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The Limits of International Organisation Leadership?

European Crisis Management
in the 1980s and the Inherent Tension
Between Bilateralism and Collectivism

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ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE

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I. Introduction¹

Abstract

Most accounts of European approaches to crisis management fail to account for both bilateral and collective/multilateral dynamics in inter-European policy coordination and transatlantic cooperation. The present paper argues that during international crisis situations affecting west European interests in the early- to mid-1980s relations between the European powers were mainly bilateral in nature, but also with collective underpinnings. However, collectivism in policy coordination was important in providing the 'first draft' material for later implemented bilateral decisions. The main empirical and theoretical contribution of this essay focuses on the political aspects of policy coordination in international organisations and the importance of the inherent tension between bilateralism and collectivism in foreign policy formulation. It begins by arguing that an inherent tension therefore exists in policy coordination between bilateralism and collectivism/multilateralism. This is main subject of this paper. To what extent is collective action in international organisation important in explaining European approaches to crisis management at the inter-European level and at the transatlantic level? What are the limits of international organisation leadership in this context? To what extent was leadership necessary to achieve European coordination of national foreign policies? To what extent were the states of west Europe willing to organise in a collective fashion? European Political Cooperation functioned as a back up to the main bilateral channel of communication. At the level of transatlantic relations consultations between the United States and the European powers were generally bilateral. Ministerial meetings in the framework of the Atlantic alliance served as a supplementary channel for transatlantic bargaining when bilateralism became bogged down. The central purpose of this paper is to cast some light on how the principal states of Western Europe attempted to manage international cold war crises in the early-

¹ This paper is partially based upon qualitative data obtained through interviews. In total 40 off-the-record interviews were conducted with foreign ministry officials and diplomats, former government ministers, former and current EC/EU officials, academic specialists and journalists in Washington, London, Paris and Bonn. The general consensus among the interviewees was that bilateralism constituted the single most important form of both inter-European and transatlantic cooperation in the three cases. However, it was also emphasised again and again that both EPC (for inter-European cooperation) and NATO (for transatlantic cooperation) were important for highlighting the then increasing European Community interest in speaking with one voice. Even though bilateral channels were used with increasing occurrence in the three cases the pressures shaping those bilateral choices were often previously formulated according to multilateral pressures drawn from state participation in international organisations - EPC and NATO.

to mid-1980s. In doing so the paper starts with the assumption that it is most fruitful to study the actions and motives of the three major powers in Western Europe: France, West Germany and the United Kingdom. Leadership in European Political Cooperation was the *raison d'état* for possible collective action in each of the cases studied. Without leadership joint actions were not feasible. What *motives* did the European powers have in reacting to international crises in the way they did? What *institutions* did the European powers decide to channel their policies through? What *types* of actions did each of the European powers choose to pursue? To what extent did the European powers perceive it in their best interests to act collectively in a leadership role? Main question: What was the tension between bilateralism and collectivism/multilateralism in the cases? In the period under scrutiny inter-European relations were decisively linked to transatlantic relations. Multilayered diplomacy (meaning possible arenas for policy-making) implied that: (1) Relations in Europe between the major powers towards a third party crisis could be conducted either unilaterally, bilaterally or in European Political Cooperation. As stated above, relations in Europe between the major powers were typically bilateral but with collective/multilateral underpinnings. (2) Relations at the transatlantic level could be conducted either bilaterally or in the Atlantic alliance. As stated above, relations also were typically bilateral but with collective/multilateral underpinnings. The transatlantic dimension must thus form an integral part of the analysis.

Questions to be Asked

The present analysis seeks to focus on the Polish crisis 1980-82, the Grenada crisis 1983 and the Libya crisis 1986 as case studies of European crisis management in the 1980s, with a particular emphasis on the management of European-American relations towards the crises. The cases have been chosen in that each had implications and spin-offs for leadership in European Political Cooperation, for bilateral relations between the European powers and the inherent tension between these two: bilateralism and collectivism. Indeed, this analysis it is argued has very important implications for the study of degrees of collective action - or distinct lack of therein - in international multilateral organisations. Poland had diplomatic implications for European power leadership in inter-European bilateral and multilateral policy coordination and for Europe's relations with the United States in a period of renewed cold war. Grenada had implications for how the "European" policies of the European powers were coordinated in a number of international fora. The case also had implications for transatlantic relations at the politico-military level. Libya had massive implications for a lack of leadership in inter-European policy coordination and for the very nature of transatlantic diplomatic and military/security relations. The

analysis purposefully focuses on the three principal powers in Europe given that it is they who generally drive inter-European and transatlantic policy coordination and policy-making. The three episodes dealt with are also excellent case studies of leadership in an international organisation.

Account will be taken of: *types of action* (unilateral, bilateral and collective), the *fora* used for the explication of actions (bilateralism, EPC and NATO) and the *type of crisis* (international and domestic). The present analysis focuses on three traditional types of international crisis involving European reactions to the crises and contingent elements in transatlantic relations.

In the European context it is argued that European Political Cooperation (EPC) in the three cases served as a "back up" forum for the coordination of national foreign policies when bilateral channels failed or became bogged down. The 'big three' in Western Europe (Britain, France and West Germany) used EPC as an extension of national interests. Collective "European" policies (if one can term them such) only emerged when the national interests of the 'big three' were served. Relations with the United States in the above crises were mainly bilateral. However, when bilateralism became bogged down alternative multilateral arena's of consultation were used: the main one's being either meetings of NATO foreign ministers (Poland) or informal meetings if the issue was out of area for NATO (Grenada and Libya). Additionally, the United States-European Political Cooperation "Political Dialogue" was used on several occasions as a 'last resort' channel for communication between Europe and America. Initially, however, it is a necessary task to define types of crisis in the context of European and American reactions to the crises.

Framework for Analysis

The analysis will then go on to outline three competing theories of state and non-state action in the conduct of foreign policy: neo-realism (state centric), neo-liberal institutionalism (emphasising the importance of international institutions but not disavowing the importance of the state) and leadership by international organisation (emphasising multilateralism in relations between states). The analysis of the three crises will be guided by the following six questions:

- 1/. Who takes the lead in responding to the crisis?
- 2/. What type of action is taken (diplomatic, economic or military)?
- 3/. What is the balance between individual and collective diplomacy? (+)
- 4/. What are the positions of the British, French and West German governments?
- 5/. What is the motive/interest behind national and European-level policies?
- 6/. How important are the various organisations involved? (+)

+ Key questions asked in the analysis

Two interests decided the design of the framework. One was an interest in determining whether a specific European multilateral approach to crisis management could be discerned in the three cases. This seems a highly relevant question to ask at a time when European involvement in crisis management is increasing rapidly.

The other was an interest in bringing out the feature that is truly unique to European Community/Union crisis management, namely the inherent tension between the interest held by the key individual members in preserving their freedom for manoeuvre and the common interest in acting as one in order to strengthen the "Community" (as it then was). The framework therefore focuses on the impact international organisation rules (in EPC and NATO), norms and ideas have on state policy. My principal sources of inspiration are Keohane and Ruggie,² who have in their writings on international institutions, have advanced the thesis that the rules, norms and ideas embedded in international organisations play an important role in influencing state interests and hence policy. Even though this analysis confirms the conventional wisdom, that the principle member states deemed national considerations more important than the formulation of a common policy, it nevertheless convincingly demonstrates that the then European Community interest in speaking with one voice was present and vocal in all three cases. The present analysis also shows that multilateral international organisations (EPC and NATO) had a larger impact on the foreign policies of Britain, France and Germany than most accounts - either general or particular - suggest.

In the present study the author distinguishes between three broad types of crisis: interstate (between two or more states), "domestic" with an international impact and domestic without a significant international impact. The table below shows that the three cases in the present analysis were interstate (between two or more states) and military or diplomatic in nature for Europe and the United States. For instance, Grenada was military for the United States, but was diplomatic for Western Europe. Poland was diplomatic for the United States and for Western Europe. Libya was directly military for both Western Europe and the United States.

Interstate crises were more common in the Cold War. In the 1990s - in a multipolar structure - crises have tended to become more "domestic". Bosnia is such a crisis as were Liberia and Rwanda recently (see the table below). Some domestic crises have an international impact (such as Liberia) whereas other

² See Keohane, R.O. and Nye, J. (1989) *Power and Interdependence* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2nd ed.); Keohane, R.O. (1990) "Multilateralism: an Agenda for Research", *International Organization*, Vol.45(4), pp. 731-764. Ruggie, J.G. (1993) *Multilateralism Matters: the Praxis of An Institutional Form* (New York, Columbia University Press).

have little impact (such as the crisis of the state in Western Europe). The table suggests that there are nine broad types of sub-crisis in existence. Such a classification is necessary to best emphasise that the present analysis focuses entirely on interstate crises in the Cold War.

