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3

BRITISH POLICY FORMULATION FOR THE EU

Bryce Comstock

In 1988, Robert Putnam wrote an article for *International Organizations* outlining his international relations theory that linked domestic and international spheres when it came to negotiating international agreements. Criticizing the overt focus on the unitary state, and the lack of comprehensive research that involved domestic constituencies and international interactions when it came to negotiation situations, Putnam (1988) outlined a basic conceptual model dealing with international negotiations, the idea of the “two-level game” (p 434). Putnam (1988) described the model as a combination of domestic groups at the national level that pressure “the government to adopt favorable policies” while at the international level executive actors attempt to “satisfy domestic pressures, while minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign developments” (p 434). The policy maker at the international bargaining table must satisfy both his domestic actors and agents, while at the same time negotiating a manageable deal with international actors across the table.

A more EU specific model of the two-level game that accounts for the specifics for both national parliaments and the EU is the negotiation-accountability dilemma, which deals with national policy-makers negotiating at the intergovernmental levels of the EU, while having to deal with domestic constituencies back home (Benz, 2003, p 88). Specifically, negotiators come from parties within national parliaments and have to interact at the Council level. Because these parties seek to maintain popular support and face opposition parties, they force executive agents to adopt nationalistic agendas at the EU level (Benz, 2003, pg 89). I also propose that beyond just electoral competition, intraparty conflict is another method of restraint on these actors as well. Hypothetically, both the need to win votes in elections and to satisfy diverging perspectives within the executive’s own party are the primary mechanisms that allow the UK parliament, and potentially others, to restrict executive outcome preferences at the Council level.

Because of the inherent intergovernmental EU-international theory that dominates the UK executive’s thinking when it comes to interacting with the EU, as well as its relatively unitary executive, skeptical public, and majoritarian parliament, the UK is uniquely suited to a qualitative approach to the two-level game model. Specifically, I will examine in depth the

parliamentary to Council negotiating-linkage and the complex interaction between public opinion, Parliament, and the executive when it comes to EU policy making. Finally, a case study regarding the Inter Governmental Conference (IGC) that produced the Maastricht treaty will reveal how these various elements coalesce to create a UK approach, constrained by a reluctant domestic constituency and aided by a strong unitary executive, that accomplishes vital national goals.

HISTORICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL LEGACY

To understand the current context in which this investigation takes place, one must understand both the British and European legacy that led to this point in time. After WW2, the Cold War separated Europe into roughly two halves. Encouraged by the US, Western Europe began to integrate, both politically and economically. Britain at first encouraged this integration, while it remained outside of it at the same time. Subsequently, because of the loss of economic prowess and the advantages of the European project, the United Kingdom attempted to join the European Community. Indeed, while Europe no longer dominated the world as it once did, it still had one of the largest economies in the world. Finally, in 1973, after numerous attempts, the UK joined the present day European Union. The UK now serves as one of the main powers of the EU, giving it more relative power than if it was to act on its own.

Key executive actors remain bounded by this historical legacy of a necessary, but reluctant membership within the EU. At the same time they are also constrained by the constantly changing evolutionary nature of the EU. Starting with the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952, then the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957, then the EU in 1993, and ultimately the consolidation of all of these various elements in 2007, the nature of the European transnational organization has not only evolved economically, but also politically over the latter half of the twentieth century (Miller and Clark, 2010, p. 3). While the degree of integration can be argued, the EU today is a politically and economically binding organization that impacts not only the Foreign Office, but also every single domestic agency, central or quango, in the UK. With its three main executive and legislative bodies consisting of the European Council, the Commission, and the European Parliament (EP), the EU is a transnational organization, not an international one (Miller and Clark, 2010, p. 7-9). While the balance between these organs has shifted over the course of EU history, British political actors remain constrained by the institutional mechanisms that blur the line between national and European interests.

PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARD THE EU

On the domestic level, public opinion tremendously influences the executive at the international negotiation table. In the United Kingdom, the public generally disapproves of the EU. According to a Eurobarometer poll in late 2009, trust in the EU is quoted at 22 percent, with trust in the Commission at 22 percent and trust in the EP at 22 percent (Miller, 2010, p 3). The UK public, according to political scientist Alistair Jones (2007), consistently “comes last” in the EU when asked “if membership of the EU is a good thing” (p. 157). Indeed, the UK is consistently among the least enthusiastic countries for the EU, though in recent years there has been more widespread discontent with some advancement in institutional change in other EU states, such as Ireland and the Netherlands (Jones, 2007, p.160-161).

