Early European Summitry and the Making of the Council of Europe

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Although the Council of Europe – after the Western European Union turned Brussels Pact ceased to exist in 2011 – is the oldest European integration body, the historical scholarship on its inception is becoming dated.[1] With the sole exception of an article published in 1997 by Marie-Anne Engelbel on Belgium's role in setting up the Council, all other assessments appeared between 1977 and 1988 when the documents from late 1940s and early 1950s became available for historical research in the respective national archives.[2] For the comparatively minor contribution that the Council has made to the further development of European integration processes, the relative lack of interest in the issue at hand (and the Council's history as such) during the last two decades is hardly surprising. However, as a consequence of this, even the most recent historical overviews still draw on these out-of-date an incomplete accounts.[3]

While all authors have convincingly described the internal-external linkages of foreign policy making in the specific national cases, i.e. the interdependence between the decision making on party, government and subsequent inter-governmental levels, they have failed to grasp, in part due to incomplete archival evidence and prevailing paradigmatic stress on national and diplomatic history, one striking and highly-relevant aspect. What I mean here is a special impetus or agency that the high-level inter-ministerial meetings within the Brussels Pact and, later during the spring 1949, within the enlarged ten-power framework have had for policy-setting and policy-shaping with regard to the Council's establishment and its institutional setup. In this respect, particularly, the importance of the May 1949 ministerial negotiations for the final

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2. W. LOTH, *Sozialismus und Internationalismus. Die französischen Sozialisten und die Nachkriegsordnung Europas 1940-1950*, DVA, Stuttgart, 1977, pp.211-214 and 221-223; G. WARNER, *Die Britische Labour-Regierung und die Einheit Westeuropas 1949-1951*, in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 3(1980), pp.310-330 and pp.316-321 in particular; J.W. YOUNG, *Britain, France and the Unity of Europe 1945-1951*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, 1984, pp.108-117; M.-T. BITSCH, *Le rôle de la France dans la naissance du Conseil de l'Europe*, in: R. POIDEVIN (ed.), *Histoire des débuts de la construction européenne*, Bruyland et al., Bruxelles, 1986, pp.165-198; A. VARSORI, *Il Patto di Bruxelles (1948): tra integrazione europea e alleanza atlantica*, Bonacci editore, Roma, 1988, pp.185-211 and 244-275 and M.-A. ENGELBEL, *La Belgique et les débuts du Conseil de l'Europe*, in: M.-T. BITSCH (ed.), *Jalons pour une histoire du Conseil de l'Europe*, Peter Lang, Berne, 1997, pp.53-75. Engelbel' article draws on her bachelor thesis which was defended at Louvain-la-Neuve in 1995.

3. Cf. e.g. W. LOTH, *Europas Einigung. Eine unvollendete Geschichte*, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt, 2014, pp.27-30 (an English version of this book appeared with a slightly adapted title *Building Europe. History of European Unification* in 2015 with de Gruyter academic publishing) and B. WASSENBERG, *History of the Council of Europe*, Council of European Publishing, Strasbourg, 2013, pp.22-26.

outcome of deliberations is dismissed or rather not exactly known. But, curiously enough, it was during this meeting when a staunch opponent of the whole idea of pan-European assembly, the British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, actively joined his French and Dutch opposite numbers, Robert Schuman and Dirk Stikker, in an effort to convince the Foreign Ministers of Sweden, Denmark and Norway to soften their intransigence on principle of unanimous voting within the Council's Committee of Ministers – the very principle on which Bevin vehemently insisted even after he gave his consent to the Council's establishment in January 1949.

As against this, a new assessment of the subject in question that will supplement the existing narratives with a fresh perspective seems desirable. In addition to analyses mentioned above, this article draws on novel primary evidence that has not yet been used for reconstructing the developments leading to the establishment of the Council of Europe. The gross of this evidence comes from the still classified Archives of the Western European Union (henceforth AWEU) which were stored at the National Archives, Kew, Richmond, UK, when the archival research for this paper had been carried out.[4] To somewhat lesser extent, this study also utilizes the files from the Historical Archive of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg (hereinafter HACE) as well as the General Correspondence series of the British Foreign Office (henceforward FO 371).

The structure of the paper is set chronologically and the article is divided into two parts that overlap with two main negotiating periods. The first of these spanned from late July 1948 to early March 1949. During this stage the negotiations were restricted to the narrow circle of the Five Brussels Pact Powers – France, Great Britain and the Benelux countries. The second, intergovernmental phase of talks lasted for merely two months, from early March to early May 1949, when Italy, Ireland, Denmark, Norway and, finally, Sweden joined the Brussels Five. The findings of the paper are discussed in its concluding section.

The negotiations within the Brussels Treaty Organisation

The Congress of Europe that took place at The Hague in early May 1948 provided an important momentum for the inception of the Council of Europe. Despite all differences between the proponents of federal and supporters of unionist approach towards the end mean of envisaged European integration, it conveyed a strong message from the influential part of European elites that the time had arrived to overcome the

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4. The archives consist of microfilmed documents of which originals were kept at an unspecified location and the London microfilms were only accessible with a permit of the Secretary General of the Western European Union. The author was granted access by the last ordinary Secretary General, Javier Solana, a few years before the organization became defunct. During the production process of this paper, it was incidentally found out by the editor of this journal that the AWEU files were transferred from London to Luxembourg at some date and are now accessible at the Archives nationales de Luxembourg.

national confines and narrow-minded nationalisms in addressing the issues that Europe faced after the end of the Second World War.[5] However, it may well have been that this clear message would have passed unheard by the political class in European countries. During the next three months, the Joint International Committee (henceforth JIC) of the Movements for European Unity, which was responsible for convening the Congress, therefore, on the impetus of Winston Churchill's son-in-law Duncan Sandys, very vividly promoted the idea of a pan-European assembly throughout its influential member network. And, in fact, this tactic proved to be working.[6]

