid a delay until the ITO could be established, which was expected to take a year or more, and to insure against the possibility that the ITO failed to materialise as planned.⁴⁴ Insistence on placing it under the ITO was therefore not simply a tactic to prevent agricultural commodity control but genuinely part of a plan for an integrated system of international economic management across all commodities operating in a single regulatory framework.

The policy was confirmed at Cabinet on October 15, 1946. The internationalist Attlee did question whether it was right that producer countries should fund emergency food supplies in a two-price system and suggested importers might need to contribute, but in response Dalton strictly maintained the Treasury line and stressed the UK could not, in current circumstances, afford the cost. He opposed British "use of dollars for the benefit of others". Dalton insisted the UK "can't accept any further

⁴² For the argument that reference to the ITO was a way to prevent Orr's plan see for example Jachertz and Nutzenadel, 'Coping With Hunger?', 111.

⁴³ Cabinet paper by Cripps and Strachey, October 11, 1946, CAB 129/13/24 CP(46)374, para 4 vii.

⁴⁴ For the origins of this proposal see the minutes of the interdepartmental Working Party on FAO Preparatory Commission, 2nd meeting September 30, 1946, and 3rd meeting October 3, 1946, in T236/93.

commitment for improvident good nature expend[itu]re". He was supported by Cripps, Morrison and Tom Williams (Minister of Agriculture), and Attlee accepted the position. The Cabinet approved the rest of the paper without discussion, including the commitment to support buffer stocks. The one condition they applied was that the UK delegation should seek further Cabinet approval before making financial commitments to any specific commodity control scheme, but this was a concern about finances not the principle of international commodity control.⁴⁵ In October 1946 the UK government was therefore committed to a policy broadly supportive of the substance of Orr's World Food Plan, including firm support for a buffer stock scheme, albeit without the central organisational role of the FAO envisaged by Orr. The UK position that a single overarching Commodity Council Commission should be a separate organisation, within the framework of the ITO, had been held consistently since Hot Springs in 1943 and remained the policy going into the FAO Preparatory Commission over three years later.

7.2 Change of US Policy

Evidence of the strength of Cabinet support for buffer stocks and an active FAO comes from their reaction to an abrupt change of policy by the US at the end of October 1946, reversing America's previous support for buffer stocks and Orr's World Food Board. At Copenhagen the American delegation, led by Norris Dodd of the Department of Agriculture, had publicly supported Orr's proposal but this position continued to come under pressure from the State Department.⁴⁶ In a meeting in Washington on October 17, 1946 Stinebower of the State Department told UK embassy staff that US policy was now wholly behind ITO as the primary agency but that "the United States would be adamant in opposition to any proposal entailing the procurement and holding of commodities by any international body", and "they would be equally opposed to any financial commitment for such

⁴⁵ For the origins of this proposal see the minutes of the interdepartmental Working Party on FAO Preparatory Commission, 2nd meeting September 30, 1946, and 3rd meeting October 3, 1946, in T236/93.

⁴⁶ Staples, 'To Win the Peace', 509–10; Jachertz, 'Stable Agricultural Markets and World Order: FAO and ITO, 1943-49', 184–85.

purposes".⁴⁷ This immediately provoked an extremely negative response in London. As a Foreign Office minute recognised: "The State Department's opposition...would reduce Sir Boyd-Orr's proposals to a shadow of their original selves."⁴⁸

In response the Foreign Office confirmed the agreed Cabinet position to the Washington embassy, noting: "You will see that these [Cabinet] conclusions differ radically from the American point of view as indicated by Stinebower."⁴⁹ Strachey, who had seen the telegram from Washington, feared UK officials had "compromised" the agreed Cabinet position and the embassy was told to say nothing more until they received further instructions.⁵⁰ These came in a telegram of October 21 which restated the agreed Cabinet position and made it clear "the American point of view as indicated by Stinebower is very different from our own." The US position risked undermining the FAO Preparatory Commission which was not an outcome the British wanted: "We must clearly avoid any arrangement which would either delay or sabotage the work of the FAO Commission and we cannot imagine that the United States Government have this in mind." It repeated the UK's commitment to buffer stocks, saying American opposition "conflicts directly with the decisions reached by Ministers." The UK wanted full examination of buffer stocks not to delay or derail their introduction but to ensure the best solution: "The United Kingdom Delegation will make it one of its important objectives to secure a properly detailed examination of schemes for buffer stocks, whether held nationally or internationally. You should leave the Americans in no doubt of the views of His Majesty's Government on this subject." Whilst the UK preferred alignment with the US at the Preparatory Commission they could not agree to the policy described by Stinebower.⁵¹ The UK position going into the FAO Preparatory Commission was clearly more sympathetic to plans for the international management of agricultural

⁴⁷ Washington to FO, October 17, 1946, T236/94.

⁴⁸ Minute October 18, 1946, FO371/58315 UR8484/292/851.

⁴⁹ FO to Washington, October 19, 1946, FO371/58315 UR8484/292/851.

⁵⁰ Ibid; for Strachey's response see tel Broadley to Waley, October 19, 1946, T236/94.

⁵¹ FO to Washington, October 21, 1946, T236/94. A letter of October 21 from Williams to Thompson-McCausland said this telegram had been "somewhat toned down" suggesting the original draft was even stronger.

and other commodities than the literature suggests, and it is certainly not correct that UK and US views were aligned as most of the literature assumes. The position is far from the narrative provided by Staples who claimed the US opposition to the Orr proposal at the Preparatory Commission was “much to the delight of the British”.⁵²