But there is something beyond just a lack support for the EU. The British public is

also indifferent and ignorant regarding the EU. According to Andrew Geddes (2004), the British public combines “skepticism about Europe with high self-declared levels of lack of knowledge” about the EU and how it operates (p.224). He also notes that the British public regards its own knowledge of the EU as last among EU member states (Geddes, 2004, p. 214). Indeed, the public is relatively ignorant about the EU, and the issue is not necessarily the most prevalent on the political agenda for the electorate. As Geddes (2004) notes, European integration is an issue that can “engender deep controversy at the elite level,” but is not being a matter of huge “concern to the population more generally” (p. 214).

One of the leaders of the most serious rebellion against European integration was Margaret Thatcher. Stephen Wall describes Margaret Thatcher’s influence as having “fostered an anti-European sentiment which had little to do with European policy” and a lot to do with “Europe as a symbol of a reality” too painful for the British self-identity (Wall, 2008, p. 211). Sir Stephen Wall (2008) further comments on how the Eurosceptic attitude affects policy-makers in Britain. Wall states that “successive British governments have found themselves making an essentially negative case” for British EU membership (p. 210). In fact, the public attitude towards the negatively politicized EU, while having very little to do with the realities of the EU, shifts the political paradigm within which key decision-makers work. This shift has a direct effect on the negotiation-accountability dilemma the UK faces at the EU stage.

Inevitably, this has consequences for how actors work in the two-level game metaphor. Wall (2008) states that the public now expects the executive to act as the gatekeeper of British national interests against the encroaching undemocratic EU (p. 207). Indeed, Wall (2008) complains that “British governments have done relatively little to explain” to the public “what the true nature of the European project” is (p. 207). Within this context, the British government is constantly trying to reassure the public against encroachments, instead of explaining the benefits of integration. Perhaps it is the perceived lack of benefit from EU policies for the UK public that determines this distrust and scorn for the EU among the polity.

POLITICAL PARTIES, PARLIAMENT, AND POLICY MAKING

Political parties serve, at least in theory, as the institutional mechanism that represents the public’s view in Parliament and consequently the key constituency for the executive on the national level. Interestingly though, Parliament tends to be much more concerned about Europe than the public, perhaps from the historical legacy attached to the prominence of Parliament in British politics. As Andrew Geddes (2004) notes “European integration has been a[n] ...explosive issue in British party politics” yet the “intensity of elite level debates” about the subject do not match the low level of public interest in European integration (p. 181).

Indeed, while the Conservative party has been known as the more Eurosceptic party as of recently, Geddes (2004) notes that “neither of the two main political parties have adopted a consistent stance on European integration” since the UK’s acceptance into the EEC in 1973 (p. 181). The Liberal Democrats have traditionally been the most pro-Europe party (Geddes, 2004, p.181).

In terms of party dynamics on the issue of the EU, as well as how it affects policy, three important points should be raised. The first is that, historically, according to Geddes (2004), “divisions about Europe have tended to be within rather than between the main parties” (p.181). The second is that Parliament is typically the key arena for debates over EU policy

(Geddes, 2004, p. 182). The third and final main point about how parties operate in Parliament regarding the EU is that the larger the party majority, the less of an opportunity there is for Eurosceptic MP's to make a disturbance or opposition to EU policy and integration (Geddes, 2004, p. 183). All three of these factors influence the extent of freedom the executive enjoys at the EU level in the two-level metaphor.

Often, the dissension within parties in Parliament has served as a constraint on the government of the time. An example is the accession negotiations to join the European Economic Community (EEC) by Edward Heath in the early 1970s. Britain, already rejected twice from the EEC by De Gaulle, tried to get approved one final time under Heath. Heath, no longer stopped by De Gaulle at the international level, decided to go through Parliament instead of a referendum, because he thought that it was the most likely to deliver a supportive vote (Forster, 2002, p. 33). The accession process came through legislation in the form of the 1972 European Communities Act (Forster, 2002, p. 33).