The three case study sections are divided into two main sub-sections: First, a chronology of inter-European and transatlantic policy coordination in the crises. Second, the main analysis which focuses on types of action (unilateral, bilateral and collective) and the fora used for coordination (bilateralism, EPC and NATO at the transatlantic level).

TABLE ONE: TYPES OF CRISES AND CRISIS POLICY OUTCOMES FOR THE UNITED STATES AND WESTERN EUROPE

| Policy Outcome | Necessarily Military | Possibly Military | Expected Diplomatic |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Type of Crisis | | | |
| Interstate | Libya [USA] Libya [WE] Grenada [USA] Gulf [USA/WE] | Grenada[WE] | Poland [USA/WE] |
| "Domestic" with inter-national impact | Kurds [USA/WE] Liberia [USA] Rwanda [FRANCE] | Bosnia [USA/WE] | |
| Domestic without a significant international impact | Algeria [WE] | Russia-Ukraine [USA/WE] | |

Key:
WE = Western Europe

Theoretical Assumptions

The analysis of collective action has two important dimensions. First, the demand for cooperation: how and why do leaders of states decide that cooperation is either an acceptable or unacceptable option? On the other hand, why do leaders not opt for collective action? Why choose bilateralism over collectivism/multilateralism? Second, the organisation of collective action. Leadership is often necessary to organise collective action. The analysis seeks to test the extent to which International Organisations can be sources of leadership and promote international collective action either against or in conjunction with more traditional bilateral diplomacy. What tensions existed between bilateralism and collectivism/multilateralism in both Europe and in transatlantic relations in the three cases? What was the relationship between bilateralism and collectivism/multilateralism. The theoretical analysis is divided into four sub-sections: neo-realist approaches to collective action in alliances, neoliberal-institutionalist approaches to collective action in alliances, leadership by international organisation, and a conclusion. Part II of the analysis (the case studies) is divided into the three crises. This is further sub-divided into a brief chronology of each crisis and then an analysis of the tensions and interactions between bilateralism and collectivism/multilateralism in each crisis.

Neo-Realist Approaches

In his path-breaking, and now classic, work *Theory of International Politics*, Kenneth N. Waltz argued that we can explain international relations when we are able to distinguish between system- unit-level factors.³ Waltz has defined an international system as the interacting units (states) plus a structure. One of the main characteristics of the structure is the distribution of capabilities among the Great Powers that make up the system of international politics. Waltz therefore distinguishes between bipolar and multipolar systems (consisting of only two Great powers, or more than two). Neo-Realists also cling firmly to the idea that international politics is basically of an anarchic structure. Under these conditions of anarchy, states can only survive when they adapt themselves to changing circumstances. In short, Waltz has maintained that the international system determines state behaviour by means of, (a) its anarchic structure, and (b) its polar structure.

In terms of the formation of alliances, Glenn Snyder asserts that "alliance formation is simpler in a bipolar than in a multipolar system. Who allies with

³ Waltz, K.N. (1979) *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA, Addison-Wesley).

whom is much less a matter of choice and more of systemic determination".⁴ But, as Snyder maintains, a so-called "alliance security dilemma" will develop. This refers to a situation in which one state's efforts to increase its security in a crisis will tend to challenge the security of others. These allied states will in turn respond with measures that will increase their own security, which will challenge the bases of crisis policy of the first state. This tends to result in a spiral of intra-alliance conflict and hostility which will most likely disrupt cooperation within the alliance. The "interests" of the individual actors will vary according to a number of criteria, including: national political experiences, trade interests with the third party in the crisis, and by the degree to which the security policies of the alliance partners are coterminous.

From a neo-realist perspective, alliance management would be easier under bipolarity since the security dilemma would be largely ameliorated. Snyder has argued that when the chips are down, - such as in an international crisis situation - each 'member state' will have to choose between cooperation and 'abandonment' of the alliance. But during the Cold War, abandonment was extremely unlikely. Within security/defence alliances the Great Power may be subject to bargains, balancing and bandwagoning from the smaller members if the alliance. This is especially the case in crisis situations, in that the smaller states often perceive a greater need to protect perceived security interests.⁵

NeoLiberal-Institutionalist Approaches

Whereas neo-realists argue that institutions are unable to promote interstate collaboration since they "affect the prospects for interstate cooperation only marginally",⁶ scholars such as Robert O. Keohane and Jack Snyder have argued the opposite.⁷ Neo-liberal institutionalist theory accepts the value of systemic analysis, but it can be distinguished from neo-realism by its emphasis on the effects of international institutions and regimes on state behaviour. Hence the

⁴ Snyder, G.H. (1990) "Alliance Theory: A Neo-Realist First Cut", *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 44, p. 117.

⁵ Van Hamm, P. (1993) "The European Community After Hegemony: The Future of European Integration in a Multipolar world", *International Relations*, Vol. 11, p. 458.

⁶ Grieco, J. (1988) "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Neo-Liberal Institutionalism", *International Organization*, Vol. 42., p. 488.

⁷ See, Keohane, R.O. (1989) *Power and Interdependence* (Boston, Little, Brown). See also, Snyder, J. (1993) "New Thinking About the International System", in Snyder, J. and Jervis, R. (eds) *Coping With Complexity in the International System* (Boulder, Col, Westview Press), pp. 1-24.

system alone does not determine state behaviour: it influences and shapes. Nevertheless, it is the main "structuring" element that directly impinges on state behaviour.

A well-established body of theory posits that institutions matter for international cooperation.⁸ Ernst Haas has argued that international regimes can promote technical consciousness on shared problems. The hypothesis is that if actors arrive at a common definition of the problem and a common understanding of the causal relations it embodies, they are more likely to cooperate on solutions. Thus, through a process of learning, international institutions can shape actors' perceptions of the problems they face.⁹

Robert Keohane explores another approach to analysing the role of international institutions, suggesting that regimes provide information and channel behaviours into predictable courses. They do this by creating stable expectations about how other actors will behave. Such a setting facilitates the striking of further bargains. In short, 'regimes can also affect state interests, for the notion of state interest is itself elastic and largely subjective. Perceptions of self-interest depend both on actors' expectations of the likely prerequisite for particular actions and on their fundamental values. Regimes can certainly affect expectations and may affect values as well.'¹⁰

A New Approach: Leadership by International Organisation

It is the present authors argument that under certain circumstances international organisations can exercise international leadership, by proposing cooperative solutions to shared problems and mobilising coalitions in support of them. Peter Haas has focused on "epistemic communities" as a way of accounting for an

⁸ By 'cooperation' I mean something more than a class of outcomes in strategic games. When actors' independent choices produce Pareto-optimal outcomes, the result is cooperation only in the sense in which game theorists use the term. For my purposes, cooperation in international politics requires policy adjustment by each player; it implies that each participant follows a course different from what it would have pursued in the absence of a joint effort. In this essay, I use the terms cooperation and collective action alternatively. Cooperation, or collective action, occurs when a group of actors seeks to provide a good (public or private) through agreed-upon joint means.

⁹ Haas, E. (1990) *When Knowledge is Power* (Berkeley, Cal, University of California Press), p. 9.

¹⁰ Keohane, R. (1990) *After Hegemony* (Princeton, N.J, Princeton University Press), p. 63.

active, leadership role for international institutions.¹¹ My approach begins elsewhere, with the problem of organising collective action.

The first step in the argument is to show that leadership is a prerequisite for collective action. Mancur Olson has shown that public goods can be supplied when one powerful actor values the good sufficiently to provide it for itself (and thus for everybody) or to make side payments in order to line up contributions.¹² But as Norman Frohlic, Joe Oppenheimer, and Oran Young argue:

"Except in the unusual case of the single individual who supplies a collective good, it is generally agreed that some sort of organisation is required to collect resources and to supply the good in question. Yet discussions of collective goods seldom pay much attention to the process through which such an organisation can or will come into existence in a social structure".¹³

They argue that political leadership is necessary to organise cooperation. Organising to supply collective goods beyond those of providing the good itself. A political leader - or entrepreneur - is one who agrees to bear the cost of providing a collective organisation in return for some benefit or net gain.