The reaction of the Cabinet was highly critical of the Americans, whose change of policy represented a challenge to their internationalist hopes and led to a crisis of confidence in FAO and the UN. At a Cabinet meeting on November 7, 1946, in the general discussion on international organisations discussed in the previous chapter, Ministers accused the Americans of undermining the FAO by withdrawing their support for buffer stocks. Strachey declared that: “Short of world buffer stocks, FAO is no practical use”, endorsing both buffer stocks and FAO. Blame was laid on the Americans. Dalton stated dramatically: “I wd. support murder of FAO – now that US won’t play.” Attlee also criticised the Americans and their increasing dominance in the UN System: “Too much in U.S. hands: may emphasise breach betw. E. & West. Danger of not internatl but under Eagles wing.” Bevan made the case for a more functionalist approach, separating the technical agencies, including FAO, from the centralised UN System to enable them to focus on their technical expertise, but even this was directed at the Americans. His comment that UN institutions “become playground for international politicians” was a complaint at US free market ideology undermining internationalism and not a criticism of the Soviets since Russia played no part in the FAO debates. The official conclusions in the Cabinet minutes gave the FAO a temporary reprieve but suggested the US had fatally wounded the organisation: “In view of the attitude of the United States Government towards world food problems, it now seemed unlikely that the Food and Agriculture Organisation would be able to play an effective part in securing the equitable distribution of the world's food supplies. It would, however, be inexpedient for His Majesty's Government to take any initiative towards the dissolution of this Organisation. If it were to continue, its headquarters and those of the International

⁵² Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 92.

Trade Organisation should be located together."⁵³ This meeting needs to be seen in the context of increasing ministerial dissatisfaction with the performance of the post-war international organisations (see Chapter Six, above) but was a damning criticism of the impact of US policy on the FAO and an indication of the disappointment of Cabinet Ministers with American attitudes to the organisation. It also suggests far greater support for an active FAO than the literature allows.

Both Ministers and officials were aware that Ministers were more internationalist than their departments. Ministerial pressure forced UK policy to be more supportive of buffer stocks, international commodity control and an active FAO against the reluctance of officials, particularly in the Treasury and Bank of England. Strachey feared officials were taking a harder line against Orr's plan, both when the plan was first made public and during preparations for the FAO and ITO Preparatory Commissions.⁵⁴ As one Foreign Office official noted: "it is perhaps worth mentioning that in ministerial circles here there is considerable sympathy for the Orr approach and perhaps a certain feeling that officials..." do not share Ministers views.⁵⁵

7.3 FAO Preparatory Commission, October 1946 – January 1947

The UK delegation to the FAO Preparatory Commission, which was held in Washington from October 28, 1946, to January 24, 1947, pursued the policy of international cooperation agreed by Ministers as far as possible given the US position.⁵⁶ The British were keen to be seen as positive and constructive despite opposing key elements of the Orr plan. Harold Wilson, a junior minister in the Ministry of Supply in 1946, headed the UK delegation at Washington. His opening speech on October 29, 1946 outlined British arguments for treating agriculture as an issue of full employment, and he explicitly advocated both "long-term contracts"

⁵³ Cabinet meeting, November 7, 1946, CAB 128/6/33 CM(46)95, verbatim record in Cabinet Notebook, CAB 195/4/74. Neither Staples nor Jachertz reference this meeting.

⁵⁴ Note by Waley, August 12, 1946, T236/92. For Strachey's belief officials had 'compromised' Minister's policy see Broadley to Waley, October 19, 1946, T236/94.

⁵⁵ Letter FO to Magowan (Washington), October 19, 1946, FO371/58316 UR8601/292/851.

⁵⁶ For an account of the FAO Preparatory Commission see Belshaw, 'The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations'; Staples, 'To Win the Peace', 510–13; Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 91–94; Shaw, *World Food Security*, 27–30; Way, *A New Idea Each Morning*, 294–96.

(bulk purchase, through state trading) and buffer stocks not just as a means of price stabilisation but as the basis of creating an “ever-normal granary” for the world: “We support buffer stocks not only as an instrument of stability but as a means, as the Director-General [Orr] has urged, of carrying reserves against the risk of bad harvests; an international 'Operation Joseph' for the modern world.”⁵⁷ The UK delegation submitted their document, ‘A Positive Commodity Policy’, at the beginning of the Commission, including the proposal for an interim Commodity Commission and a Federation of national buffer stock schemes. It formed the basis of discussions in the Commission.⁵⁸ Although it was acknowledged from the outset that, given the American rejection of Orr’s plan it had “little chance of seeing the light of day”⁵⁹ the UK delegation supported buffer stocks as a mechanism for international commodity management and a continuing active role for FAO whilst resisting proposals for two-tier pricing and “new international financial agencies”.

The UK delegation also continued to press the case for an effective international commodity control regime through the ITO against opposition from the Americans, both in the FAO Preparatory Commission in Washington and the simultaneous ITO version in London.⁶⁰ The UK delegation attempted to work with sympathetic elements from the Department of Agriculture in the American FAO delegation to “...make it very difficult for the 'Commodity boys' from London on the United States side to step in and completely wreck the Conference. Against this, we know that Clayton is still a great power to be reckoned with, and are watching our step accordingly...Perhaps we ought not to count our chickens before they are hatched, but we are all in the mood at present to have a good crack at hatching something

⁵⁷ Conference Document 6, P/4, MAF 83/3056.

⁵⁸ Staples, ‘To Win the Peace’, 510.

⁵⁹ Letter Melville (British Food Mission, Washington) to Clauson (Colonial Office, a UK delegate at the parallel ITO Preparatory Commission in London), November 1, 1946, UK delegation document TN(P)(46)37, T236/95.

⁶⁰ FO to Washington, note of meeting between UK and US delegations at ITO Preparatory Commission, October 25, 1946, at which the US delegation head Wilcox said they opposed UK plans for a provisional Commodity Council and admitted: “Trading and manufacturing elements in United States of America are opposed to any kind of commodity regulation scheme.” FO371/58316 UR8695/292/851.

that will at least let out a healthy squawk before it has its neck wrung."⁶¹ Harold Wilson told officials in London they were working with the US Department of Agriculture but Clayton "had been consistently opposed to the FAO proposals" and Congress also opposed buffer stocks.⁶² Wilson wrote dismissively to Bevin of American ITO negotiators opposing buffer stocks as "theologians".⁶³ Staples claims that American (and Dutch and Canadian) opposition to Orr's plan at the Commission was "to the delight of the British" but far from being delighted the UK delegation actively worked against Clayton and the State Department by advocating buffer stocks as part of a scheme of international cooperation in commodity markets.⁶⁴

There was a minor crisis at the end of December 1946 when the Commission chairman, the Australian Stanley Bruce, appeared to support proposals for a two tier pricing scheme made by Dodd for the Americans, with potential costs to the UK Treasury, but pressure from the UK delegation headed off the threat by early January 1947.⁶⁵ The British delegation also resisted efforts by the very active Indian delegation to promote the needs of developing countries, though Harold Wilson was personally sympathetic to some of the Indian claims and the need to address food supply in 'backward areas', including the need for industrial development to increase purchasing power and short term relief from a 'World Famine Reserve' through buffer stocks.⁶⁶ This support for industrial development of under-developed countries was a significant shift in policy from the position taken at Hot Springs in

⁶¹ Letter Williams (Treasury, UK delegation) to Fisher (Treasury, London), November 21, 1946, UK, T236/95.