By Heath deciding to use Parliament as the instrument to get accession to the EEC, and correspondingly to "include 40 volumes of European Community (EC) regulations" into British domestic law through one piece of legislation, he enabled political parties and their political actors, MPs, to decide the fate of his EC policy. Interestingly enough, the majority of only thirty seats for Heath, as well as an estimated seventy or eighty dissenting Tory MPs, put this policy into jeopardy (Forster, 2002, p. 33). Although there was a lack of consensus among members of the Conservative Party, there was strong cohesion among government members (Forster, 2002, p. 34). Indeed, most of the dissenting Tory MP's were backbenchers.

In the Labour Party, every level of the party, according to Forster (2002), was split on the issue, but on the whole Labour was more anti-EC than the Conservative Party (p. 35). Thus with a possibility of enough anti-Marketees in both parties to stop UK accession, the idea of a possible coalition on this issue between the opposing party members against EC membership formed (Forster, 2002, p. 37). Inevitably, the choice between party loyalty and stopping accession determined the final vote.

Parliament served as the main arena over this issue between 1970 and 1974 (Forster, 2002, p. 42). This set a precedent in the UK about EU policy debate: the public did not really show an interest and was slightly against joining the Market at this time, while political parties ferociously debated the topic inside of the political arena known as Parliament. Inevitably the whips were able to ensure enough Conservative votes went for the government proposal, as well as 60 Labour MPs revolted and voted for the government, giving it a winning vote of 301 to 284 (Forster, 2002, p.44-45). The precarious nature of the passage demonstrates the danger of Parliament as public arena and final approval for EU policy. While Parliament may have lost power in the multi-level policy making field of European decision-making, it still can provide an enormous restraint on domestic decision-makers, even if the government has a majority.

Further still, a cyclical pattern emerges on the stances of the two major parties towards Europe over the years. With regard to the ebb and flow of skepticism of the years, according to Forster (2002), "mass skepticism in political parties has been a phenomenon which has coincided with periods of opposition" (p.130). Typically the government tends to be relatively pro-Europe within the British political context. Similarly, another pattern emerges amongst the party in power. According to Forster (2002), parties are initially more integrationist, while at the end of their terms in power they tend to be more disillusioned with Europe (p.

130). Consequently, Europe can be seen as an issue that sparks regeneration and transformation, following a cyclical pattern of moving towards the center to eventually form a government, yet at the same time parties radicalize once out of office in order to reestablish their identities (Forster, 2002, p.141). Thus these changes and dynamics within the main domestic constituency alter the domestic level in the two-level game.

At the same time Parliament has formal procedural and organizational norms that explicitly deal with oversight of executive actors at the EU level. The House of Commons in 1980 passed a resolution formalizing the need to have Parliament scrutinize any EC legislation before the government takes a stance on the subject, though this scrutiny reserve resolution only dealt with some issues (House of Commons Information Office, 2010, p. 7). The next Resolution of the House, in 1990, applied the Scrutiny Reserve Resolution to all EC legislation, thus extending scope of the previous Scrutiny Reserve Resolution. The most current Scrutiny Reserve was completed in 1998 to catch up with the development of co-decision and the Treaty of Amsterdam (HCIO, 2010, p. 7). The current Scrutiny Reserve, adopted in House of Commons, essentially maintains that no minister shall agree to any piece of EU legislation or decision without having that legislation being scrutinized through Parliament's procedure (Cabinet Office, 2011, Annex D). Roughly the same Scrutiny Reserve Resolution was passed through the House of Lords in 1999, just reflecting the different organizational framework of the House of Lords (CO, 2011, Annex E). There are exceptions to this process, but at the same time the Scrutiny Reserve Resolution has no legal power. The Government has so far cooperated with this process with Parliament.

The Scrutiny Reserve forms the foundation of the Parliamentary scrutinizing process. To begin the process, the Cabinet Office will deposit the various EU directives, positions, and agreements with Parliament coming mostly from the European Council, the Commission, and the Council of Ministers (CO, 2011, p.1). Once the legislation is filed with Parliament, a Minister will send an Explanatory Memorandum or EM, which explains the various implications of the document and the Government's position on the legislation. In the House of Commons, the European Scrutiny Committee will either find whether the document is considered relevant and it will be subsequently reported. If the legislation is deemed necessary of debate, the European Scrutiny Committee will assign it to one of its three subcommittees (A, B, and C) to debate the topic and decide on it more formally (CO, 2010, p. 11). Every year, the European Scrutiny Committee sorts over 1,000 documents, reports substantively on 500 of them, debates 40 of these, and sends 3 to be debated on the Floor of the Commons (Department of Chamber and Committee Services, 2010, p 10).