The dominant mode of thinking in international relations scholarship is has been that hegemons play the leadership role because leadership is identified with power.¹⁴ Hegemons, the argument goes, are able to motivate collective action through coercion or side payments. But there are multiple kinds of leadership, with power/leadership only one variety; other kinds of leadership do not rely on the ability to bribe or compel. As Oran Young has recently argued, effective international leadership can also derive from bargaining skill ('entrepreneurial leadership') and the ability to generate ideas that reshape the perspectives of the bargainers ('intellectual leadership'). Young also notes that

¹¹ Haas, P.M. (1989) "Do Regimes Matter?", *International Organisation*, 43, Summer.

¹² Olson, M. (1965) *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press).

¹³ Frohlich, N. et al (1987) *Political Leadership and Collective Goods* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press), p. 6.

¹⁴ See Kindelberger, C.H. (1973) *The World In Depression* (Berkeley, University of California Press); Gilpin, R. (1975) *US Power and the Multinational Corporation* (New York, Basic Books); Krasner, S.D. (1976) "State Power and the Structure of International Trade", *World Politics*, 28, April; Strange, S. (1988) *States and Markets: an Introduction to International Political Economy* (London, Pinter).

the very 'heavy-handed arguments of the hegemonists' run into problems of reification and 'do not stand up well to empirical testing'.¹⁵

A number of leadership functions do not depend on the wielding of power. Such functions include some or all of the following:

1. Proposing, which points out to potential collaborators the areas in which collective action would be mutually beneficial
2. Mobilising, which draws potential collaborators into discussions over the proposed collaboration
3. Shaping the agenda, which outlines a framework for negotiations, including goals and means of cooperation
4. Building consensus, which promotes common understandings of the problem and cause-effect relations
5. Brokering compromises, which defines potential regions of agreement among divergent interests.¹⁶

If one views the functions of international leadership in this way, then clearly the exercise of leadership is not limited to officials of national governments. Officials of international organisations are able to provide international entrepreneurial and intellectual leadership as defined by Young. The officials and staff of an International Organisation (IO) might expect a variety of gains from taking a leadership role; enhanced prestige, new domains of activity, larger budgets, and more personnel.

The point is that neorealism implicitly assumes for IO's to exercise leadership, they would have to act like major states by displaying power/leadership.¹⁷ A more nuanced notion of leadership allows that IO's can lead in other ways. By linking political leadership to the costs of organising cooperation, I have reframed the notion so that it can include leadership by IO's. In principle, IO's are capable of assuming at least some of the costs of organising cooperation.

I enumerate four conditions under which the potential for leadership is greatest. Even the presence of all four in a specific situation, however, does not ensure that leadership will be effective.

First, the greater the initial grant of authority to the international organisation, the greater its ability to lead in new areas. Some IO's are forums

¹⁵ Young, O. (1991) "Political Leadership and Regime Formation: On the Development of Institutions in International Society" *International Organization* 45, Summer.

¹⁶ Sandholtz, W. (1992) *High-Tech Europe: The Politics of International Cooperation* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1992), chap 2.

¹⁷ IO's do not act or lead; their officials do.

in which member governments can express their positions and debate the differences - like the United Nations General Assembly. Others provide a mechanism for coordinating rules and standards; the IO then promulgates the agreed-upon rules. The International Civil Aviation Organisation is an example of this type. Other IO's have secretariats with authority to administer funds and programs agreed upon by their member states; the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are examples. A few IO's have independent powers to make and enforce rules among the member states and their populations. The Commission of the European Union is the best example of this type. It possesses the power, for example, to rule whether or not to permit certain company mergers. Hence, the capacity of an IO to lead depends to a large part on the nature of its constitution and the independent authority granted to its officers and staff. The World Bank and the Commission of the European Union therefore enjoy greater scope for independent initiative than does the International Postal Union.

Second, when leaders and staff of the international organisation are substantively knowledgeable and well prepared, they can help shape technical discussions and agreements. One of the most dramatic examples of this effect is the economic analysis generated by Paul Prebisch and his fellow economists at the U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America. ECLA thinking was incorporated into the philosophical foundations of both Latin American regional organisations and the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Third, the capacity of international organisations to exercise initiative depends in part on the personal characteristics of their leaders. Personal attributes that enhance the influence of an IO official include, charisma, expertise, negotiating ability, personal achievement outside the IO, and administrative competence. Thus, as Robert Cox and Harold Jacobson suggest, 'High international officials may command information and recognition, which allows them the initiative in proposing action or resolving conflict'.¹⁸

Fourth, and most important, I submit that IO's register the greatest impact on interstate cooperation during periods of policy adaptation. When national leaders confront policy failures that compel them to rethink their objectives and/or the means chosen to pursue them, they adapt by searching for alternative approaches. Under such circumstances IO's can seize the initiative to supply new models and strategies to promote bargains. Policy crises provide opportunities for activist leaders to marshal states behind a cooperative solution, such as in the

¹⁸ Cox, R. and Jacobsen, H. (1973) *The Anatomy of Influence* (New Haven, Conn, Yale University Press), p. 20.

framework of European Political Cooperation between the member states of the European Union.¹⁹

At this point the notion of domestic influences can be integrated with notions of international leadership. Essentially, for collective action to be possible, governments must come to value it over unilateralism. Domestic groups are important in this context: they can provoke governments to rethink and adapt their policies, although domestic politics is not the only way to induce policy adaptation. Cognitive change is also possible, as governments adopt new ideas, models, and information that can alter the way they view problems and define the national interest. Governments can also learn from experience, when policy failure forces them to search for alternative approaches.²⁰

Summary

Thus the analysis of collective action has two important dimensions. Half of the question deals with the demand for cooperation, how and why leaders of states decide that cooperation is an unacceptable option. Explaining the demand for cooperation forces us to look at domestic politics, learning, and policy adaptation. The other half of the analysis focuses on the organising of collective action. Even when states reassess their interests, cooperation is by no means automatic. Leadership is necessary to organise collective action. IO's can be sources of leadership and promote international collective action. To reaffirm what is the balance between individual, bilateral and collective action in the three cases? What resulting tensions between bilateral and collective action become evident? How important are the various organisations involved?

¹⁹ See Nuttall, S.J. (1992) *European Political Cooperation* (Oxford, Clarendon Press).

²⁰ Odell, J.S. (1991) *U.S. International Monetary Policy* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press), p. 368.

II. Case Studies

The Polish Crisis, 1980-82

European Reactions to the Crisis: A Short Chronology

On 13 February 1980 the Polish authorities - under Premier Gierek - stated that they were ready for a 'wide dialogue' with the Catholic Church and the emerging workers unions.²¹ This led the Political Committee of the Western European Union to set up a committee on the emerging situation in Poland the next day. The Committee was asked to present a report on the situation as soon as possible. Representatives were despatched to Warsaw, Krakow and Gdansk on the morning of the fifteenth. In Poland's major cities they were to find "widespread worker discontent and a general mood of despondency concerning worker-party relations in Poland".²² The Italian foreign minister - Emilio Colombo, who was on an official visit to Washington - discussed the situation in Gdansk with President Carter and his adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski in the White House. The Italian foreign minister informed his American colleagues of the worker unrest in Gdansk uncovered by the WEU fact-finding mission.²³ On 19 February the WEU Political Committee issued a warning to the Soviet Union related to the situation in Poland. Moscow was requested to "refrain from any activity that might jeopardise the territorial integrity of Poland".²⁴

In the months after August 1980 Solidarity had increasingly become a national force which had to be taken into account in Polish political life. Political Cooperation was slow to respond to this development. Hans-Dietrich Genscher took the lead in drawing attention to the implications of the crisis for the West, but discussions in EPC went little further than exchanges of views and analyses.²⁵ The first concrete action implemented by the Western Europeans was to re-schedule the Polish debt on 27 January 1981.²⁶ This was pushed hard by the West German foreign minister in a meeting of EC foreign ministers in

²¹ *Agence Europe*, 14 February 1980.

²² WEU, Political Committee Documents, 1056, 1980, p. 17.

²³ Interviews, Washington, D.C., January 1993.

²⁴ WEU Political Committee Documents, 1057, 1980, p. 4.

²⁵ In the Ministerial Committee of European Political Cooperation. Interviews, London and Bonn, January 1994.

²⁶ *Agence Europe*, 28 January 1981.

Brussels earlier in the month. The French were in principle in favour of a re-scheduling, "whilst the British with no special interest in Poland were keen to go along with the West German lead".²⁷ Previously on 8 January Solidarity held its General Meeting in Gdansk. Walesa proclaimed Solidarnosc to be an "independent trade union free from state control".²⁸ On 16 January the Netherlands Presidency of the EC and EPC outlined Dutch priorities in relation to Poland: to re-schedule the crippling Polish debt, to aid in any way trade unions in Gdansk, and to provide aid for Poland.