⁶² Update from Wilson to FAO Preparatory Commission Working Party, London, December 20, 1946, MAF 83/3056.

⁶³ Letter Wilson to Bevin, December 31, 1946, PREM 8/501.

⁶⁴ Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 92.

⁶⁵ For Dodd see tels 7251 and 7252, Washington to FO, December 21, 1946, copies in PREM 8/501; tel 7300, Washington to FO, December 24, 1946, PREM 8/501; for the response see tel Amaze X8196, London (Broadley) to Washington (British Food Mission), January 7, 1947, FO371/66871 UR89/41/851; and note Strachey to Attlee, January 10, 1947, PREM 8/501; Letter Inverchapel to Bevin, March 4, 1947, explained the US proposal was "determined by the fact that the United States Administration is committed to a domestic policy of price maintenance which encourages farmers to produce more than can be sold at the guaranteed price", and they wanted international approval for selling off food, FO371/62863 UE1545/1473/71.

⁶⁶ Letter Williams (Treasury, UK delegation) to Fisher (Treasury, London), November 7, 1946, UK, T236/95; update from Wilson to FAO Preparatory Commission Working Party, London, December 20, 1946, MAF 83/3056; Letter Wilson to Bevin, December 31, 1946, PREM 8/501.

1943, where the British opposed the principle, and indicative of a more sympathetic position taken by Labour Ministers.

The FAO Preparatory Commission completed its work on January 24, 1947. With the withdrawal of US support Orr's plan was watered down and the final report set limits on the work of the FAO, reinforced its role as a provider of technical advice and statistics and decisively rejected an operational and executive role.⁶⁷ The report rejected Orr's World Food Board and instead proposed a World Food Council to advise FAO. The UK delegation secured most of its key objectives, especially acknowledgement that economic development, including full employment and industrial development, was the foundation of improved nutrition. The report included a national version of a buffer stocks scheme, to be administered through a body intended to become part of the ITO, albeit alongside other tools such as production quotas, and a programme for concessionary sales funded primarily by exporters, as well as a 'famine reserve' in case of future food emergency. It proposed the ITO version of buffer stocks rather than that of Orr's FAO, with commercial considerations prioritised over humanitarian needs. As one contemporary noted, improved nutrition therefore became a "contingent objective" of the plan, dependent on the primary objectives of trade expansion and free trade, rather than nutrition being the main objective.⁶⁸ It effectively represented the ending of hopes for an activist FAO on the lines of Orr's idealist vision.

The essential requirements of a commodity scheme that Wilson had defined in his opening speech emerged in the final report almost verbatim: firstly, they should contribute to the stabilisation of agricultural prices at levels fair to both consumer and producer; secondly, they should avoid restriction of production and stimulate expansion of consumption and improvement of nutrition; and thirdly, they should

⁶⁷ See summaries in UK Parliament, Ministry of Food, 'Cmd 7031, FAO Preparatory Commission'; 'Food and Agriculture Organization', 1948; Belshaw, 'The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations'; Lamartine Yates, *So Bold an Aim*, 81–82; Staples, 'To Win the Peace', 511–12; Shaw, *World Food Security*, 27–29; Jachertz, 'Stable Agricultural Markets and World Order: FAO and ITO, 1943–49', 185.

⁶⁸ Belshaw, 'The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations'.

encourage shifts in production to areas in which the commodities in question could be most economically and effectively produced.⁶⁹ Commodity control was not in the scope of FAO, and the failure of Orr's plan effectively ended hopes that it would be in the future. This outcome reflected UK priorities since Hot Springs in 1943.

UK delegates congratulated themselves at the practicality of the Commission's conclusions, which kept its "feet firmly on the ground" and avoided the temptation "...to take a somewhat sentimental view of what is needed."⁷⁰ The British were especially pleased with the conclusions on structures, reflecting their concern at the uncontrolled proliferation of UN agencies: "The Commission instead of pursuing the idea of establishing yet another special agency to co-ordinate national, agricultural and nutritional programmes and to assist in securing price stabilisation of agricultural products, has concentrated on a review of the existing machinery of the Food and Agriculture Organisation...This is a most important conclusion because at this particular stage of the development of the United Nations there is an obvious danger that too many specialised agencies will be established, thus making it extremely difficult to prevent undue overlapping between them. What is wanted is that there should be a small number of specialised agencies, but all of them properly equipped to do practical work without falling over each other's feet."⁷¹

In a restatement of support for international market intervention and planning the delegation made it very clear they had successfully opposed the free-market solutions preferred by the State Department. "The salient fact confronting us since the first day of the Conference has been that of Government intervention in food and agriculture. In most important products there is no longer a world price which the producer receives and the consumer pays. In exporting countries Governments

⁶⁹ UK Parliament, Ministry of Food, 'Cmd 7031, FAO Preparatory Commission'.

⁷⁰ The delegation report also declared: 'No one challenges the great social significance of attempts to raise nutritional standards, but there could be little hope of success if consideration of what was needed was conducted on the plane of vague sweeping generalisations.' January 22, 1947, summary of Preparatory Commission report circulated by Caplan (Board of Trade), FO371/66871 UR524/41/851.