The House of Lords procedure is different in the scope it goes into for each document. Unlike the Commons' system which handles each document quickly and merely debates on whether an item should be debated on or not, the European Union Committee – as the scrutiny committee in the Lords is known as – deals with far fewer documents but goes into more detail (HCIO, 2010, p. 19). The European Union Committee Chair will “sift” through each EM and its associated document to either clear the document or send it to subcommittee (CO, 2011, p. 2). Once “sifted,” the document is either immediately cleared or “scrutinized” ore sent to the one of 7 subject subcommittees. These subcommittees will then either make a report on the document and send it to debate, or will clear the document through their own inquiry. The Lords' process is more selective and in-depth than the Commons', reflecting the nature of both houses.

BRITISH INTERACTIONS WITH EU INSTITUTIONS: THE LINK BETWEEN DOMESTIC AND THE EU STAGE

The emphasis for the British preparation for projection at the EU level relies on the critical link between domestic and international spheres. As Arthur Benz (2003) states, it is the “negotiation-accountability dilemma” between national parliaments and the Council, the core body at the center of the EU (p. 88). This model principally takes account of the British foreign policy situation. Parliament, the arena for debate on the EU and having a strong Euroscepticism element, keeps account domestically of nationally elected individuals that have to negotiate at the Council table. This two-tier game, according to Benz (2003) represents a challenge for officials (p. 88). Parliament encourages negotiating officials to focus on strictly the national interest because its perspective is heavily slanted domestically. At the same time, decision-makers have to deal with far more complicated interests encountered at the EU level. Parliament does not have to take into account these mixed motives and differing perspectives because of nationalistic orientation. This predicament ends up binding national officials at the Council stage of negotiations, who encounter European wide interests and other national interests, while at the same time being constrained by Parliament in its outcome preferences.

BRITAIN AT THE NEGOTIATION TABLE: THE MAASTRICHT TREATY

While the machinery is in place institutionally for Britain to be an effective voice at the EU level, the attitude is not. From a myriad of historical identity issues, political constraints, and national interests, Britain is often in conflict with her EU partners in policy and the want to move the EU forward. As Andrew Geddes (2004) states, “Britain has often been peripheral to the economic and political integration” that has characterized the development of the EU (p. 21). Indeed, these distinct factors tend to promote almost the same policy preferences towards Europe regardless of who is in control of the British central government. Rarely are leaders as anti-Europe as they appear in public, but yet they still pursue mostly intergovernmental arrangements. Indeed, the common position of the UK towards the EU has been of reluctance to economic and political integration, domestic regulation, and a promotion of the liberal single market and increased defensive coordination (Thatcher, 1984). This position has largely been the same throughout Britain’s EU policy history, regardless of premiership, (Wall, 2008, 210).

How Sir Wall (2008) explains the composition of British policy is an “extraordinary, complex, and changing mixture of factors which include an inherited view of the British national interest, partisanship, personality, circumstance, public pressures, luck...” as well as a rational analysis of what is best for the UK and attempting to turn that position into reality (p.185). This process ends up being remarkably similar regardless of which Britain-EU interaction. To further explore the entire process of Britain’s EU policy formulation, attached to the negotiation-accountability dilemma and two-level game, John Major and the Maastricht treaty provide an opportunity to see the mechanisms, attitudes, and various levels of multi-level policy making in the British context.

MAJOR AND POLITICAL INTEGRATION

As Sir Wall (2008) states, the Rome European Council had been what had hastened Margaret Thatcher’s departure and sparked a Euro-rift in the ruling Conservative party (p. 110). In that winter of 1990, with Major at the helm, another Intergovernmental Conference

(IGC) was launched, arranging political union reform in conjunction with the European Monetary Union (EMU) IGC (Wall, 2008, p. 110). This treaty proposed a significant challenge for Major. EMU and further political integration had been something that Margaret had fought against, and Major was attached to that position, but how was he to handle this new IGC concentrated on further integration with more tact than Thatcher while still preserving British–EU policy?