On 20 July 1948, Georges Bidault, the French Foreign Minister, urged by an influential French Socialist politician Paul Ramadier,[7] delivered towards the closing of the second meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Brussels Pact a formal statement 'on the political and economic aspects of European federation' in which he proposed to raise negotiations on the establishment of an European assembly to an intergovernmental level.[8] Speaking for the majority of members of Robert Schuman's first, and at the time, out-going cabinet, as well as in the name of French public opinion, Bidault at first emphasized that by signing the Brussels Pact the signatory countries expressed their willingness to work for the political and economic unification of Europe. 'In the political sphere' – the French Minister went on – 'the peoples of Europe were crying out for some form of organised European collaboration, and it was for the Consultative Council to help them realise this desire'. To meet this expectation Bidault proposed that the Brussels Pact Powers should immediately investigate how

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5. Cf. e.g. B. WASSENBERG, op.cit., pp.20-22. For a detailed account of the Hague Congress see, for example, J.-M. GUIEU, Ch. LE DRÉAU (eds), *Le «Congrès de l'Europe» à La Haye (1948-2008)*, Peter Lang, Brussels, 2009.
6. P. GERBET, *La construction de l'Europe,* Armand Colin, Paris, 2007, p.63.
7. Ibid., p.63 and W. LOTH, *Europas Einigung…*, op.cit., p.27. Although there is a consensus in literature that a 'half-hearted Europeanist' Bidault delivered the speech mainly for inner-political reasons, his ulterior motives are not exactly clear. While Young (concurring with Loth and Warner) argued that the outgoing minister made the move 'in a last, desperate effort to remain at the Quai d'Orsay' by impressing Ramadier and other Socialists, Massigli, who personally witness much of the events described in this article, intimated that Bidault – rather than the Socialists – desired to impress Auriol, the President of the Republic, hoping the latter would appoint him to form a new government. Massigli's view is further reinforced by the fact that Bidault leaked the information that he will deliver the proposal at the meeting to the press. Cf. J.W. YOUNG, op.cit., p.110; W LOTH, *Sozialismus und Internationalismus*, pp.211-212; G. WARNER, op.cit., pp.317-318; R. MASSIGLI, *Une comédie des erreurs 1943-1956. Souvenirs et réflexions sur une étape de la construction européenne*, Plon, Paris, 1978, p.145 and L. S. KAPLAN, *NATO 1948. The Birth of the Transatlantic Alliance*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, 2007, p.127. The first who noticed the difference in interpretation of Bidault's motives was Antonio Varsori, cf. A. VARSORI, op.cit., p.188 and ft.33 on p.325. For a complex evaluation of Bidault's foreign policy conduct and developing attitudes towards the European integration, see e.g. P. SVIK, *The Czechoslovak Factor in Western Alliance Building,* in: *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 1(2016), pp.133-160 and G.-H. SOUTOU, *Georges Bidault et la construction européenne, 1944-1954*, in: S. BERSTEIN et al., *Le MRP et la construction européenne*, Complexe, Brussels, pp.197-230.
8. Cf. AWEU [Archives of the Western European Union], DG 1/3/13: Council of Europe: extracts from minutes and other papers (folios 1-108) [hereafter DG 1/3/13], Déclaration du Président Georges Bidault sur le problème du fédéralisme européen, 20.07.1948.

to 'enable the peoples of Europe to meet and give expression to their public opinions by the creation of a European Assembly' and how to establish

> 'amongst the Five Powers (or amongst certain of them) […] a customs and economic union, which in the normal course of events would be extended to all other European nations anxious to join it'.[9]

The immediate response to these proposals was rather hesitant. The British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, was worried that a European assembly – as long as parliamentary parties were represented proportionately – would become an arena for Communist agitation, which he thought would be extremely dangerous at the particular moment. On the other hand, he also stated that, if the setup of an assembly would have been left to the initiative of pro-federalist associations, then they would nominate its members at their own choice which he considered undesirable, too. It might after all be better – Bevin contemplated – if the governments would take part in these affairs and the assembly would consist of members of parliamentary parties. Bevin, therefore, ultimately suggested that, with respect to Bidault's proposal, the Ministers should inform their respective governments in order to find out how to move forward on this issue. The Belgian Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Paul-Henri Spaak, expressed himself along somewhat different lines by emphasizing that although the Belgium government had declared its support for the Hague Congress, Brussels would like to leave further initiative up to private associations for the moment. And, eventually, the governments of the Brussels Pact countries could express their support for such initiative at a later stage. Regarding the second point, Bevin and Spaak agreed that the establishment of a common customs and economic union was not an urgent matter and could wait pending the outcome of ongoing negotiations within the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation.[10]

In fact, however, the official record provides a somewhat idealized account of negotiations and the discussions were less idyllic and far more heated than the document indicates. While recounting the meeting some thirty years after it took place, René Massigli, the then French Ambassador to London, remarked that Bevin eventually hit the ceiling and, as if at a unions rally, bitterly spat his comments in a highly undiplomatic language towards Bidault while the French Minister was still speaking.[11] There were principally three reasons for Bevin's outburst and these, as the article will demonstrate, also pre-determined the attitude of British Labour government toward the whole idea of a European assembly in the forthcoming months. The first of these was Bevin's conviction that the real intentions of Bidault and Ramadier,

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9. In order to avoid the readers' confusion from mixing up the English parenthesis with Bidault's curly French, I am quoting here from a summarized English version of his speech. AWEU, DG 1/3/13, Summarised Translation of M. Bidault's Speech at the Second Session of the Consultative Council, 20.07.1948.