⁷¹ Ibid.

subsidise their farmers for reasons of domestic social policy, while in importing countries Governments subsidise their consumers for the same reason. Price alone can therefore no longer act as the adjuster between supply and demand. Consequently Delegates of the 18 nations on this Commission have attempted to lay down an agreed set of rules to keep Governments in line with each other and prevent a mere scramble of self-interest."⁷² This meant agreement on the rules themselves and "on machinery for regular inter-Governmental consultation."⁷³ In a press conference immediately on his return to London Harold Wilson openly admitted that the UK opposed an FAO "full trading body" because the UK (and others) were not willing to fund it. They also rejected a full international buffer stock scheme "partly on financial grounds", but they did agree a "practical buffer stock approach", keen that "wherever there is commodity regulation, it shall be done by agreement between Governments, and not agreement between producers."⁷⁴ Wilson underlined the point about international planning to the House of Commons in early February. All nations will intervene in agricultural markets to protect their own interests and "...the only way to keep Governments in line with one another, and to prevent a mere scramble of national self-interest—with all the measures such as dumping, unnatural export subsidies, and restrictionist methods, which would have resulted—was to secure international agreements covering as wide a field as possible of agricultural production and distribution...His Majesty's Government believe—and the Commission accepted our view fully on this matter—that only by international planning on such a scale, and by cooperation and very great courage in operating the plans drawn up, can these problems be dealt with."⁷⁵ This was idealist

⁷² Washington to FO, January 23, 1947, FO371/66871 UR554/41/851.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ January 24, 1947, Harold Wilson press conference, held at Ministry of Food; Doc IDP/FAO(47)4 January 31, 1947, in FO371/66871 UR835/41/851.

⁷⁵ Wilson to House of Commons, February 7, 1947, Debate on World Food Situation, HC Deb 06 February 1947 vol 432 cc1990-93. In the debate, the main criticism of the final report was from those believing it went too far in supporting an international scheme, on the grounds that it was dominated by producers and represented "state-based planning". The concessionary sales element came in for particular criticism. Several critics accused it of being "a sell-out to the United States Government" to enable them to dump expensively produced food on the world market as a subsidy to their agricultural interests, paid for by importers. HC Deb 06 February 1947 vol 432 cc1986-2087; for the 'sell-out' quote see column 2025. Criticism of concessionary sales came from both sides of the house, including Richard Law, head of the UK delegation at Hot Springs (cols 2004-2009) and Evan Durbin

in its internationalism but firmly realist in its recognition that, in the world of the 1940s, competing nationalisms were inevitable and needed to be managed through agreed international rules and machinery for their application. It was practical internationalism to manage the world.

The Preparatory Commission recommendations were accepted by the FAO Executive Council on March 3, 1947, and the structural changes, including the creation of the World Food Council, were completed at the FAO Conference in Geneva in August/September 1947.⁷⁶ Orr, disappointed, left the FAO, which proceeded to focus on its technical functions and abandoned ambitions for a more active and executive role in food supply.⁷⁷ Fitful attempts were made to establish interim commodity groups as proposed in the Preparatory Commission report, and confirmed at the ITO Preparatory Commission, and ECOSOC established an Interim Co-ordinating Committee for International Commodity Arrangements in a resolution of March 28, 1947.⁷⁸ However, the structure proved ineffective and achieved little. British hopes for a robust international commodity control regime eventually floundered with the ultimate collapse of the ITO scheme negotiated at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment in Havana in 1947-48 when the US failed to ratify the agreement.⁷⁹ The attempt to create a UN System of international trade failed not as a result of Soviet obstruction – they had been cooperative at Hot Springs and the FAO Interim Commission, then absent from FAO after Quebec 1945 – but because the policy of Truman’s America had retreated from the interventionist internationalism of FDR. It increased the perception of UK policymakers that the US was retreating from earlier commitments to the UN’s universal multilateralism, perceptions that were reinforced in 1947 by the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan which helped undermine ECOSOC.

(cols 2009-2011). There was little criticism of the report representing the death of Orr’s plan and the hopes raised initially at Hot Springs.

⁷⁶ Report of the Conference of FAO, Third Session, Geneva, Switzerland, 25 August - 11 September 1947, <http://www.fao.org/3/x5582E/x5582E00.htm>, accessed April 18, 2020 .

⁷⁷ Staples, *The Birth of Development*; Shaw, *World Food Security*; Lamartine Yates, *So Bold an Aim*; Phillips, *FAO, Its Origins, Formation, and Evolution, 1945-1981*.

⁷⁸ Resolution E/RES/30(IV), Document E/403, ECOSOC 4th Session, March 28, 1947.

⁷⁹ Zeiler, *Free Trade, Free World*; Toye, ‘Developing Multilateralism’.

7.4 Conclusion

The reaction to Orr's World Food Board proposals illustrates both the UK's continuing internationalism and concern at the effectiveness of an increasingly bloated UN System. Simply because UK policymakers did not support executive responsibility for the FAO did not mean, as Staples (2006) argues, the UK government opposed internationalist solutions to global food issues in favour of "national security policies...based on alliances, atomic weapons, unilateral international action, [and] large peacetime militaries".⁸⁰ There is more than one form of internationalism. It was, however, a form of internationalism that was calculated to serve UK interests: less idealism, more realism. It was illiberal in its rejection of free-markets and support for the high interventionism of commodity control, and neo-colonial in the way it sought to reproduce relations of less developed periphery primary producers supplying cheap raw materials to a developed, industrialised, metropole. It was intended as a rule-based order, establishing terms of trade, but one in which the UK set the rules in their own interest and then interpreted and enforced them.

It demonstrated the genuine commitment of Labour Ministers to a strong role for interventionist international cooperation and the continued support for a UN System of economic management based on coordination through ECOSOC; and the depth of feeling at the undermining of those hopes by a change in US policy suggests the continuing centrality of internationalism to the self-identity of the Labour government. However, the ministerial response also revealed increasing concerns at the effectiveness of the new UN bodies which undermined that support. It also shows how UK policy often diverged from that of the US, contrary to the regular conflating of the two in the literature in a combined Anglo-American world order, and the extent to which UK ideas challenged the American free market version of that order.

⁸⁰ Staples, *The Birth of Development*, 85.