Political union discussed at the IGC and before relied on several key external factors and events that pushed European integration forward. The main two principally revolved around Germany, namely, according to political scientist Alasdair Blair (1999), the reunification of Germany after the fall of Communism and the German push for monetary union needing to be coupled with political integration (p. 51). Both Germany under, Helmut Kohl, and France, under President Mitterrand, wished for a new unified Germany to be tied into Western Democratic Europe (Blair, 1999, p. 51). Indeed, Germany and France worked together during the two IGCS, one on political union, the other on EMU, in order to bind Germany into the EU (Wall, 2008, p. 126).

British interests in the European Political Union (EPU) discussion were those of trying to enable Eastern European countries to join in the future, a continued pervasiveness of Council decisions on issues, a reluctance to give any further powers to the EP, and the right kind of new foreign policy and security mechanism (Blair, 1999, p. 53). Britain, as Blair mentions, was in the minority in not calling for the IGC's, especially the EPU IGC (Blair, 1999, p. 53). Britain was hostile to further political integration. Officially, the IGC was declared at the 1990 Dublin European Council (Blair, 1999, p. 53).

Britain's attitude in the run up to negotiations could be qualified as wanting "*details first rather than details later*" (Blair, 1999, p. 54). In typical British fashion, reluctance to further integration guided the central government's approach to the political negotiations under the Maastricht Treaty. It was after this period, in December 1990, which Major decided to become more constructive about EPU discussions, in order to achieve more favorable results for Britain (Blair, 1999, p. 54). Indeed, Major, according to Wall, wanted to "be active in making a success of Britain's EU membership" and adopted a more open engaging attitude towards other member-state leaders, but was still "subject to the severe constraints of domestic interest and politics" (Wall 2008, p. 111–121). Indeed, Major realized the impetus for political integration was going ahead, but he looked to be more proactive and more engaging in order to get better responses for the UK, even though it could be called "playing for a draw" as Labour Leader Neil Kinnock famously said at the end of negotiations to the *Daily Mail* (qtd Wall, 2008, p.131).

Major and the central government appeared enthusiastic and progressive towards the EPU IGC, but the key actors maintained broad and opaque priorities, at least in public in the run up to the EPU (Blair, 1999, p. 55). Indeed, no White Paper was released heading into the discussions for Conservative MP's in order to maintain being flexible and to quell as much internal dissension as possible (Blair, 1999, p. 55). The only time it made its negotiating tactics known was December 6, 1990, when the government advocated for emphasizing intergovernmental approaches at the EU level, the notion of subsidiarity, stronger foreign policy cooperation, and to prevent more legislative powers for the EP (Blair, 1999, p.56). Britain also sought to prevent greater usage of QMV, to encourage further integration of Eastern European countries in the future, and to avoid an EU defense force that undermined the UK's relationship with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (Blair, 1999,

p.56). Overall, the UK policy-makers remained hostile and negative to any further political integration, all determined at the Cabinet and Cabinet Committee level, though with a certain degree of flexibility and tolerance in tone that was not present under Thatcher's final months.

Three key issues were the priority of the EPU IGC for the UK: foreign policy and military integration, co-decision, and structural reform.

The new political structure of the EU built off of the Treaty of Rome definitely went Britain's way, but still showed how Britain was not a relatively positive player in the IGC discussions. There were two principal ways that the EU could look like based on ideas from the IGC; according to Wall (2008) the "rival concepts of Europe as a tree or a temple" (p. 124). The tree approach, supported by Italy and others, conceived of the EU under one body where every policy would be decided the same way as they had in the EC: Commission has sole right of initiative, Council and now a more powerful EP share legislative roles, and the final judicial authority is the European Court of Justice (ECJ) (Wall, 2008, p.124). In this scenario, any new competencies proscribed for Europe would be dealt with under previous Community processes. British officials were not happy with this plan, as they wanted further intergovernmental approaches to new competencies for the EU. Britain favored the pillared approach under which new competencies such as the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the new justice and home affairs arms would be dealt with based on intergovernmental structures strictly (Wall 2008, p. 125).

Luxembourg proposed the pillared approach and Holland proposed the unitary structure (Blair 1999, p. 60–61). The Dutch document outlined a structure where there would be the single decision making policy for all proposed new competencies, something Britain could not afford. Indeed, Britain was able to convince other member-states that the Luxembourg proposal was the proper way forward, with Major declaring it a negotiation success at the Conservative Party Conference in October of 1991 (Blair, 1999, p. 66).