Then on 22 January the British made a loan of \$50 million to Poland based on minimal rates of interest and with a grace period of ten years. The "British were following the example of the Reagan administration in proffering selective 'carrots' to the Polish leadership...That was naive of them."²⁹ European-American relations were not in the best shape following the 23 January natural gas agreement with the Soviet Union that is described below in detail. European-American differences also emerged at the end of the month when the CPSU Central Committee sent a note to the Polish leadership talking of the "indissolubility of the Socialist people's".³⁰ American Secretary of State Alexander Haig contacted his German, French and British opposite numbers to complain - in typical 'Haigspeak' - of "gross Western European inaction at a time when Poland is in the grips of a tyranny".³¹ Following the Franco-German summit of 5 February Giscard d'Estaing and Helmut Schmidt issued a joint statement condemning the Soviet letter. But the rhetoric of Haig was flatly rejected in favour of a cool pragmatism. Further European-American influences emerged on the eleventh of February when it was announced that a military man would lead a new Polish government of national salvation: the man was the minister of defence, General Wojciech Jaruzelski. Washington once again berated the European powers for not following the State Department policy of "licensed rhetoric".³² The West Germans "were a particular butt of State Department jokes concerning the Third Reich's former links with Poland, and why they had

²⁷ Interviews, London, January 1994.

²⁸ *The Solidarity Congress of 1981*, Edited and translated by George Sandford. (London, Macmillan), p. 5.

²⁹ Interviews, Paris, January 1994.

³⁰ Quoted in Ploss, S. (1986) *Moscow and the Polish Crisis* (Boulder, Col, Westview Press), p. 42.

³¹ Interviews, Washington, D.C., February 1993.

³² Interviews, Bonn, January 1994.

to make up for past crimes by helping shore up the Polish regime whatever happened...This added a touch of indecency to American policy."³³

At the opening of the nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Brezhnev spoke of the "vanguard of the Socialist people's...and the indissolubility of the Socialist motherlands".³⁴ The EC responded by proposing to sell more EEC subsidised sugar to Poland. Secretary Haig was furious that the Europeans could respond with such a weak gesture in the framework of the Community Treaties. Instead he proposed that the Polish debt towards the West should be re-scheduled sooner rather than later. In a statement on 25 February the European People's Party of the European Parliament "berated the leaders of the European Community member states for doing too little for the Polish people".³⁵

In a somewhat contradictory move - contradicting the previous 'carrot' policy - the agriculture ministers of the EC decided to ban delivery of beef from Poland into the Community for fear of disease. This had the effect of widening the Polish trade deficit with the Community member states even further. As one Commission functionary from the agriculture directorate general recently stated: "the institutions of the European Community did not work well together in this case...The DG's of the Commission were also vying for influence on their own specific policy sector. At agriculture we could not care less about what the people at external relations were doing. There is not much internal communication."³⁶ The contradictory nature of the American 'carrot' and 'stick' policy was being "transferred" to European policy-making except the context of the poor decision-making was the foreign ministries of the European powers and the directorate generals of the European Commission.

On 16 March the East German Socialist Unity Party and the Polish Party of Labour issued a joint statement on the "indissolubility of East German-Polish relations". Similar utterances had been made prior to the Russian and East German invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.³⁷ This led Hans-Dietrich Genscher to visit Poland on 19-20 March for consultations with General Jaruzelski. The two talked of the implications of the re-scheduling of the Polish debt for East-

³³ Interviews, Washington, D.C., February 1993.

³⁴ *Agence Europe*, 25 February 1981.

³⁵ Statement issued by the EPP on the Situation in Poland, Press Office of the EPP at the European Parliament, Strasbourg, 25 February 1981.

³⁶ Interviews, Brussels, July 1991.

³⁷ See Cynkin, T.C. (1989) *Superpower Signaling in the Polish Crisis* (London, Macmillan), p. 102.

West relations in general and for West German-Polish relations in particular. At the same time plans for a national strike were being planned in Gdansk. Solidarity was on the offensive: Genscher actually criticised Solidarity for "rocking the boat in Eastern Europe" and for 'jeopardising West German relations with Moscow and Warsaw.' He saw the crisis strictly in terms of what damage could be done to West German relations with Moscow."³⁸

Following consultations with the British and French governments Herr Genscher liaised with Chancellor Schmidt to present a "unified" West German policy at the forthcoming Maastricht European Council. The German position was that the West Europeans should keep out of the internal Polish situation as much as possible in order not to jeopardise hard-won detente with Moscow. The final press communique of the European Council meeting stresses that "Polish developments should be allowed to occur ordinarily."³⁹ The Heads of Government - heavily influenced by Genscher's report of his short trip to Poland - decided not to take concrete actions either against Moscow or Warsaw for the sake of detente. The Maastricht declaration was well-received by the Government and the Unions in Poland, but not in Washington. Secretary Haig was against the general tenor of the declaration because it contradicted American policy.

On 1 April the Polish Vice-President Jagelski visited Paris. In talks at the Elysee, Giscard "reiterated French concern at the situation in Poland...and promised further re-scheduling of the Polish debt. He also confided in Jagelski that he believed the Americans were on the wrong tack suggesting sanctions to trade and so on".⁴⁰ At the European Council in Maastricht it had been decided to implement "own-resources-aid", that is national and not EC aid, to Poland. France demanded that the legal basis be non-EC 'national aid' unknown reasons. American-European relations received a further blow following a Brezhnev visit to Prague, where the Soviet President again reiterated the indissolubility of the Socialist people's and warned those who might wish to "repeat the follies of 1956 and 1968". The Americans almost immediately suggested sanctions. The Western Europeans disagreed. Yet a plenary session of the European Parliament criticised the European powers for not doing enough to help the Polish nation.⁴¹

³⁸ Interviews, Bonn, January 1994.

³⁹ *European Political Cooperation Documentation*, (Bonn, Federal Printer, 1988), p. 144. English edition.

⁴⁰ Interviews, Paris, January 1994.

⁴¹ *Agence Europe*, 9 April 1981.

On the eleventh of April the European Parliament issued a formal warning to Moscow on internal interference in Poland and the consequences of a Soviet intervention for Soviet-West European relations. The European Commission decided that EEC aid to Poland must be dispatched quickly to Poland in order to relieve economic hardship in the cities.⁴² Three days later the US government agreed - under intense European pressure - to adjust the debts of the Polish State Bank (Handlowy) in dollars. Indeed, "Mr. Genscher breathed fire on the telephone to Haig...Haig complied with the adjustment because of its logic. It made economic sense to make Poland as dependent on the West as much as possible".⁴³ However, the real crunch in American-European relations came on the twenty first of the month: Washington decided to end the grain embargo mentioned above towards the Soviet Union. Three months earlier the Department of Defense had heavily criticised the Europeans in relation to the planned Siberian pipeline. That would mean a loss of Western European jobs. It now looked to the West Europeans as though Washington wished to protect American agricultural jobs. Relations between Europe and America deteriorated on this issue to their lowest level yet in the crisis.

At the end of April the WEU Political Committee issued a communique that suggested that "Western European interests were not necessarily always the same as those of Washington. The Polish crisis has demonstrated this beyond doubt".⁴⁴ This prompted the American Secretary of State to visit Brussels on 4-6 June to talk with West European NATO ambassadors and with the President of the European Commission Gaston Thorn. Haig complained of proposed EC subsidies on cereals exported to Poland, in that it was unfair competition. The collective European reply to Haig was embodied in an EPC ministerial declaration of 24 June: "The Community and its member states aim to help the Poles by re-scheduling debts, offering aid and subsidising food".⁴⁵ Washington policy-makers - especially Haig - felt heavily let down by the actions of the Western Europeans. Haig's failure to "deliver" the West Europeans also had a deleterious effect on his own already precarious standing in the Reagan administration.⁴⁶

By late June the American Department of Agriculture had promised American aid to Poland so that Warsaw could buy subsidised corn from

⁴² Interviews, Brussels, July 1991.

⁴³ Interviews, Bonn, January 1994.

⁴⁴ Proceedings of the WEU, April 1981.

⁴⁵ EPC Documents, p. 145.

⁴⁶ Interviews, Washington, D.C., January 1993.