8 Conclusion

“But International peace and security must be made positively, and not only kept by the negative means of suppressing violence. They will be confirmed and strengthened by guarding the right of man to seek his freedom, and by increase in the well-being of human society...It will be necessary, therefore, for the Organisation to create institutions to promote the betterment of world-wide economic conditions and the removal of social wrongs....”¹

UK Dumbarton Oaks Proposals, July 1944

Archival analysis of UK post-war planning and policy in the early years of the UN demonstrates that UK policymakers intended the UN to provide international governance to manage the international system across a range of functional areas, including economic and social affairs. While UK policymakers understood that Great Power cooperation was at the heart of the political project of the UN, the UN was about more than collective security and managing relations between the Great Powers. This thesis recovers the importance of the economic and social responsibilities of the UN alongside its political and security responsibilities and enhances understanding of UK policymakers’ expectations of the UN and the role it was intended to play. For the UK, the literature regards the UN primarily as a means to secure a US commitment and a Great Power security alliance and has ignored UK policymakers’ economic and social objectives in the creation of the UN. This thesis has addressed that gap.

Categorisations of UK policy as ‘muscular internationalism’, ‘internationalist realism’ or ‘Hobbesian internationalism’ therefore misrepresent British policy by underestimating the importance of the UN’s wider governance role and the

¹ War Cabinet Paper, Future World Organisation, July 3, 1944, WP(44)370 CAB 66/52/20, Memo A, paras 8-9.

significance of economic development and social justice as an international responsibility in British thinking. UK policymakers certainly wanted a US commitment and continuation of Great Power cooperation, and keeping the peace was seen as a central responsibility of the UN. However, the concept of a Positive Peace, outlined in UK preparations for Dumbarton Oaks, emphasised that the “suppression of violence” was not sufficient. British proposals for Dumbarton Oaks called on the world organisation to promote “the removal of social wrongs”, and the UK delegation supported incorporation of economic and social objectives into the Preamble and Chapters I and IX of the Charter.²

Accounts that assume UK policymakers pursued a traditional *realpolitik* strategy, using the UN instrumentally to secure a US security commitment unavailable in a direct form, or to create a concert of the Great Powers, therefore offer an incomplete account of British expectations. Instead, this research has shown they prioritised a general international organisation rather than a simple security organisation and that economic and social responsibilities were central to its role, managed through a coordinated and centralised UN System of functional Agencies. This was not only because they defined security in wider terms, by including the economic and social causes of conflict, but in expectation the UN should deliver a Positive Peace to improve living conditions and social justice for citizens as well as security between states. The UN was not expected to deliver this directly - that remained a state responsibility - but should increase the capacity of states to provide for the welfare of their citizens. The UN therefore had meaning as a site of wider international governance.

By examining the UK planning process for the world organisation this thesis demonstrated that by Dumbarton Oaks policymaker thinking had evolved from a simple four-power security directorate to what they understood to be a general international organisation with universal membership. Policymakers did want a US

² War Cabinet Paper, Future World Organisation, July 3, 1944, WP(44)370 CAB 66/52/20, Memo A, paras 8-9.

commitment, and a continuation of the Grand Alliance (US, UK, Russia) into peacetime, and believed this could not be achieved outside a wider organisational structure. However, by 1944 their preference was for the wider organisation and when presented with the possibility of a more direct alliance in early 1945 it was rejected in favour of the general international organisation. They understood a general international organisation to mean universal state membership, in a deliberate effort to strengthen an international society of states, and a broader scope of responsibilities to include economic, social, and cultural activities. Although other scholars have identified the shift from a four-power directorate to a wider organisation, they ascribe it to a desire to accommodate US preferences, as well as legitimacy concerns for the new organisation and don't associate it with the economic and social functions and the understanding of the UN's role as a site of international governance. As UK planning shows, though, economic and social functions were central to UK policymakers' conception of the UN by Dumbarton Oaks.

Evidence from UK policy development shows that belief in the principles of planning and state intervention led policymakers to prefer a more centralised and coordinated UN System to support international planning and active management of the international system. This challenges the literature that suggests the British planned a loose functional association of Agencies. UK policymakers advocated close cooperation between Agencies managed directly through the UN rather than the loose functional arrangement that subsequently evolved, which the literature assumes was designed into the UN from the outset. Before Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks UK policymakers wanted economic and social functions to be overseen directly by the World (Security) Council, a reflection of their importance; it was only when the US proposed a separate economic and social council (ECOSOC) that the British dropped the idea of direct control by the World Council, though not the centrality of these functions to the UN's role. ECOSOC, though, was not to be an Economic Security Council as some have suggested. ECOSOC was to coordinate, not direct, as a kind of global public agora for the formulation of agreed policies. This did, though, include the Bretton Woods institutions. Examination of the record at

Bretton Woods shows the institutions were expected to have a close relationship with the widely anticipated new world organisation, though this could not be directly reflected in the IBRD and IMF Articles as the UN was not even on the drawing board at Bretton Woods. UK records show UK policymakers expected ECOSOC to coordinate the IBRD and IMF, and the abortive ITO, along with other Agencies in the UN System.

By extending research into the post-war period this thesis refutes the counter-argument that professions of support for a strong UN in economic and social affairs was only wartime propaganda or political rhetoric. Analysis of UK policy toward ECOSOC in 1945-47 shows UK policymakers pursued in practice the policies they advocated during planning. In debates over the relationship of Agencies to ECOSOC the UK repeatedly supported closer ECOSOC oversight, especially through the Agreements between the Agencies and the UN, and favoured establishing new bodies (IRO, UNESCO) as Commissions of ECOSOC or the General Assembly rather than as autonomous Agencies. Evidence from Cabinet debates on the performance of the UN in 1945-47 reinforce the argument that Ministers wanted a strong and effective UN in economic and social affairs to facilitate, amongst other policy areas, full employment and commodity control. This reflected their continuing belief in planning and the scientific management of the international system. Ministers were frustrated when these hopes were not fulfilled.