Britain also feared greater powers for the EP. Only Denmark and Britain, according to Blair (1999), were against any kinds of increase in powers for the EP (p. 69). In particular, the idea of co-decision between the Council and the EP was something Britain fought against. Co-decision was something Parliament was vehemently against, forcing British officials into the accountability–negotiation dilemma. Major did a fantastic job of preventing Parliament from picking up on the ideas of co-decision within the treaty (Blair, 1999, p.70). Major had to remain accountable to domestic factors back home stating, "a European super-state would not be acceptable to me or to the House" on the issue of co-decision and any mention of a federal goal for the EU (qtd Blair 1999, p. 71). Major had to specifically frame the issue for Parliament back home, or "cultivate a domestic perception that the debate was by no means over" regarding EP increased power (Blair 1999, p. 71). Major and his officials always knew that at the table the EP would have to get more powers, but it had to balance this with the constant potential of rebellion back home ruining the negotiation line. Ultimately though, UK pressure kept the EP from getting full co-decision powers on all Commission competency legislation

Foreign policy and security were new competencies for the EU, outlined as an intergovernmental decision-making policy area, where the UK had conflicting points of view. British officials were scared of any sort of military force outside of NATO command, while at the same time wanting a bigger voice for Europe on the world stage (Wall, 2008, p. 127). The principal debate, according to Winn and Lord (2001), was between a "Franco-German

proposal that the European Council should be empowered to request the Western European Union” to back up CFSP joint actions by military force and Britain which sought to prevent any sort of military structure in Europe outside of NATO (p. 42). Britain was unwilling to undermine US confidence in European security, which it saw happening under the military arm of the CFSP negotiations. Ultimately a compromise was reached where military forces were almost completely left out of CFSP plans and new agreements on joint action protocols took place (Winn and Lord, 2001, p. 42).

BRITAIN AND EMU

The EMU IGC was far more politically important, both internationally and domestically for Britain, though for different reasons. The single currency was an issue that drew an incredible amount of domestic political attention, while at the same time it was a key issue from the Maastricht Treaty that had substantial implications for the EU. Britain’s political actors were against the EMU in the form it eventually took, but the rest of the EU, including France and Germany, were pushing for it.

Britain’s fight in the EMU IGC was much simpler than in the EPU IGC according to Blair (1999) (p.43). Obviously it affected less areas of government, particularly the Treasury and the Bank of England, than EPU. Inevitably, preparations were made mostly between officials from the Treasury, FCO, Cabinet Office, and Bank of England (Blair, 1999, p. 43). This approach was considerably different than preparations for the EPU IGC, which required much more of a total Cabinet approach. Again the main policy was to avoid EMU, though at what potential EU economic and political cost? The discussions were simpler and an opt-out from EMU had already been secured before the IGC even started (Blair, 1999, p. 45). At the same time though, EMU was of much more significance to the new government than EPU (Wall, 2008, p. 113).

The Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) had been a contentious issue under Thatcher. The Exchange Rate Mechanism had almost forced the resignation of the Chancellor Nigel Lawson and the Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe, who threatened to leave the Cabinet if Thatcher did not agree to it (Geddes, 2004, 85). EMU was a much stronger step than ERM though. And while Major won major concessions at the EPU debate, it was not looking like he would be able direct the discussions for EMU in the same way (Geddes, 2004, p. 86). EMU had already been discussed during the years before Thatcher leaving office, but Britain had been uncommitted regarding the issue. It came down to domestic politics and how much impact Britain would have in the future of EU negotiations if it was not included in EMU.

As Geddes (2004) notes, Major had to “straddle the pro- and anti-EU wings of his party and was unable to provide strong leadership” during the negotiation of the Maastricht Treaty (p. 87). This included a strong anti-EMU contingent in the House of Commons. Previous EMU discussions, led by Germany and France, and endorsed by the Commission, caught Britain off guard. The relatively quick pace that found most of EMU constructed by the time it got to Maastricht meant Britain had had little input into the actual outcome (Blair, 1999, p. 154). Indeed, the Delors report on EMU stages 1, 2, and 3 included a perspective that Britain was against fast integration and was content to pursue EMU at a much slower pace than the rest of the EC, leading to the conclusion that EMU could happen with Britain outside of it (Blair, 1999, p. 155).