Washington. The West Europeans were wary of American intentions. Was the idea invest a little in order to 'buy off' the Poles? If so, it was feared "that such a strategy would have no prospect of coming to fruition due the Soviet external pressure on Warsaw".⁴⁷ American-European relations hit a new low in early July. EEC measures on the modification - increase - of food aid to Poland induced panic in Washington: the Americans were afraid that the Soviet Union would make the most of Western disunity on Poland by invading. A precedent existed in the form of Suez: American-British/French disagreements enabled the USSR to invade Hungary almost "undercover". The British, French and West German governments dismissed the American fears as alarmist. On 17 July a joint EEC-EPC summit of foreign ministers - a first - was convened in London to coordinate national economic and political approaches to Poland. This sent signals to Washington that "Europe" had its own national-level and Community-level policies in both the economic and political fields.⁴⁸

On 5 August Brezhnev and Honecker issued a joint statement "against subversion in the Warsaw Pact". The statement was driven by Erich Honecker's distrust of the Polish leadership and his memory of the 1968 Czechoslovakia invasion. Indeed, Honecker had previously accused Brezhnev of being too 'soft' on 'class enemies' in Poland.⁴⁹ The European powers reacted to the statement with utmost caution, whilst the United States accused Moscow of "planning international crimes in Poland".⁵⁰ Two days later the French foreign ministry issued a statement offering to supply Poland with more basic food stuffs in a period of difficulty. Nevertheless, Western banks rejected further flexibility for the Polish external debt for 1981-82: this highlighted the inflexibility and the contradictory nature of the "Western" policy towards Poland in that period.

By early September the Polish leadership requested more Western aid in order to pay Moscow in hard cash for the Siberian pipeline gas deal. Washington balked at the idea of Western creditors paying Poland indirectly to pay Moscow for the pipeline. The "Western Europeans not surprisingly disagreed with the main thrust of Washington's logic...The pipeline would, in our view, have brought wealth and prosperity to Eastern Europe and thus extended detente".⁵¹ By the twenty fifth of the month, however, the European Commission was accusing the Polish of dumping vacuum cleaners in the EC market. This did not

⁴⁷ Interviews, London, January 1994.

⁴⁸ Interviews, London, January 1994.

⁴⁹ Ploss, S. (1986) *op. cit.*, p. 166.

⁵⁰ *The Washington Post*, 8 August 1981.

⁵¹ Interviews, Bonn, January 1994.

auger well for EC-Polish relations. Further accusations - from the Americans - of European inconsistencies emerged on 28 September when the West German national press agency accused the Community of meddling in Polish domestic affairs: the European powers dismissed the accusation, but the Reagan administration argued that "Western Europe has foregone its privilege of 'telling' the administration what is and is not correct policy".⁵²

By early October Solidarity had fielded four candidates for the forthcoming Polish Presidential elections. Then on the tenth Claude Cheysson visited Warsaw. His approach to the visit was low-key. Indeed, "the visit was designed to highlight French independence from Western policy-making and also that France would do nothing if Poland was invaded".⁵³ This is to be contrasted with the American attitude towards the visit: "In the State Department Cheysson was not the most popular person. First, because he was French and, secondly, because he had gone against the United States policy on Poland in such a vicious and public manner".⁵⁴ The following day Secretary of Defense Weinberger stated: "The Europeans should take a firm line with the Russians instead of pussy-footing around".⁵⁵

Meanwhile the Polish government had officially applied to join the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. On 12 November the Italian Defence Minister Giovanni Spadolini was despatched to Warsaw for talks. He was joined by the French Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy. Both men stated their own countries positions regarding the Polish application to join the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Both governments favoured Poland joining, but under certain conditions. "France was in favour of Warsaw being limited to how much it might borrow. Italy wished to impose similar stringent conditions on Poland".⁵⁶ Mauroy also took the opportunity to declare that "France does not back the sanctions policies of the United States"⁵⁷ mentioned below in Section II. Secretary of State Haig retorted that "France does not know where her best interests lie".⁵⁸ By this critical stage of the crisis American-

⁵² Secretary of State Alexander Haig quoted in: *The Washington Post*, 30 September 1981.

⁵³ Interviews, Paris, January 1994.

⁵⁴ Interviews, Washington, D.C., February 1994.

⁵⁵ *Department of State Bulletin*, 30 October 1981, p. 34.

⁵⁶ Interviews, Paris, January 1994.

⁵⁷ Interviews, Paris, January 1994.

⁵⁸ Quotation from the *New York Times*, 12 November 1981.

European relations were confused and somewhat mutually "hostile". The Polish World Bank application misled policy-makers in London, Paris and Bonn into believing that the regime in Warsaw was actually implementing pro-Western economic and political policies. There was even talk of a further re-scheduling of the Polish debt for 1982. In fact, discussions had already begun on 25 November.

Then on 5 December the European Commission allocated some 10 million ecu's of economic aid to Poland.⁵⁹ There was "clearly a belief in Western Europe that the 'carrot' policy of selective inducements and rewards would prevent either a Soviet invasion or an internal repression of Solidarity".⁶⁰ This was confirmed on 10 December when the Soviet Union attempted to openly obtain a loan of 500 million American dollars from Western banks. Policy-makers believed that Moscow and Warsaw had moderated their behaviour in favour of the West. These hopes were shattered on the thirteenth when the Polish military declared a "state of war" on the Polish people. Western policy had failed to fulfil its main aim of preventing an internal crackdown.

Analysis

In the period of the Polish crisis it is a fair assessment to state that relations between the three principal European powers were carried out mainly at the bilateral level. Nevertheless, EPC (for inter-European relations) and NATO (for transatlantic relations) served as "back up" channels to the dominant bilateral channel of communication. The pertinent question is why? What does this tell us about the tension between bilateralism and collectivism in EPC and in NATO? What does this case tell us about potential collaboration between the European powers? What does it tell us about the mobilisation of potential collaborators into discussions. What does it tell us about how the inter-European and transatlantic agenda was organised - either bilaterally or collectively and why? What does the case tell us about consensus-building measures between the European powers? Lastly, what does the case tell us about the brokering of compromises between the European powers and between the European powers and the United States?

A number of possible explanatory factors must be brought to bear on the question. First, it can be convincingly argued that the United States used bilateralism in transatlantic relations as a means to divide and rule the European powers. Indeed, American insensitivity towards greater European wants, needs and policy platforms was almost official policy in the Reagan administration.

⁵⁹ *EC Bulletin*, n°1, 1982, p. 12.

⁶⁰ Interviews, London, January 1994.

This was in turn exacerbated by a lack of European willingness to go collective at critical phases of the crisis. This tells us that the scope for inter-European collaboration was attenuated by the United States shaping the European level policy agenda externally to some significant degree. Nevertheless, as the narrative demonstrates European interests in agriculture, trade and aid were all consistently dealt with at the European level via EC Treaty provisions. This shows that European level resources were effectively mobilised in order that the European powers might go "collective" in this particular policy sector. On the other hand, however, bilateralism in transatlantic relations encouraged Washington to, for instance, talk to London but not inform either Paris or Bonn. In other words, Washington frequently played off the European powers against each other with the result of fuelling both greater bilateralism within Europe on political issues, but - interestingly - greater collectivity in economic issues between the EC(10).

Second, EPC was a highly underdeveloped mechanism in the early 1980s. It was typically used as a "back up" channel when bilateral relations in Europe and between individual European national capitals and Washington became bogged down. The European powers generally preferred to consult with each other bilaterally. It was the perception of decision-makers in all three major capitals in Western Europe that the bilateral channel was the most convenient for consultation and bargaining. Each of the 'big three' in Europe did not want to reveal too much information to its immediate European partners. However, economic decisions reached in EPC - for instance regarding sanctions against the Jaruzelski regime passed in Brussels on 4 January 1982 - were duly given a Community wide implementation via the appropriate articles of the Rome Treaty. Nevertheless, the political will to propose collective decisions and mobilise resources was highly limited until the actual imposition of martial law in December 1981. Consensus building measures were seriously lacking between the European powers except related to provisions of the Rome Treaty.

Third, Britain, France and West Germany had - and have - extensive political, economic and cultural links to East Central Europe. In the Polish case the West Germans obviously had many commercial and political interests in Poland that were closely related to Poland's fate. West German policy aimed to protect Bonn's relations with Moscow and (most importantly) with East Berlin. The gains of 'Ostpolitik' from the early 1970s were the guiding principle in West Germany's policy towards the crisis. Helmut Schmidt's policy was one tacit acceptance of events in Poland. His Free Democrat foreign minister Genscher was also keen to improve relations with Moscow and East Berlin.⁶¹ This served to attenuate political cooperation between the European powers. On

⁶¹ Interviews, Bonn, January 1994.

the other hand, however, the will to collectivism in Europe was manifest in Berlin "quad" meetings between the four western powers. A lack of European acceptance of American demands for sanctions against Poland during late 1981 and early 1982 induced greater inter-European cooperation and actually more consultation with the United States. Washington had to somehow justify its hardline policy to the West Europeans. The process of policy coordination - our main focus here - was well developed and maturing by late 1981, even before the crackdown. The Berlin group meetings indicate that the political will to propose collective compromises was present in Europe and that a mobilisation of resources was implemented to meet the demands of a collective policy agenda.