Ministers attributed this failure partly to over-ambition by the UN but also to a failure of member states to place 'technical' and practical considerations ahead of what they saw as political manoeuvring. This indicated the UN was proving less controllable than UK policymakers expected, accompanied by a naïve assumption that British goodwill and good sense were self-evident and departures from the British view must necessarily imply bad faith. These criticisms were directed at smaller states rather than Russia, which played a minor, and ambiguous, role in economic and social issues in 1945-47 (in contrast to their role on the Security Council). Calls by smaller states for the UN to prioritise development were evident from the outset of the UN's operation, which UK policymakers interpreted as a

threat to their interests. US policy was also a considerable source of frustration, though, and the Truman administration's decision to pursue the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan outside the UN, and their retreat from the ITO, undermined ECOSOC and the UN's economic and social role, to the irritation of UK Ministers. UK policymakers continued to advocate a strong, centralised, UN System coordinated through an active ECOSOC even as the Americans shifted their focus away from the UN, challenging accounts that conflate UK and American policies. This is evident in the case of the British response to the FAO's World Food Board proposals of 1946, outlined in Chapter Seven.

Policy was contested amongst policymakers, but within narrow parameters. Few rejected outright the need for a new world organisation, though its scope and nature were questioned. Most UK policymakers, officials and Ministers, were traditional realpolitikers steeped in British traditions. However, their understanding of the world, and Britain's place in it, led them to conclude multilateral cooperation was the most appropriate strategy to maximise British interests as they defined them. The significant leavening from more internationalist policymakers during wartime, including academics drafted in as Whitehall officials (Keynes, Robbins, Meade, Webster, Maud) and especially the internationalist-minded Coalition Ministers (Attlee, Bevin, Dalton, Cripps), meant internationalist ideas had strong support at the highest level. Eden and Law in the Foreign Office were also sympathetic. This enabled a consensus to emerge between more committed internationalists and the traditionalist majority around a multilateral and internationalist strategy expressed as support for a strong UN as a site of international governance. Ehrhardt (2020) categorises policy as a combination of internationalism and realism, identifying them as separate and parallel, but policies were internationalist, with multilateral cooperation fundamental across policy areas. This was not internationalism alongside realism as Ehrhardt suggests: it was internationalism as realism.³

³ Ehrhardt, 'The British Foreign Office and the Creation of the United Nations, 1941-45', 292–93.

Despite their internationalism, UK policymakers' expectations of the UN were not utopian. Though a debate between idealism and realism in IR has been questioned, policymakers themselves distinguished between the two in policy discourse. Utopianism was politically toxic, and accusations of idealism were used to discredit policies and individuals. However, internationalists claimed idealism as the new realism, while traditionalists defended the same policies in terms of 'practicality' and 'pragmatism'. This thesis suggests acceptance of seemingly idealist policies went beyond Plesch's (2010) argument that it was the destructiveness of war that made idealist policies a realist necessity.⁴ In this sense, the policy discourse was not a debate between idealism and realism but between competing understandings of realism.

Erez Manela (2020) describes the history of internationalisation as "the response of a diverse set of historical actors, both state and non-state, to the process of globalisation."⁵ This thesis has illuminated the process for UK policymakers in the 1940s. As we saw in Chapter One, UK policymakers were aware of increasing interdependence and the consequences for their role as state managers. By showing they responded to this by adopting multilateral strategies while creating structures to meet their own needs as they identified them this thesis has also provides granular evidence for the *longue durée* perspective of Murphy, Gorman and others who argue the growth of international cooperation was a response to technological change affecting cross-border relations.⁶ This was not supranationalism, though: world government was rejected as premature, though some saw it as a long-term inevitability. It was a state-based order, and the intention was to enhance the capabilities of the state to deliver for their own citizens in an interdependent world.

⁴ Plesch, *America, Hitler and the UN*.

⁵ Manela, 'International Society as a Historical Subject', 190.

⁶ Murphy, *International Organization and Industrial Change: Global Governance since 1850*; Gorman, *International Cooperation in the Early Twentieth Century*.

Understanding the nature of British post-war internationalism in turn contributes to the growing literature on different forms of internationalism.⁷ These managers of the British state saw multilateralism as the means to manage their interdependent world and project their own power. For them, taking back control required international cooperation. Autarky had been discredited alongside fascism, except amongst national planners and imperialists such as Leo Amery. The dangers of national competition, political and economic, made multilateral cooperation a realist strategic response. The widely acknowledged interdependence in the international system, the dangers of which were brutally underlined in the 1930's Depression, made cross-border cooperation not only preferable but essential. It was, for them, simply the most effective way to manage the affairs of state in the mid-20th century. UK policymakers also rationalised support for multilateralism as a strategy to compensate for their perceived material and economic weaknesses and to constrain America and Russia. This identifies post-war UK internationalism as a *raison d'état* strategy, challenging the claims of Dunne and MacDonald (2013) that the two are incompatible.⁸

The corollary is that not all internationalisms are idealist or liberal. The idea of economic and social development, and social justice, as essential to a Positive Peace may have echoed a liberal ideal, but the structures they built to deliver this were distinctly illiberal in nature. UK policy was not only motivated by *raison d'état* it was also an illiberal, not progressive liberal, internationalism further weakening the link between idealism and internationalism. It was illiberal in its concentration of power at the top, and its rejection of harmony of interests in favour of central planning and control. Its insistence that states were the only legitimate actors limited its pluralism. It also compromised sovereign equality through preferential privileges for the Great Powers and limits on the rule of law. The preferred model, both during the war and after, was the command-and-control structure of the wartime Combined Boards, which impinged on the sovereignty of individual states and were seen as providing

⁷ Sluga and Clavin, *Internationalisms*.

⁸ Dunne and McDonald, 'The Politics of Liberal Internationalism'.

effective management of cross-border issues. It therefore provides support to the argument (Beate Jahn 2013, 2021) that inherent contradictions in liberalism require liberal internationalism to exhibit illiberal, or, less pejoratively, non-liberal features.