Thus the legacy Major inherited from Thatcher on EMU left his government behind

in the discussions on what EMU could be. By being left out on the original discussions, Major and his officials were forced into a yes or no proposition with little room to compromise.

Major and his Chancellor, Norman Lamont, went into negotiations with a key idea: the need to be able to go into EMU later, but only with the consent of Parliament and the central government (Wall, 2008, p.113). The fear was that EMU would go ahead without Britain, but the government was unwilling to give up monetary sovereignty at this time. Major was unconvinced that “there would be sufficient economic convergence” to make EMU worthwhile (Wall, 2008, p. 114). Major doubted that Parliament would accept the Maastricht Treaty with any forced timetable for joining EMU (Wall, 2008, p. 131). Instead, it was an issue he needed flexibility in, but was instead faced with an environment where commitment to EMU was likely going to happen with or without Britain.

Britain and Denmark were the only countries at the EMU IGC that were against the single currency (Blair, 1999, p. 172). Britain was isolated, and its negotiators constrained by Parliamentary reluctance to be tied economically into the EU on a single currency. The introduction of a single currency, according to Blair (1999), was unacceptable to Conservative MP’s (p.174). Also, Britain was considered on the periphery of the discussion of EMU because of its extreme reluctance. Indeed, British objectives, according to Blair (1999), were to “avoid any binding commitment to a future single currency” (p.177). Eventually, Major had a sit down meeting with several heads of government at the June Luxembourg European Council including Delors, Santer, Lubbers, Mitterrand, and Kohl, where he negotiated an opt-out clause, though with no specific time frame (Blair, 1999, p.179). This was the only political option open to Major that would enable a reasonable outcome for Britain, while satisfying domestic constraints within Parliament.

CONCLUSIONS FROM MAASTRICHT

The Maastricht Treaty indicated much of the philosophy, methods, and constraints British officials and ministers face at the EU level. While Maastricht can be construed as a success for Britain from an individual standpoint, Britain did nothing to establish itself as the leading voice in Europe. Again it was established as a negative voice, often on the outside of economic and political integration questions. That is beside the point though of how British attitudes, policy-making habits, and institutional arrangements deliver certain outcomes for the UK central government. Specifically, it operates as a key example of the two-level game, and the subsequent outcomes the executive could reach based on national and international interests.

The Maastricht Treaty was a favorable outcome for Britain. The extension of competencies was relatively weak. The EP did not get full co-decision, the UK managed a way to stop the Social Chapter, negotiated an opt-out from EMU, got a CFSP that was firmly entrenched in Britain’s perspective, and a pillared approach to the EU structure. Indeed, Britain’s goal of eventually extending membership to Eastern European countries ended up becoming a reality. The EU was neither as integrated nor as extensive as some others wanted it, reflecting the negative attitude British negotiators took to Maastricht.

Inevitably, the circumstances around Maastricht develop the idea of a negotiation-accountability dilemma and a two-level game when it comes to EU matters. Major and his government were forced to stand back at some negotiations because the Conservative party was splitting at the seams over the EU. He barely passed the Maastricht Treaty through Parliament, requiring dissenting Labour voters to save him. Labor tried to force Major to accept

the Social Chapter for electoral purposes. Major was constrained at every twist and turn of the negotiation road to preserve domestic tranquility. Eventually the dissension in the party and his perceived failures at Maastricht cost the Conservatives control of the government.

While national political factors reduced the government's progress at Maastricht, it also showed how the machinery between Britain and the EU worked. Britain was able to formulate outcomes it wanted in relative terms because of its limited negotiating position, even in the case of EMU.

If anything, the Maastricht treaty indicates how complicated the EU is for Britain. The key policy makers have to deal with a public that is at best lukewarm and uninterested in the EU, a Parliament that strongly binds whatever actions the UK takes at the EU level, and foreign partners that adopt positions that are typically in the opposite direction negotiators want them to go in. Specifically, the Maastricht Treaty process shows how intraparty and interparty conflicts severely limit outcomes for the executive at the Council level. If anything, the United Kingdom is indicative that the negotiation-accountability dilemma is a satisfactory way of explaining the compounded representation issue that affects the EU policymaking process. The UK's heavily centralized and disciplined party system also lends evidence to the idea that intraparty conflict may play a larger role than many scholars would assume when it comes to constraining the executive at the Council level.

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