Fourth, French policy towards the crisis implied a tacit acceptance of Europe's division as laid down at Yalta in 1945. Both Giscard and his Socialist successor (from May 1981) talked incessantly about the ills of Soviet infiltration into eastern Europe. However, very little was done by way of deeds to back up the words. Pierre Hassner put forward the following formula in 1988 to describe French policy in the Polish crisis: "the Americans were strong, the Germans did little and the French used words".⁶² In substance French policy was very similar West German policy: relations between the two parts of Europe - East and West - should be driven by pragmatic considerations. This implied some degree of cooperation between the French and German leaders and the respective foreign ministries. Indeed several meetings were held in 1981 between officials from the respective foreign ministries in order to hammer out a "rational" policy towards the Polish crisis based upon humanitarian principles and little direct concrete action. In turn cooperation between the Quai d'Orsay with the State Department increased in order to patch over existing policy differences regarding sanctions policy towards Poland and the USSR. Again this indicates that the European powers and the United States were willing to mobilise resources to attempt to compromise on policy differences. However, consensus building measures were fragile and thus tended to reinforce bilateral discussion.

Fifth, British policy towards Poland was also non-committal. There was a general acceptance in London that the Polish crisis was of greater significance to Bonn than London. London did not want to get too deeply involved in making policy given that the West German government obviously was in possession of infinitely superior resources.⁶³ Foreign ministry cooperation between lower and higher level officials did periodically occur in order to improve the European collective reaction to the American agenda in policy.

⁶² Hassner, P (1988) "The View From Paris", in Gordon, L (ed) *Eroding Empires* (Washington, D.C., Brookings Institute), p. 55.

⁶³ Interviews, London, January 1994.

However, policy differences between London and Bonn did exist on sanctions. On this issue London was consistently more in tune with Washington than with her near European partners. Hence this general agreement served to reinforce bilateral relations between Reagan and Thatcher personally. Nevertheless, Lord Carrington also wanted to positively use the Polish crisis to further British influence in the development of EPC at a time when London held the Presidency of the Community and EPC (July to December 1981).⁶⁴ Carrington also did not accept Margaret Thatcher's disengagement from the Polish problem: under the British Presidency, for example, selective sanctions to trade against Warsaw were implemented. London was also instrumental in having Poland's international debt rescheduled in August and December 1981 respectively.⁶⁵ Indeed this indicates that a fair degree of inter-European collective cooperation did exist between the European powers in EPC.

Sixth, there was no sustained political will on the part of Britain, France and West Germany to put forward a "unified" European response to the Polish crisis. A Euro-wide "collective" agenda was thus severely lacking: resources could thus not be mobilised in order to broker European consensus deals. The typical "European" initiatives implemented amounted to selective trade and aid packages under the auspices of the EEC Treaty articles 113 and 224. And even then such measures typically took many meetings and many months to decide upon. However, the significance of such meetings relating to the development of the European responses to the Polish crisis is that they signify that when the chips were down west Europeans pulled together and fought their corner(s) against perceived American bullying.

Seventh, meetings in NATO were also important for the exchange of information. Meetings of NATO foreign ministers were convened mainly to exchange information only and not to "make" policy. Frank discussions did take place on a number of occasions, but not with the same degree of frequency or intensity as in the bilateral meetings between Washington and the foreign ministers of the European great powers. Indeed, discussions of any importance were generally made following bilateral discussions.⁶⁶ That is not to deny, however, that neither EPC (inter-European coordination) or NATO (transatlantic coordination) were never used as policy-making fora at critical junctures in the development of the crisis when bilateral channels did not work. Indeed, as the

⁶⁴ Interviews, London, January 1994.

⁶⁵ See: Cynkin, T.C. (1988) *Superpower Signaling in the Polish Crisis* (London, Macmillan), p. 73.

⁶⁶ This generalisable statement is based on interviews in Washington, London, Paris and Bonn.

chronology of the crisis intimates many important discussions did take place in NATO regarding western tactics towards the crisis and the tension between bilateralism and collectivism was greater than most commentators allow in their analyses. The Atlantic policy agenda was to a significant degree shaped by collective European and American proposals that were backed by resources. Nevertheless, many failed to be implemented due to the inherent differences in national foreign policies detailed above.

This having been said, however, why was EPC in particular used as a "back up" significant channel in west European-American relations? First, EPC was used as a consultation mechanism and not a bargaining channel between London, Paris and Bonn. Policy was never "made" in EPC. However, this confirms the fact that inter-European collectivism existed alongside bilateralism. It also confirms that resources were periodically mobilised to further selected collective decisions and that the European policy agenda was not strictly bilateral - inherent tensions periodically emerged between bilateralism and collectivism. Nevertheless, "European" policy, such as on sanctions or aid was more often than not decided in bilateral or trilateral discussions between the three main European powers. EPC meetings of foreign ministers were used either to clarify inconsistencies or doubts arising from bilateral meetings of foreign ministers. This indicated that compromises that diverged considerably from the European-wide decisions reached at the European level had to be watered down to suit various national interests.

Second, EPC was always of secondary importance to Washington. The American policy of 'divide and rule' (mentioned above) towards the European powers also had a decisive impact on the importance the Europeans themselves did or did not attach to EPC. Indeed, the Europeans tended to prefer the more straight-forward bilateral dealings among themselves and in relations with Washington. There was no political will on the part of the European powers to use EPC as anything other than a crude consultation mechanism. As mentioned above, EPC was used as a "back up" channel to the main bilateral avenue of consultation. National interests - particularly Bonn's - had a deleterious effect on the prospects for European foreign policy coordination. Resources were often not mobilised. The policy agenda was often kept bilateral and hence the opportunities to go collective - in a numerical sense - simply did not exist most of the time.

Third, existing bilateral channels of communication in Europe and transatlantically functioned well and were tried and tested. To some extent this in itself influenced the European powers that it simply was not worth to go collective on many issues of perceived vital national importance. Political Cooperation was still in its 'growing' stage in the early 1980s, and hence was not considered by its member states to be the optimal arena for consultation. It lacked the binding mechanisms to make the difference in terms of cooperation.

However, the mechanism was an important channel for inter-European communication. So-called bilateral "polices" were thus shaped to some degree by multilateral determinants.

In the period of the Polish crisis NATO emerged as a significant if slightly subordinate arena (to bilateralism) for transatlantic relations. But the question is why? First, NATO provided a highly convenient forum for the multilateral discussion of foreign policy problems as they arose. It is the premier multilateral diplomatic arena for the discussion of foreign and defence policy problems in the North Atlantic area. In the Polish crisis meetings of foreign ministers supplemented the dominant bilateral meetings. In NATO discussions typically focused on European and American sanctions, aid and trade policies towards Poland and the USSR. This tells us that the Europeans accepted the Atlantic Alliance as an increasingly political, security and economic organisation. It was an important institution for policy consultation at various times in the crisis: when it was in the interest of the Americans and the Europeans to collectivise the Atlantic policy coordination process this was done. However, American insistence on implementing sanctions against Moscow and Warsaw was not accepted in London, Paris or Bonn.⁶⁷

Second, the Polish crisis involved making Western calculations regarding Soviet military intentions towards Poland. Hence on the military aspects of the crisis a certain degree of collectivism did emerge in 1981 and 1982 in the Atlantic Alliance. Discussions in NATO frequently focused on the subject of Soviet military intentions towards Poland. A number of meetings of foreign ministers - and occasional meetings of defence ministers - were called in the course of 1981. The aim of the meetings was to prepare (western) contingency plans in the event of a Soviet invasion of Poland. The American administration was more in favour of heavy penalties against Warsaw and Moscow, whereas the European powers did not want to endanger West European detente with Moscow.

Third, when bilateral arrangements failed - which was not often - Washington attempted to persuade the Europeans of the correctness of American policy. This was when collectivism came into its own as a policy coordination forum. NATO is the perfect forum for talking to large numbers of countries when one wants something specific from all of them. The Atlantic alliance served as a "back up" channel to the main bilateral arrangements for transatlantic relations. For instance, in April 1981 discussions concerning the "Western" response to Soviet troop movements along the Polish-USSR border demanded both political and military consultations beyond the scope of bilateralism.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Based on interviews in London Paris and Bonn.

⁶⁸ Interviews, London, January 1994.