10. AWEU, DG 1/3/13, Extract from the record of the 2nd meeting of the Consultative Council held at The Hague, 19-20.07.1948. For full record of this meeting, see AWEU, DG 1/1/1, Records of Session of the Consultative Council, vol.I: 2nd and 5th sessions, Record of the 2nd meeting of the Consultative Council.

11. Cf. MASSIGLI, op.cit., p.156.

as well as of other continental leaders who supported the idea of European unification, were not as noble and honourable as they declared and that they only cynically used the issue for achieving inner-political goals. The second was, in a sort of Freudian projection, the worries and anxiety of Labour leaders that Winston Churchill and the Tories would use the proposed assembly as a platform for attacking Clement Attlee's government from outside of Britain. The third was Bevin's concerns that the French, with the backing of the Americans, aimed by presenting the proposal at restoring 'la grandeur de la France' and desired to take the leadership in Western Europe from British hands. For all these reasons the British Foreign Secretary and his colleagues in government were determined to derail the project by adopting the dilatory tactics.[12] This, however, proved subsequently harder than the Labourists had perhaps expected because neither the French nor the JIC desired the issue to disappear from an official level where Bidault's speech lifted it up.

Already on 21 July, i.e. the day after Bidault had presented his proposal, the JIC dispatched to the five Foreign Ministers of the Brussels Pact countries similarly worded letters in which it warmly welcomed that the Ministers had discussed the issue of a European assembly at their recent meeting and that the matter was to receive a further consideration by respective national governments.[13] The letter also informed the Ministers that a specialized study group had been formed under the aegis of the JIC, which was chaired by Paul Ramadier. The task of this was to define the 'precise terms of reference' of a proposed assembly as well as its composition and 'the method to be adopted for the selection of its members'. The letter further stated that during its last meeting (17-18 July 1948) the study group also addressed the 'choice of the authority which shall convene the assembly' and came to the agreement that such an initiative should come from European governments or national parliaments. However, if they were unable to render a decision, then the JIC would be prepared to act and convene an assembly on their own initiative. In conclusion, the letter called upon the Ministers to meet with the JIC representatives to discuss the aforementioned issues.[14]

Upon the suggestion of Michiels van Verduynen, the Dutch Ambassador to London, the Brussels Treaty Permanent Commission (hereafter BTPC) attempted to work out a common reply of the Brussels Pact countries to the JIC's letters at its 23rd and 24th meeting (10 and 12 August respectively). However, the discussions produced no results whatsoever.[15] The JIC therefore made a step forward and on 18 August 1948 submitted to the five governments a memorandum prepared by Ramadier's study

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12. Cf. J.W. YOUNG, op.cit., pp.110-111; G. WARNER, op.cit., pp.312-321 passim and S. KAPLAN, op.cit., pp.127-130.
13. AWEU, DG 1/1/1, Record of the 2nd meeting of the Consultative Council, Annex IV – Communiqué, 20.07.1948, and P. GERBET, op.cit., p.63.
14. AWEU, DG 1/3/13, Joint International Committee of Movements for European Unity to Bevin, 21.07.1948.
15. AWEU, DG 1/3/13, Extract from the minutes of the 23rd and 24th meetings of the Permanent Commission, 10-12.08.1948.

group.[16] Having secured the support of Paris and Brussels for its goals, the committee in the document proposed that the sixteen member states of the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation should establish a common assembly.[17] However, until the European

> 'nations should decide to transfer some part of their sovereign right to an international European authority, the assembly could have no legislative or executive powers'.

On the other hand, the document pointed out that an assembly 'could perform important functions of a deliberative and advisory character'. The assembly would 'give expression to the desire of the European peoples for unity and peace' and should 'consider methods of developing closer understanding among the European peoples in the spiritual and cultural spheres'. On a more pragmatic level, the assembly should propose 'practical measures to secure the progressive political and economic integration of Europe' as well as 'study the constitutional, economic and social problems inherent in the creation of a European union'. Finally, the assembly should 'approve a Charter of Human Rights' and 'make proposals for the establishment of a European Supreme Court, with adequate sanctions to secure the implementation of the Charter'.[18]

The document then suggested that 'for reasons of speed and administrative convenience', the five Brussels Pact governments should 'undertake responsibility for convening and organising the assembly'. As a preliminary step towards achieving this objective, the five countries should call to Brussels a preparatory conference that would take place no later than the end of November 1948 and would be attended by seventy-five representatives. Of these 25 were to be from Britain and France, 11 from Belgium and the Netherlands and Luxembourg should have been represented by 3 deputies. It was the responsibility of national governments to 'secure from their respective parliaments the designation of the appropriate number of delegates' that 'should be chosen, without restriction, from among Members of Parliament or from outside of the parliamentary sphere'. The preparatory conference should pre-negotiate for the subsequent ministerial meeting the technical issues such as: the number of potential member countries in the assembly, the number and allocation of seats for each state, the rules of procedure, propose a date and place of first session of the assembly and, finally, approve an agenda, which will be discussed during this session.[19]

On the same day that the memorandum by the JIC was dispatched, the French government met at the Palais de l'Élysée under the chairmanship of the President of the Republic, Vincent Auriol. After the government meeting, a public communiqué in support of the committee's proposals was released and the French government also

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16. AWEU, DG 1/3/13, Recommendations submitted to governments by the International Committee of the Movements for European Unity, 18.08.1948.
17. Since Ramadier was between 26 July and 28 August 1948 a deputy Prime Minister in the government of André Marie, it is hard to imagine that Paris would have adopted a different stance.
18. AWEU, DG 1/3/13, Recommendations.
19. Ibid.