Identifying the illiberalism at the heart of the UN is neither original nor new. As Bevan's 1945 complaints of the UN as a 'Holy Alliance' show, such criticism was present from the outset. Moreover, it came not from opponents of a world organisation but from those disappointed at its compromises with power. British traditionalists defended these as practical and consistent with political realities, matching power with responsibility. Attlee appealed to principle and defended the structure against criticisms of Holy Alliance by claiming that the principles of the Great Powers were 'holy' and that the rules of international society would place limits on the abuse of power. However, even Attlee's understanding of international society was strictly hierarchical, with privileges based on calculations of power. There was to be a rule of law, but it was not to be a law of rules but broad guiding principles, to be interpreted and enforced by the institutions of the UN, which in practice meant the Great Powers themselves. The principles were also compromised. British resistance to the inclusion of justice between states (as opposed to social justice) as a principle of the Charter betrayed a cynicism that reinforced the lack of constraint on the Great Powers in the new world order. It was rules-based, but with rules set, interpreted, and enforced by the Great Powers, including Britain, in their own interests.

This also raises the question of whether the UN was an imperial project, led by the UK, as suggested by Mazower (2009). This thesis has not addressed the question directly but shows how UK policymakers sought to create structures to project British power, political and economic. If 'imperial' is defined as the projection of asymmetric power, then UK (and US and Soviet) motivation in creating the UN was indeed Imperial. However, accepting Hopkins' more restricted definition of imperial as requiring territorial control then UK motivations were more nuanced. Wertheim (2020) argues US policymakers used the UN instrumentally to justify (mainly to a

domestic audience) the projection of American global power.⁹ As we've seen, the greatest challenge to a universal general international organisation amongst UK policymakers came from supporters of Empire and Imperial Preference. This suggests Mazower's claim the UN was a British project designed to protect the colonial Empire is misplaced. It was, rather, seen as an alternative, an evolution from earlier models of control. Rather than a means of protecting territorial Empire on the 19th Century model the UN was a way of maintaining power into a post-colonial world. It still reflected assumptions of a central metropole and a less developed periphery but reflected an age in which direct territorial control was no longer viable or acceptable but also not necessary. In this sense it was post-imperial, rather than imperial.

UK policymakers (as with the US) sought to create institutions that embodied structures that met their needs as they defined them. As the FAO case in Chapter Seven showed, attempts to set terms of trade, for instance in agricultural products, that maintained less developed countries as low-cost producers of agricultural and other commodities for an industrialised metropole and sought to limit potentially competing industrial development outside the centre replicated colonial economic relationships without the necessity of direct territorial control. Control was to be exercised through international agencies and the rules they imposed, themselves controlled by the UK and other Great Powers. For agriculture this was to be a Commodity Council and the international trade rules enshrined in the abortive ITO. That this failed to be created does not alter the principle. Policymakers were creating structures to reproduce British power, not protect a territorial Empire as such.

Deepening our understanding of British intentions in creating the UN therefore contributes to greater understanding of the nature of the UN. Recovering the importance of economic and social responsibilities to UK conceptions of the UN, and the centralised nature of the UN System they wanted to build to deliver this, enhances our understanding of the UN by showing that a major founder wanted a

⁹ Wertheim, *Tomorrow, the World: The Birth of U. S. Global Supremacy*.

general international organisation, not just an extended security alliance. It emphasises the importance of the UN as a site of international governance and underlines the understanding of UK policymakers that the international system both should, and could, be managed through the UN to produce better outcomes for humanity. This was not something that emerged in the latter years of the UN but was implicit from its founding. It reflects the widespread belief in scientific management, rational planning, and state intervention prevalent in the mid-1940s. This was not just a New Deal for the world handed down from the US: expectations of state responsibility and intervention reflected aspirations and beliefs shared across the world.

Understanding the UK's expectations for a strong ECOSOC at the centre of a coordinated UN System also develops understanding of the nature of the UN System and the relationship between Agencies and the UN. Although this thesis concludes that ECOSOC was not intended to act as an Economic Security Council, as suggested by Childers and Urquhart (1994), it demonstrates that, far from preferring a loose and functionalist grouping of Specialised Agencies, the UK sought a centralised and interventionist institution to manage the international system. Despite its later functionalist development, this indicates functionalism is not inevitable in the structure of the UN System.

It also contributes to the debate on embedded liberalism and Welfare World, showing that the economic system UK policymakers wanted to create not only permitted domestic welfare, as Ruggie (1993) argued but, as Helleiner (2019) suggests, called for more international management and intervention than Ruggie allows. This, though, fell short of the direct provision of welfare internationally, as suggested by Steffek and Holthaus (2018). Welfare remained the responsibility of the state and the UN was intended to increase state capability.¹⁰ Nor was there to be

¹⁰ Ruggie, 'International Regimes, Transactions, and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Postwar Economic Order'; Helleiner, 'The Life and Times of Embedded Liberalism: Legacies and Innovations Since Bretton Woods'; Steffek and Holthaus, 'The Social-Democratic Roots of Global Governance: Welfare Internationalism from the 19th Century to the United Nations'.

wealth transfer between rich and poor states, beyond emergency relief operations. As shown in the FAO case chapter, when confronted with choices on what one US representative called international “social services”, as at the 1943 Food Conference and FAO’s World Food Board proposals in 1946, UK policymakers rejected this as “permanent santa claus”, for which UK Ministers were not ready.¹¹

This adds to the understanding of the 1940s as a period in which, at this apogee of internationalism, states expected international cooperation across a range of functions and an interventionist, managed, approach. The rules-based order created in the 1940s was far more managed than the neo-liberal model of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The example of the commitment to full employment, which was a UK domestic political objective, demonstrates that UK policymakers regarded the UN as necessary to support domestic goals. It was also an international issue of importance to many states in the 1940s, scarred by the experience of the 1930s. Its inclusion as an objective in the Charter (Article 55) underlines how the 1940s was a decade in which social improvement, and social justice, was widely seen as a central purpose of international cooperation. American attempts to prioritise trade liberalisation over employment commitments, an attempt that was successful in the Articles of the IMF if not the Charter, was a harbinger of later battles and the subsequent triumph of neo-liberalism. Similarly, it supports the argument of Moyn (2018) and others who have shown that economic and social rights were an important element of the human rights agenda in the 1940s.¹² This thesis helps recover that lost understanding.