Conclusions

In the context of inter-European relations during the Polish crisis the following conclusions are salient in understanding Western Europe's response. First, bilateralism was the dominant form of consultation between the European powers during the crisis. Second, consultations in EPC (inter-European) and NATO (transatlantic) served as a "back up" channel to the dominant bilateral arrangements. However, at critical phases of the crisis the Europeans "went collective" in for many different reasons: to present a united front against American pressure to accept the concept of linkage; to present an effective set of sanctions against the Soviet Union but not against Poland, and to in some cases develop the institutional set-up of EPC. Third, transatlantic relations were mainly bilateral, with NATO serving as a significant supplementary channel for communication when bilateralism became bogged down. The Americans decided to go collective in the Atlantic Alliance for several reasons: to influence multiple national actors in Europe on the correctness of US sanctions policy; to assert perceived American leadership in the Alliance at a time when the Europeans had begun to question that very leadership, and to highlight European dependence on the United States - politically and economically to a significant degree.

The Grenada Crisis, 1983

European Reactions to the Crisis: A Short Chronology

The Grenada crisis occurred so quickly as to take the European powers by utter surprise. No such invasion was envisaged in either London, Paris and Bonn or in the EPC Working Group on Central America and the Caribbean.⁶⁹ To say that the invasion came as a shock to the participants is an understatement. In this section, therefore, the emphasis is on foreign policy coordination in Western Europe in the post-invasion phase of the crisis. This is also when transatlantic policy coordination/communications actually occurred.

The first reactions in Western Europe to the situation in Grenada occurred on 3 October. A British diplomat put it as follows: "News reached London that

⁶⁹ "The invasion took us by surprise in the foreign office...We were unprepared because the Reagan administration decided not to inform us of their express intention to invade. It really was a slap in the face for London, especially following the extensive American support during the Falklands campaign of the previous year. I personally then was a middle-level diplomat attached to European Political Cooperation, where I served in the Working Group on Central America and the Caribbean. Washington showed no interest in contacting any of us in Europe." Interviews, London, January 1994.

something was going on in Grenada. We were unconcerned given that the eastern Caribbean is of no strategic importance to us. In fact one could say that government policy was to have no policy. I remember asking my deputy who this Bishop chap was...It turned out that he was a Marxist revolutionary who had previously studied philosophy in London. Of course we did nothing to confirm or disconfirm reports that Bishop was being challenged by his deputy Bernard Coard".⁷⁰

Meanwhile, the foreign ministers of the Ten were meeting in the forum of the European Community. It was decided on the tenth to send aid to Grenada to the tune of 1.5 million ecu. This was on top of Lome Convention aid payments.⁷¹ The European powers aimed to induce 'reasonable behaviour' in the Marxist regime on Grenada. We may term this to be a 'carrot' policy of selective inducements in order to attain stability on Grenada. On the twelfth the Political Directors of the Ten met in Brussels in order to discuss their monthly calendar. "Grenada was low on the list of foreign policy priorities for all except Britain".⁷² The British Political Director - Julian Bullard - told his colleagues that Bishop had been toppled from power. This had been confirmed by the British High Commissioner in Bridgetown, Barbados - Giles Bullard, the brother of Sir Julian. Sir Julian said to his colleagues: "Britain cannot stand by and see civil war develop on the island of Grenada. The Prime Minister has ordered the frigate HMS Endurance to stand by for a possible evacuation of British subjects from Grenada. I shall remain in close contact with the British High Commissioner in Bridgetown".⁷³

Then on 14 October the British legation in Bridgetown confirmed that Bishop had been overthrown by his deputy Bernard Coard. Coard was known to be an orthodox Marxist who had steeped himself in the writings of Marx and Engels whilst at University in England in the 1960s. A further meeting of Political Directors was called for the afternoon of the fourteenth in Brussels. At the meeting the West German Political Director asked Sir Julian Bullard what "could be done to avert anarchy in Grenada?". Sir Julian replied that the British government did not think intervention was a good idea in the circumstances: it was illegal in international law, and it would be a bloodbath if any outside power sent in troops.

⁷⁰ Interviews, London, January 1994.

⁷¹ *Agence Europe*, 12 October 1983.

⁷² Interviews, Bonn, January 1994.

⁷³ Interviews, London, January 1994.

Sir Julian then reported the meeting to his foreign minister Sir Geoffrey Howe. Howe "agreed with the broad lines of Bullard's policy...But he also suggested that he contact American Secretary of State George Shultz. This he did on the morning of the fifteenth. Shultz thanked Sir Geoffrey for his concern".⁷⁴ Immediately following his conversation with Shultz Sir Geoffrey telephoned Claude Cheysson in Paris and asked his opinion on the crisis. Howe put it on a 'what shall we do?' basis. Cheysson replied: "I think we can do very little...Neither France or the United Kingdom have the money or self-interest to do anything. Of course we must protest against the situation in Grenada in the United Nations. But I believe the Americans will do something".⁷⁵

Meanwhile the West German foreign minister proposed to Sir Geoffrey that the Europeans make a collective declaration the developments in Grenada in EPC.⁷⁶ Sir Geoffrey declined to make such a 'token gesture' as the problem mainly concerned the United Kingdom. West Germany had few interests in the Caribbean - except for investments - and therefore had no right, in London's perception - to do anything about Grenada.

By 18 October London knew for certain that Maurice Bishop had been slain by the new Coard regime. Bilateral contacts between London and Washington should have been frenetic but were not. "Geoffrey Howe spoke to George Shultz between 2 and 3 p.m. eastern standard time on the eighteenth...The British wanted to know what our plans were in the State Department on Grenada. We stone walled saying that we didn't know enough about the situation on the ground. That made no sense to them I'm sure".⁷⁷ Indeed, "in the foreign office we knew that the Americans were up to something...It was just a question of what. Day after day it was getting more difficult to get anything concrete out of the State Department".⁷⁸

On 20 October an informal meeting of the British, French and West German Political Directors took place in Brussels at the Sheraton in Place Rogier. On the agenda of the meeting was the situation in Poland and the reported death of Maurice Bishop. The latter topic received about ten minutes of discussion. The main question asked by the three was will the Americans invade? It was correctly thought that Reagan had already ordered an invasion. It was decided that the three would keep each other informed - via the

⁷⁴ Interviews, London, January 1994.

⁷⁵ Interviews, Paris, January 1994.

⁷⁶ Interviews, Bonn, January 1994.

⁷⁷ Interviews, Washington, D.C., February 1993.

⁷⁸ Interviews, London, January 1994.

cooperation of missions in Washington - on what American intentions were in relation to the crisis. Nothing concrete could be decided given that none of the participants had any concrete information.

As we have previously stated, by the twenty-first Washington had initiated a propaganda offensive against Havana and Grenada. Mrs. Thatcher contacted President Reagan by telephone "but he was not forthcoming on American plans...What could I do? One cannot force information out of an American President".⁷⁹ Sir Geoffrey Howe telephoned Claude Cheysson and Hans-Dietrich Genscher between 4 and 5 p.m. London time on the twenty-first. Cheysson characteristically "dismissed American meddling in the Western hemisphere". Genscher called for an emergency meeting of EC foreign ministers. The meeting, as stated above, was held on Vouliagmeni between 22-24 October. The Greek foreign minister - Nikos Haralambopoulos - prevented the issue of Grenada from entering the agenda of the meeting. This was probably in protest against the EC member states reluctance to discuss the Cyprus issue in EPC. There could be no collective European "position" on Grenada in those circumstances. A telegram was forwarded to Washington "expressing the concern of the Ten with the situation in Grenada...and with the lack of American consultation with Europe".⁸⁰ One day later the United States and the member states of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States invaded Grenada.

Meanwhile on the twenty-sixth France condemned the US invasion of Grenada as an "act of gross indecency". The Federal Republic of Germany also unswervingly condemned the invasion as a breach of international law. European influence in American policy amounted to nil. Washington had invaded Grenada on a strictly unilateral basis without prior consultation. On the afternoon of the twenty-sixth Geoffrey Howe contacted Claude Cheysson once again: "We must" said Cheysson "condemn the American invasion outright".⁸¹ Sir Geoffrey replied that "such a public recital could only serve to embarrass Britain".⁸² Cheysson, nevertheless, went on to condemn the invasion and lack of prior consultation on the morning of the twenty-seventh. European foreign policy coordination worked well on the level of consultation, but less well on the level of collective action.

Meanwhile on the 30th the European Parliament justified the American-led invasion on the grounds of humanitarian intervention: "the European Parliament

⁷⁹ See: Hugo Young (1989) *One of Us* (London, Macmillan), p. 443.

⁸⁰ *Agence Europe*, 26 October 1983.

⁸¹ Interviews, Paris, January 1994.