proclaimed its willingness to continue efforts leading towards the establishment of a European assembly.[20] On 7 September 1948 – a week after Robert Schuman had delivered a speech on the issue of European assembly with the vast majority of deputies voting in favour of its inception – René Massigli suggested that the BTPC should deal with the JIC's proposals and, until the next session of Foreign Ministers in Paris in October, prepare a joint report outlining the way forward with regard to this issue. This proposal had been backed by Obert de Thieusies who served as the Belgian Ambassador to London and the country's representative to the BTPC. This enthusiasm was quickly 'dampened down' by Gladwyn Jebb, the British representative to the BTPC. Jebb pointed out that the British government was of the opinion that the Pact's member states should first take advantage of the opportunities already available. With regards to military issues, it was necessary to act through the Brussels Pact and in economic matters through the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation. Besides this, the British conditioned any further discussion on the JIC's proposals by requesting the other four governments to provide, at first, the answers to the British questionnaire that was distributed through the BTPC on 2 September.[21]

The British desired the French and Belgians to answer eleven questions, which can basically be summarized into the following four areas: 1) Will the delegates represent the positions of the government or parliament at the preparatory conference? Consequently: 2) Who will be responsible for selecting national delegates and how will they be chosen? 3) What functions will the European Assembly carry out and what competences will it have? Will its delegates also discuss monetary and fiscal policy as well as the questions pertaining to foreign policy and national security? And finally, 4) Will decisions made by the Parliamentary Assembly be binding for member countries or will they take the form of non-binding recommendations?[22]

The French replied via a statement that was presented by Massigli during the 31st session of the BTPC on 30 September and to which the Belgians adhered two days later.[23] It stated that the European Parliamentary Assembly 'would not be an agent of governments', but the delegates would exclusively represent public opinion, whose wish is to create a greater union among European nations. From a formal perspective – the document further underlined – the respective parliaments of Assembly's future member states will be responsible for selecting the members of national delegations. However, this does not automatically imply that the delegates will not be free to make any suggestions or take decisions on their own and will solely represent the positions of their nominating institutions. Concerning the other two points posed by the British questionnaire, Paris stated that the Assembly would not be limited when planning its agenda and could discuss any and all issues regarding

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20. TNA [The National Archives], FO 371/79267, Z2054/10719/72, p.12.
21. AWEU, DG 1/3/13, Secretary-General's Note, 02.09.1948; Extract from the minutes of the 27th meeting of the Permanent Commission, 07.09.1948.
22. AWEU, DG 1/3/13, United Kingdom Note on European Assembly, 07.09.1948.
23. Ibid., Extract from the minutes of the 31st meeting of the Permanent Commission, 30.09.1948; Belgian reply to the British Questionnaire, 02.10.1948 30.

the political, economic, social and cultural integration of Europe. However, the res-
olutions pertaining to these issues would not be binding for national governments and
would serve as recommendations only. The Assembly would thus obtain only a re-
commendatory capacity.[24]

London was disappointed by such a reply. Jebb particularly objected that the
British government, on the basis of this answer, still did not have an exact idea of
what Paris and Brussels were proposing. Indeed the real sticking point was something
else.[25] From the records of the BTPC meetings it is evident that the issue at hand was
not of a procedural nature, but rather that London's idea for the shape and the purpose
of the proposed Parliamentary Assembly was radically different than the one envis-
aged by Paris and Brussels.[26] Unlike the continental countries, London insisted that
the best way for achieving greater European unity would be the intergovernmental
consultative meetings of leading Ministers and other government experts of Brussels
Pact countries. Bevin suggested this solution for the first time in a series of private
meetings with Schuman, who took over the Quai d'Orsay in early September, Ra-
madier and George C. Marshall, the US Secretary of State, during the United Nations
General Assembly meeting in Paris in late September and early October 1949. And
then again he re-raised the issue at the third meeting of the Consultative Council of
the Brussels Treaty Organisation which took place in Paris on 25 and 26 October.[27]

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs were, however, unable to tackle the conceptual
dispute about whether the Brussels Five should initiate the inception of a parliamen-
tary assembly or inter-governmental European Council — as Bevin started to call his
counter-proposal. However, amid the wave of riots that the Communist led miner's
union unleashed in early October and subsequent turmoil on French political scene,
both the French and British desired to show a better face and the Ministers, upon the
suggestion of Robert Schuman, agreed to establish a Committee for the Study of
European Unity/Comité d'Études pour l'Union Européenne, which was supposed to
study, in detail, the alternative proposals and to collect and consider any eventual
suggestions or comments that would arrive from other countries interested in the issue
or from transnational associations. On this basis, the committee should then recom-
mend further steps that would lead to 'a greater unity' between European nations and
whose practical implementation the ministers could discuss at their next meeting in
January.[28]

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24. Ibid., French reply to the British note on European Assembly, 30.09.1948.
25. Ibid., Extract from the minutes of the 32nd meeting of the Permanent Commission, 07.10.1948.
26. Ibid., Extract from the minutes of the 28th, 33rd and 34th meetings of the Permanent Commission,
    08.09, 14.10 and 21.10.1948. See also the Report of the Permanent Commission on the question of
    the European Assembly, 21.10.1948.
27. Cf. J.W. YOUNG, op.cit., p.112 and Bevin's immediate reaction on opening speeches by Schuman
    and Spaak in particular, AWEU, DG 1/3/13, Record of the 3rd meeting of the Consultative Council:
    Agenda relating to the Proposal for a European Assembly, 25-26.10.1948.
28. AWEU, DG 1/3/13, Record of the 3rd meeting. But see also R. MASSIGLI, op.cit., pp.160-161;
    J.W. YOUNG, op.cit., pp.112 and G. WARNER, op.cit., p.321.