This therefore challenges Ruggie’s contention that the Charter was only a form of governance to manage the “externalities of state relations”.¹³ It was also seen as necessary to deliver domestic political objectives, including full employment in post-

¹¹ Account of meeting by Gore-Booth, in UK delegation meeting May 19, 1943, CAB 78/6 Gen 8/38; diary entry August 15, 1946, Meade, *Meade Collected Papers Vol IV*, 314–15.

¹² Moyn, *Not Enough*; Morsink, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*; Whelan and Donnelly, ‘The West, Economic and Social Rights, and the Global Human Rights Regime’; Sikkink, *Evidence for Hope*.

¹³ Ruggie, ‘Reconstituting the Global Public Domain — Issues, Actors, and Practices’, 505.

war Britain. Herbert Morrison's concerns in 1946-47 that without a strong UN capability there was a risk of not winning the peace applied to his domestic responsibilities not just cross-border issues. The composition and popularity of the interdepartmental IOC illustrates how many areas of government the new international organisations impacted.

By identifying the nature of the internationalism underpinning the UN and examining the motivation and assumptions behind the policy of one of the key founding members this thesis can also contribute to contemporary debates on the future of world order by better understanding its past. Assumptions that the 1945 UN represents the Liberal International Order (LIO) are simplistic and incorrect. While the LIO was western in both origin and membership, the UN was the result of wider influences. Russia played a major role in its creation and there was considerable agency from China, smaller European states, and those from what later came to be known as the Global South.¹⁴ The LIO intersected with the UN, and the US would later seek to co-opt the UN to its own agenda, but the UN played a significant bridging role between east and west and north and south.

This thesis makes no attempt to analyse the differences between the 1945 UN and the American-led LIO which developed from later in the 1940s as the Cold War intensified, but it accepts the suggestion the 1945 UN was distinct in its universalism, confidence in humankind's ability to manage the international system, and belief in intervention in economic, social, and cultural issues. It shows, though, that UK policymakers' assumptions that UK ideas would be at the centre of the UN were starting to unravel from the beginning as, to British frustration, the US changed course and smaller states exerted their independence. The 1945 UN, Ikenberry's liberal internationalism 1.5, was a short interregnum with a distinctive character before the Cold War and shifts in US policy intervened.

¹⁴ Acharya, *The End of American World Order*; Acharya, 'After Liberal Hegemony'.

Both the LIO and UN were rules-based, but it is not sufficient for an order to be rules-based: it matters what those rules are, and who makes, interprets, and enforces them. This thesis contributes to debates on world order by showing how UK policymakers sought to set UN rules and structures to reproduce UK power and meet UK interests as they defined them. As Patrick Porter (2020) argues the LIO is used instrumentally to project US power.¹⁵ However, while the LIO had bipolarity, or unipolarity, at its core the UN was intended to be universal and assumed a multipolar international system. As such it provides both a challenger to the LIO and a potential model for 21st century multipolarity.

This thesis has employed archival research and methods of analytical diplomatic history to recover the significance of economic and social international governance in elite UK policymakers' understandings of the purpose of the UN during its creation and early years of its operation. It has not attempted a narrative history of Britain's policy within ECOSOC (or the UN) in the early years of its operation, which remains to be written. Also, while there have been histories of specific Agencies the literature lacks a UN-centred archival history of the economic and social functions of the UN System and of ECOSOC in particular. Further work remains to be done on the evolution of ECOSOC and its eclipsing as the coordinating centre for management of the international economic system.

Similarly, although this thesis extends examination of UK policy into the early post-war period further work can be done for later in the 1940s. It challenges accounts that conflate UK policy with American policy but has not explored Anglo-American relations in the UN, especially UK reactions to American attempts to use the UN as an anti-Soviet tool. Through the 1947 Interim Committee (Little Assembly), echoed in 1950 by the Uniting for Peace resolution, America sought to shift power from the Council, which Russia could obstruct, to the Assembly. The UK reaction was negative, partly because they already faced challenges from smaller states over decolonisation and recognised their lack of control over the Assembly, but also because it ran

¹⁵ Porter, *The False Promise of Liberal Order*.

counter to their vision of the UN as a global agora, a universal site of international governance: US policy risked the defection of large parts of the international system if Russia responded by leaving the UN. UK policymakers continued to advocate a strong, centralised, UN System coordinated through an active ECOSOC even as America launched initiatives outside the UN. Further research is necessary on Anglo-American differences over the role of the UN and approaches to the post-war order, alongside the development of the LIO.

This thesis has purposely focused on elite UK policymakers. There has been no attempt to examine wider UK views of the UN. Also, the UK was only one of the UN founder members, albeit a significant one. Further historical accounts of the input of other actors, including those in the Global South, are needed to round out the perspective and adequately represent the agency of the full range of participants in the creation of the UN. The UN was created rapidly and with relatively little dissension amongst participants at the intergovernmental meetings held to establish it and its Agencies. This thesis suggests the mid-1940s was a period in which the interventionist management of the international system, not just in political affairs but also economic, social, and cultural, was widely accepted. The existence of transnational epistemic communities has been touched upon but can be explored further. More remains to be done on the history of this critical period.

Restoring economic and social issues to the centre of the UN's original purpose for UK policymakers, one of the UN's principal creators, this thesis has contributed to understanding British policy with respect to the UN. It has also highlighted the international governance role the UN was expected to perform. Even though it does not support the contention that ECOSOC was intended to be an Economic Security Council, it shows UK policymakers intended the UN (through ECOSOC) to play a crucial coordinating role within a more centralised and interventionist UN System than currently understood.

It demonstrates a confidence in the application of scientific rationalism, international planning and intervention lost in subsequent years, especially since the neo-liberal

turn of the 1980's and 1990's. A climate emergency and global pandemic has refocused attention on the need for multilateral cooperation to face common problems, a lesson that had been painfully learned in the 1940s but forgotten. However, the British attempts to rig the rules to favour the powerful in their own interests suggests internationalism cannot be welcomed uncritically. In a rules-based order It matters what the rules are: who sets them, who interprets them, and who enforces them. Clearer historical analysis of the responses of policymakers who lived through the great crises of the 20th Century may contribute to better awareness of the needs of the 21st Century as the world contemplates the future of the LIO and UN.

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