Under the leadership of the former three-time French Prime Minister Édouard Herriot, the Commission met eight times, with the first four meetings being held in late November and early December 1948 and the next four between 18 and 20 January 1949.[29] In addition to the French-Belgium and British proposals, the Commission also took into account a declaration on European issues adopted by the Dutch parliament as well as a memorandum that the Italian government addressed to the member countries of the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation. In addition to this, the members of the Commission also met on 8 December with representatives of the European Parliamentary Union and a day later with a delegation from the Movement for European Unity. The committee received from these a set of opinion papers and memoranda, which it also used in preparing its recommendations to the Ministers.[30]

On 15 December 1948 – after the first round of negotiations – Herriot's committee presented a rough draft proposal in which it called for the establishment of a European assembly (Council of Europe/Conseil de l'Europe) and at the same time of a European Consultative Council/Assemblée Consultative européenne. In practical terms it was a compromise solution, which gave the inter-ministerial Consultative Council, i.e. governments, relatively effective control over what would be discussed by a parliamentary assembly. According to the proposal the Council of Europe would be allowed, except for military issues, to discuss all questions pertaining to the envisaged processes of European integration. Assembly's chairman should indeed inform the inter-governmental Consultative Council of the proposed agendas. The Ministers could, by a means of a two-thirds majority vote, reject specific points on a proposed agenda whose discussion the national governments of member countries may deem sensitive. Moreover, the Consultative Council should have the right of 'first choice', which would allow the Ministers to submit a list of questions that would have to be discussed by the Parliamentary Assembly preferentially. The Assembly would only have advisory capacity and its recommendations would be non-binding for the member states. The selection of delegates would be in the hands of the member states, which could decide for themselves how to choose the deputies from among the ranks of national parliaments and senates.[31]

In early January 1949, the situation became more difficult, however. This was because London 'reversed gears' and requested its partners to re-open negotiations with an argument that agreements on a European basis needed to wait until the conclusion of discussions on the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Bevin was, in fact, worried that Washington might get the impression that a formation of transatlantic alliance was not a priority for Western Europe and this could eventually embolden isolationist circles in America to the new offensive. However, having received positive signals from Washington, Paris, Brussels and The Hague did not share the

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29. The talks within this committee are minutely described by both M.-T. BITSCH, op.cit., pp.179-192 and M.-A. ENGELBEL, op.cit., pp.59-65.
30. TNA, FO 371/79261, Z 936/10719/72, Covering letter to the report from Committee for the Study of European Unity, 20.01.1949; Committee for the Study of European Unity: Preamble, 15.12.1948.
31. Ibid., Draft for Submission to Plenary Committee, 15.12.1948.

Foreign Secretary's position and considered his steps to be more of a tactical ma-
noeuvre. Still the three countries agreed to postpone further negotiations on the Euro-
pean Assembly from 6 January to 18 January 1949. Nonetheless, their concerns
proved to be correct, because the British delegation arrived at the renewed negotia-
tions with a completely new proposal, which significantly differed from the previ-
ously accomplished compromise proposal from December.[32]

The British January memorandum did not foresee the establishment of a Parlia-
mentary Assembly at all. It only contemplated the inception of an inter-governmental
advisory body (Conference of Ministers) whose members would be chosen by na-
tional governments and the respective delegations would be led by the Minister. In
addition, members of such a Conference would not vote individually, but votes would
rather be within each delegation with the majority opinion being presented as the
official position of the country on each specific issue. By a two-thirds majority vote,
the Conference could approve individual issues for further discussion within the inter-
ministerial Committee of Ministers, in which, however, any decisions should have
been taken unanimously. While the memorandum also proposed the principle of pro-
portional representation, i.e., the bigger the country the greater the number of votes,
had the newest British proposal succeeded, London could effectively control the work
and agenda of the proposed organisation.[33]

Moreover, as the January talks opened, the leader of the British delegation, Hugh
Dalton, had declared that the January memorandum represented the official position
of the British government and had to be accepted as a basis for any further discussion
on the matter. While the other four representations insisted on the December draft
proposal, there was no place left for arguments and the talks deadlocked. Moreover,
the French delegation came into fierce confrontation with the British delegation. The
exchange culminated in a moment when Paul Reynaud blamed London for presenting
its partners with authoritarian proposals whose basic feature was hostile opposition
towards any democratic discussion. Thus, after two days of heated talks, the five
delegations had at last agreed that the Committee for the Study of European Unity
would furnish the Foreign Ministers with the copies of a draft agreement from De-
cember, the latest British proposal from January, and minutes of Committee's ses-
sions.[34]

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs were therefore faced with the uneasy task of
alleviating the tense situation and finding a compromise solution that would be ac-
ceptable to all five countries. The key role in achieving this played the Dutch Minister
Dirk Stikker, who suggested that the Ministers should only adopt a general declaration
stating their intent to foster unity among European nations through an organisation,

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32. M.-T. BITSCH, op.cit., p.188.

33. TNA, FO 371/79261, Z 936/10719/72, Draft Heads of Agreement for a Council of Europe, January
     1949.

34. TNA, FO 371/79261, Z 936/10719/72, Covering letter; AWEU, DG 1/3/13, Extract from the minutes
     of the 51st meeting of the Permanent Commission, 21.01.1949. See also M.-T. BITSCH, op.cit.,
     pp.189-191.

whose members would also include Italy and Western Germany. All other issues, such as the method for nominating delegates and voting procedures, should have been resolved at an *ad hoc* conference, which would be attended by all countries expressing their interest in membership in this new organisation. This proposal was subsequently taken up by Schuman and Bevin, with the latter suggesting that the organisation as a whole should be called the Council of Europe and should be constituted by the Ministerial Committee and by an unspecified type of assembly. In a slightly modified form – the term "assembly" was replaced with the term "consultative body" and without explicit mention of possible other members of the Council – this compromise made its way into a communiqué that was issued after the completion of negotiations on 28 January 1949.[35]

At the same time the Ministers instructed the BTPC to draw up a provisional statement of principles upon which the Council of Europe would be built. This document should also serve as the basis for discussions with other possible member countries. As far as the organisational aspects were concerned, the Ministers proposed that each country should be represented at a Ministerial Committee by one representative and that the Assembly should have approximately one hundred members. This meant that the resolutions could be adopted by a simple majority vote. The Assembly's agenda should primarily focus on the issues submitted by the Ministerial Committee, but the deputies would attain a certain amount of self-initiative as well. The proposed agenda would, however, be subject to a veto by the Council of Ministers who, with a two-thirds majority vote, could prevent the discussion of sensitive issues. The five Ministers also suggested that the Assembly should convene once a year with the session lasting no longer than one month.[36]

The BTPC agreed upon the final proposal of statement on 4 March 1949, after another series of discussions lasting more than a month.[37] Three days later, the British government, on behalf of the BTPC, sent the governments of Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Norway, and Sweden a note in which she officially informed them that the preliminary talks on the establishment of the Council of Europe would be held in London at the end of March.[38]

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35. AWEU, DG 1/3/13, Record of the 4th meeting of the Consultative Council held in London: Report of the Committee for the Study of European Unity, 27-28.01.1949; Annex II: Communiqué, 28.01.1949.
36. Ibid., Directives given by the Consultative Council to the Permanent Commission concerning the Council of Europe, 01.02.1949.
37. AWEU, DG 1/4/13, Council of Europe: extracts from minutes and other papers (folios 109-229); Draft Organisation for the Council of Europe, 04.03.1949. For detailed minutes of talks, see AWEU, DG 1/3/13 and AWEU, DG 1/4/13.
38. AWEU, DG 1/4/13, Secretary-General's Report on the work of the Permanent Commission with regard to the Council of Europe, 12.03.1949.

Intergovernmental Negotiations during the Spring of 1949

On 28 March 1949 at 11:00 a.m., representatives of France, Britain and the Benelux countries met with the Ambassadors of the aforementioned five nations accredited to the British government for the first session of the Preparatory Conference for the establishment of the Council of Europe. Until 7 April 1949, six further meetings subsequently took place and these were initially presided over by Gladwyn Jebb and later by his assistant W.I. Mallet. The Preparatory Conference officially concluded on 14 April when the final report containing a draft statute of the Council of Europe was released.[39]

After months of disputes within the Brussels Pact, the results of the three-week conference were surprisingly positive. In ten cases, however, the delegates were unable to agree upon the exact wording of the articles of the proposed statute. They therefore suggested several alternative versions and left it up to the Ministers to make the ultimate decision. Leaving aside the obligatory issue of voting procedures and other technical details, the delegates disagreed, for example, on how to call the proposed organisation (Council of Europe/European Union) or whether the preamble should explicitly refer to religious or, eventually, to the Christian values as the delegations from Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg, and Holland advocated.

Initially, it was expected that the Ministers of Foreign Affairs from all ten countries would attend the opening of the Preparatory Conference and would return to London again in late April in order to resolve any outstanding issues and initiate the treaty establishing the new integration body. However, in the end, the priority had been given to the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in Washington on 4 April and the ministerial conference was rescheduled for early May.[40]

The conference was held at St. James' Palace and the Ministers were accompanied by over five dozen diplomats and senior officials from the respective ministries of Foreign Affairs. During the conference, the longer discussions focused mainly on whether or not the new institution should be called the European Union – as being promoted by the Italian and French governments – or the Council of Europe – as preferred by the other countries. Schuman eventually eased off on his position, as he did not want to obstruct the progress of negotiations, and the Ministers accepted the name Council of Europe. The Danish Minister Gustav Rasmussen was not content with the proposed location of the Council of Europe in Strasburg and, instead, suggested that the headquarters of the organisation be located in Holland or Belgium, since both of these countries have a long and unbroken tradition of democratic governments and mutual cooperation. In this 'battle of symbols' Strasburg finally won

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39. For the records of the talks, see e.g. HACE [Historical Archives of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg], 0017: Preparatory Conference on the Establishment of a Council of Europe, 28.03.-12.04.1949.
40. HACE, 0018, Preparatory Conference for the Establishment of a Council of Europe: Final Report, 14.04.1948.

out, symbolizing – as Bevin pointed out – 'the end of hundreds of years of mutual fear and hostility' among the nations of Europe.[41]

Another question, which was raised by the Swedish Minister Østen Unden, concerned the method of voting within the Council of Europe. Not only Sweden, but Scandinavian countries as a whole, were concerned that in comparison to the original intention of the Brussels Five, as well as the proposed statute that emerged from the discussions during the Preparatory Conference, the final draft mentioned neither right of veto nor the institute of unanimous vote. According to Unden, this could lead to a curious situation where national parliaments would approve the statute of the Council of Europe, but the ministerial committee could subsequently change it by a two-thirds majority without such a change being voted on again in national parliaments. This point aroused a long debate, which lasted into the second day of the conference. The result was a compromise that retained the principle of a two-thirds vote by the Council of Ministers, but a strict rule of unanimous vote was introduced in relation to the change of specific articles of the statute. As an example we can mention Article 1 paragraph d of the Statue, which states that the issue of national defence does not fall within the scope of the Council of Europe, and also Article 7, which defines the conditions for withdrawal from the organisation.[42]

The last point, which was intensely debated, was the issue of eventual accesses of Greece and Turkey as both countries had, at the end of March, expressed interest in attending the Preparatory Conference. Although the countries of the Brussels Five rejected this as premature, they did, for geo-political reasons, support their early admission into the Council of Europe.[43] The position of the Brussels Pact members was also shared by the Italian Minister Carlo Sforza. Sean MacBride, the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs, emphasized that the admission of Athens and Istanbul could, in turn, support further democratic reforms within these countries. As such, he indirectly supported Schuman's position that ten Ministers should not play the role of judges and that the Council should remain open to all European countries, whether they are already democratic or not. The Scandinavian countries, however, did not agree with this position stating that only countries with a democratic form of government should be allowed to become members of the Council, such as Iceland. Following this line of thinking, the Norwegian Minister Halvard Lange also pointed out to Schuman that the Ministers had just approved Articles 3 and 4 of the Statute, which explicitly state that only countries respecting human rights could become members of the Council.[44]

The resulting compromise published in the conference's closing communiqué stated that the Ministers agreed with the membership of Greece and Turkey in the

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41. AWEU, DG 1/4/13, Extract from the 59th meeting of the Permanent Commission: Annex, 03.03.1949; Note on the subject of the Council of Europe meeting on 28 March 1949, 15.03.1949.
42. HACE, 0019, Conference for the Establishment of the Council of Europe, St. James's Palace, London, 03-05.05.1949, pp.5, 6-7 and 14-15.
43. Ibid., pp.7-10 and 13-14.
44. AWEU, DG 1/4/13, Extract of the minutes of the 64th, 65th and 66th meetings of the Permanent Commission, 24.03, 31.03. and 06.04.1949.

Council and that further steps regarding this issue – according to the statutes of the Council of Europe – would be addressed by the Council of Ministers immediately after its formation. Also, at that time, the Council of Ministers would assess all subsequent requests for membership in the organisation.[45] After the Ministers resolved a few remaining technical issues, the statute of the Council of Europe was initiated on 5 May 1949 in the afternoon.[46]

The first meeting of the Council of Europe took place between 8 August and 8 September 1949 and was marked by a distinct hint of overall ardour and euphoria. This fact is particularly well reflected in the conclusions and recommendations of the Consultative Assembly to the Committee of Ministers:

> 'the Assembly considers that the aim and goal of the Council of Europe is creation of a European political authority with limited functions but real powers'.

Or similarly, one of the points of economic resolution requested the Ministers to discuss the Assembly's recommendations in order to re-establish the economic stability of Europe. The Ministers should then furnish the Assembly with the proposals of their governments. After the deputies would consider these, the Consultative Assembly would 'nominate a delegation from the Council of Europe which shall enter into negotiations with the Government of the United States of America and with any other Government concerned' and that will 'express the common policy of the member States' during eventual negotiations on lowering US custom tariffs.[47]

It is more than obvious that such overrated – and one may even say illusory – expectations had to, sooner or later, hit the ground. This brings me, however, to the wider implications–both in terms of historical developments and their reflection in historiography – of events described in this article.

Conclusions

The first question that immediately strikes one's attention is an abrupt and sudden change of Ernest Bevin's attitude toward a European assembly proposal during the January 1949 meeting of the Consultative Council of the Brussels Treaty Organisation in London. The reason why Bevin made volte-face has not been fully answered in literature as yet, however. While Geoffrey Warner evades the problem, John W. Young, Antonio Varsori and Wilfried Loth concur that the Foreign Secretary, observing that the other Brussels Pact Powers had formed a joint and solid front, sounded a retreat and this ended a short period lasting from January 1948 to January 1949

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45. HACE, 0019, Conference for the Establishment.
46. AWEU, DG 1/4/13, Statement issued by the signatories of the Statutes of the Council of Europe, 05.05.1949.
47. TNA, FO 1009/3, Report on the proceedings of the 1st session of the Council of Europe, 08.08-08.09.1949. See also B. WASSENBERG, op.cit., pp.26-28.

during which the British 'enjoyed' the leadership in promoting the co-operation in Western Europe. Bevin's biographer Allan Bullock, in contrast, suggests that the Foreign Secretary, desiring an early conclusion of concurrent negotiations on NATO and Germany, gave way only for tactical consideration but remained as sceptical about the whole idea as he was before.[48] However, what both these differing interpretations overlooked was a special impetus which the compromise formula suggested by the Dutch Foreign Minister, Dirk Stikker, had on the outcome of meeting. When looking at Stikker's proposal more closely, it is obvious that what he proposed was a minimum consensus-based method that allows for incremental, step-by-step problem solving: the Ministers did not resolve all problems at once, but only agreed on a few basic principles – i.e. that there should be a Council of Europe composed of a Ministerial Committee and an Assembly and that the former body will enjoy a certain amount of control over latter body's agenda – while leaving any sticking points (method for nomination of deputies, en bloc voting) open for further discussion. In consequence, Bevin and Attlee were able to perform a U-turn without (too much) losing face, which was certainly equally important as the factors mentioned by scholars above.

Two other important aspects that this inquiry revealed were the crucial importance of high-level inter-ministerial meetings in setting up the Council of Europe and the limited but yet still highly visible role the JIC played in the process. Although the issue of summitry gains increasing prominence in social science research on the policy-setting and policy-shaping within the EU, which can be attributed to the formalization of the European Council's position in the architecture of European polity after the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force in 2009, the phenomenon is hardly a new one.[49] As this article suggests, its origins even pre-date the year 1974 when the Council was officially established and, in fact, they can be traced back to the early, embryonic stages of integration as embodied in the Brussels Pact and the Council of Europe.[50] In connection to the latter factor, i.e. JIC's contribution to the establishment

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48. Cf. G. WARNER, op.cit., p.319; J.W. YOUNG, op.cit, p.115; A. VARSORI, op.cit., p.266-270; W. LOTH, *Europas Einigung…*, op.cit., p.29 and A. BULLOCK, *Ernest Bevin: Foreign Secretary 1945-1951*, Heinemann, London, 1983, pp.658-659.
49. Cf. e.g. S. JAMES, P. COPELAND, *Governing in the Shadow of Intergovernmental Hierarchy: Delegation Failure and Executive Empowerment in the European Union*, in: *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, 4(2014), pp.518-533 and K.M. JOHANSSON, J. TALLBERG, *Explaining Chief Executive Empowerment: EU Summitry and Domestic Institutional Change*, in: *West European Politics*, 2(2010), pp.208-236. See also W. WESSELS, *The Maastricht Treaty and the European Council: The History of an Institutional Evolution*, in: *Journal of European Integration*, 7(2012), pp.753-767 and W. WESSELS, *The Constitutional Treaty: three readings from a fusion perspective*, in: *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Annual Review, 2005, pp.11-36.
50. Cf. E. MOURLON-DRUOL, F. ROMERO (eds), *International Summitry and Global Governance: The Rise of the G7 and the European Council, 1974-1991*, Routledge, London, 2014; E. MOURLON-DRUOL, *Filling the EEC Leadership Vacuum? The Creation of the European Council in 1974*, in: *Cold War History*, 3(2010), pp.315-339. See also N.P. LUDLOW, *The European Community and the Crisis of the 1960s: Negotiating the Gaullist Challenge*, Routledge, London, 2006, pp.118-124 and the articles in a special issue of *JEIH*, 2(2003) on the December 1969 Hague Council edited by Jan Van Der Harst, for the evolution of summitry before 1974.

of the Council, the most interesting question is why its prominence had relatively radically diminished after October 1948. This can be explained by the fact that Bidault and Schuman were less enthusiastic about the assembly idea than Ramadier, Reynaud and Léon Blum.[51] And since none of the latter three was a member of Bidault's second cabinet that took office in late October, the visible connections and ties between the course of French foreign policy and JIC aims diminished accordingly. Equally, the nominations of Reynold and Blum to the Committee for the Study of European Union could as well be interpreted as a concerted effort on the part of Bidault and Schuman to neutralize the pro-federalists by binding their activities into the strictly intergovernmental framework.[52] In the most frank way Schuman admitted this during the bi-lateral conversations with Bevin on 13 January 1949, when he told his interlocutor that:

> 'the French and Belgian Governments had asked the Five Brussels governments to take on [an assembly] question because they realized that private international organisations […] had succeeded in surrounding the idea of European unity in a mist of demagogy. They felt that the moment had come when the governments themselves must take the lead and study the matter officially in order to avoid exaggerated hopes and claims'.[53]

As Bullock pointed out, it was during this two-day-meeting (13-14 January) when the French and the British Minister gained confidence in each other what may have also contributed significantly to the positive outcome of the five Ministers' meeting later that month.[54]

Finally, against this backdrop, it is reasonable to suggest that the European policies pursued by Bidault and Schuman and by Attlee and Bevin were less divergent and conflicting at the time than it is traditionally supposed. Despite all of the above mentioned differences over the assembly proposal, the fact is that neither Schuman nor Bidault were in 1948 and 1949 ready to go beyond the framework of mere non-binding deliberations. This conclusion is convincingly supported, for example, by examining the records of the Brussels Pact Finance Ministers meetings. When during the second ministerial meeting in Paris in October 1948 the Dutch Minister Piet Lieftinck pointed out that the member governments should develop and concert their long-term economic policies within the Brussels Pact framework, for the first article of the Brussels treaty calls for this, Stafford Cripps and Henri Queuille in unison concurred that the mutual consultations among the five nations prior the meetings of the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation would in general suffice…[55] Therefore, as American historian Lawrence S. Kaplan suggested, it is likely that the

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51. Cf. M.-T. BITSCH, op.cit., p.167.
52. Due to worsening health conditions Blum was in the end replaced by Guy Mollet.
53. TNA, FO 800/465, Conversations between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the French Minister for Foreign Affairs in London, 13-14.01.1949. Similar expression can also be found in AWEU, DG 1/3/13, Record of the 3rd meeting of the Consultative Council: Agenda relating to the Proposal for a European Assembly, 25-26.10.1948.
54. Cf. A. BULLOCK, op.cit., pp.656-658.
55. AWEU, DG 1/7/43, Ministers of Finance meetings, April-October 1948 and January 1950: reports and minutes of the meeting of Finance Ministers held in Paris, 17.10.1948.

'Brussels Pact leaders ultimately saw a European assembly as a diversion from their appropriate preoccupation with economic recovery and military security'.[56] And it was only during the Franco-British deliberations about the Schuman Plan proposal in May and June 1950, that the Attlee government decided to remain in a state of splendid isolation. Although, as Anthony Eden's decisive role in transforming the Brussels Pact into a Western European Union had shown, such an isolation was rather a myth than a reality.

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56. S. KAPLAN, op.cit., p.131.

Ist „mehr Europa" gesellschaftlich durchsetzbar?

Unterschätzte Risiken

Strukturelle Defizite und politische Herausforderungen der Europäischen Währungsunion

Von Dr. Vanessa van den Boom

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Ist „mehr Europa" notwendig zur Überwindung der Eurokrise? Unter welchen Bedingungen ist eine weitere Harmonisierung nationaler Politik in der Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion institutionell und gesellschaftlich durchsetzbar? Läuft die europäische Krisenpolitik der Entwicklung einer europäischen politischen Kultur zuwider? Zur Beantwortung dieser Fragen wird die Durchsetzbarkeit einer verstärkten politischen Harmonisierung innerhalb der EU untersucht.

Da neben der institutionellen Umsetzung auch die Akzeptanz von strukturellen politischen Veränderungen in der Bevölkerung eine zentrale Rolle spielt, bildet auch die Frage nach der Entwicklung der politischen Kultur in Europa einen Schwerpunkt der Analyse. Hier widmet sich die Autorin Fragen nach demokratischer Legitimität, europäischer Identität und deren Bedeutung für eine erfolgreiche Umsetzung der empfohlenen Maßnahmen zur Harmonisierung der nationalen Politikfelder.