⁸² Interviews, London, January 1994.

sees fit to applaud the actions of the United States of America in Grenada...for saving countless lives following the illegal coup of the twelfth".⁸³ This seemed to justify the American invasion on the part of Western Europe.⁸⁴ The British and French governments protested against the invasion in the strongest possible terms, Mrs. Thatcher herself contacted President Reagan on several occasions complaining of lack of consultation and of the folly of invading. Most critically on the evening of 24 October Mrs Thatcher sent the following telegraph to Ronald Reagan:

"The action will be seen as an intervention by a western country in the internal affairs of a small independent nation...I ask you to consider this in the context of our wider East-West relations and of the fact that we will be having in the next few days to present our Parliament and people with the siting of cruise missiles in this country. I must ask you to think carefully about these points. I cannot conceal that I am deeply disturbed about these points. I cannot conceal that I am deeply disturbed by your latest communication. You asked for my advice. I have set it out and hope that even at this late stage you will take it into account before events are irrevocable".⁸⁵

In summary, two issues dominated Western Europe's reaction to the crisis: First, the lack of a perceived need on the part of the European powers to coordinate their foreign policies. Second, the fact that European influence in American policy was slight at best.

Analysis

During the Grenada crisis consultations between the European powers were carried out mainly at the bilateral level, as in the previous case. However, EPC served as a "back up" channel to the main bilateral consultations. Indeed European level meetings of foreign ministers did take place in European Political Cooperation and should not be discounted in assessing the importance of collectivism in European policy coordination. In transatlantic relations bilateralism was also the norm in consultations between Europe and America. Foreign ministers meetings in the framework of the Atlantic alliance served as a "back up" channel to the dominant bilateral channels. But were collective resources mobilised? Did a European agenda exist? Were compromises brokered at the European and Atlantic levels?

⁸³ European Parliament Proceedings, A/83-30/10.

⁸⁴ Interviews, Paris, January 1994.

⁸⁵ Thatcher, *M. The Downing Street Years* (London, Harper and Row), p. 331.

As in the previous section a number of possible explanatory factors must be brought to bear on the question. First, London's special interests in the eastern Caribbean precluded the Foreign Office from sharing detailed information with Paris and Bonn.⁸⁶ However, at the meeting - mentioned above - of EC foreign ministers in Greece held in late October actual cooperation did take place. Policy implementation was a different matter, but national foreign policies towards the crisis were discussed with some verve. European-wide proposals were suggested by the Belgians, Dutch and the Italians. Nothing was carried through however. The shaping of the agenda by the Greek government put pay to European initiatives. All consensus building measures were dropped in order primarily because of Greek mismanagement of the EPC mechanism. Additionally, Paris and Bonn had developed their own "national" economic policies towards the eastern Caribbean in the early 1980s. This served to reinforce bilateralism in inter-European relations.

Second, French policy towards the eastern Caribbean recognised a distinction between Francophone speaking areas and Anglophone areas. The latter were considered not to be in the French sphere of influence. French policy specifically targeted former colonial possessions in order to maintain cultural and political links with France. However, in the period of the Grenada crisis the French foreign minister Claude Cheysson cultivated a strongly anti-Washington policy predicated on the premise that it was wrong for the American administration to invade Grenada. This was sharply at odds with the approach of London and Bonn.⁸⁷ Again this served to highlight bilateralism in inter-European relations. It also highlighted that European proposals were perceived to be somehow 'second rate'. However, European proposals put forward by the likes of Belgium provided to raw material for later decisions on the crisis reached in bilateral meetings - the paradox of the tension between bilateralism and collectivism.

Third, Political Cooperation was managed in a highly idiosyncratic fashion by the incumbent Greek Presidency. For instance, an extraordinary meeting of EC foreign ministers (meeting in EPC) was called by France, West Germany and the Netherlands under the crisis procedure contained in the London Report of 1981 (see above).⁸⁸ In the course of the meeting no declaration was made (as the French had wanted) because of Greek obstructionism. The Grenada crisis was placed very low on the agenda of the meeting, even though the main reason to call the meeting was to discuss American conduct in Central America and the

⁸⁶ Interviews, London, January 1994.

⁸⁷ Interviews, Paris, January 1994.

⁸⁸ *EC Bulletin*, 12/81, pp. 9-11.

Caribbean. On the one hand, this highlighted that the majority wanted to actively cooperate against the thrust of the American invasion. However, this movement was quelled by Greek mismanagement of the EPC mechanisms and procedures. This in turn served to reinforce bilateralism in relations between the European powers and in transatlantic relations.

Fourth, there was no political will on the part of Britain and West Germany to put forward a "unified" European response to the crisis. To do so would have embarrassed London both in its relations with Washington and with several former British colonies in the eastern Caribbean. London preferred the normally "quieter" diplomacy of bilateralism in order to save face. Nevertheless, this did not preclude collective consultations in EPC between the west European powers. Indeed, resources were mobilised at Vouliagmeni to reach collective decisions. The political will was there on the part of the smaller countries to reach collective decisions in either the EPC or EC frameworks. In the final analysis, however, collective action - as opposed to collective consultations - was something different that did not materialise in practice due to the national preoccupation of the big three and Greek mismanagement of the mechanisms in EPC.

Fifth, Grenada was an out of area action for NATO. However, several highly informal meetings of NATO foreign ministers did take place in late October 1983. Washington refused to consult with the smaller states in NATO. This tended to reinforce bilateralism in relations between Washington and London, Paris and Bonn respectively.⁸⁹ The informal meetings often came to little and induced arguments between the European powers about how to treat Washington in the immediate aftermath of the action. Nevertheless, collective resources were mobilised, collective solutions to problems in Grenada were suggested, a Euro-American agenda was instigated and the Americans attempted to diffuse the situation by proposing consensus building measures which were later rejected by France, Germany and the smaller countries.

That is not to deny, however, that neither EPC or NATO (informally) were never effectively used as forums for inter-European and transatlantic communications. Political Cooperation, as its name suggests, concerns (and then concerned) the intergovernmental coordination of national foreign policies between the member states of the EC. As in the Polish case EPC was used as a "back up" channel for consultation when bilateral measures in Europe failed to bear fruit for the participating states. But the pertinent question is why?

First, EPC was used as a consultation mechanism and not as a bargaining channel between the European powers. At no stage of the crisis were critical policy decisions decided in foreign ministers meetings connected with the EPC

⁸⁹ Interviews, Washington, D.C., February 1993.

process. However, collective consultations did exist in a highly systematic way and provided to some degree the 'first draft' for decisions that were later taken at the bilateral level. Multilateral influence on implemented bilateral policies is unquestionable and present. Resources were mobilised, a Euro-wide agenda was worked out (but never implemented) and consensus building measures at least existed between the main European powers. Belgium and Italy were particularly vocal adherents of collectivism in EPC and in the fringe meetings of NATO foreign ministers.

Second, EPC was always of marginal importance to Washington. The American policy of no prior consultation (mentioned above) towards the Europeans also had a decisive impact on the importance that the Europeans themselves attached to using the EPC process. Indeed, the Europeans typically tended to prefer more straight-forward bilateral dealings among themselves and with Washington. Nevertheless, collective consultations concerning the perceived illegality of the American action were discussed by European foreign ministers in late October and early November. This also served to 'inform' later bilateral decision-making. In Europe the use of collective resources, collective mobilisation and the creation of a European-wide agenda are important determinants to the national foreign policies that were finally implemented by the EC(10) - especially the big three in the EC.

Third, there was no sustained political will on the part of the European powers to use EPC as anything other than a crude consultation mechanism. On the one hand, it was used as a "back up" channel to the main bilateral avenue of consultation. National interests - particularly London's - did not facilitate the coordination of national foreign policies in Political Cooperation. On the other hand, however, the consultation process in EPC was important in informing national policies towards diverse issues such as: the legality/illegality of the American action in international law; attitudes towards British and French linguistic spheres of influence in the Caribbean and German trade links with the region.

In the post-invasion phase of the Grenada crisis NATO was not a significant arena for transatlantic consultation given that Grenada was out of area. However, several unofficial meetings of NATO foreign ministers did occur in late October after the invasion on the 27 and 28 of that month. But the pertinent question is why? Why did the American government and the governments of Europe decide to go "collective" in unofficial NATO fringe meetings after the crisis?

First, the NATO fringe meetings provided a highly convenient unofficial multilateral forum for the possible collective discussion of the Grenada crisis. American reluctance to discuss the crisis meant that the discussions were often of limited value to the Europeans. Legally speaking Grenada was out of area and Washington was under no obligation to discuss the matter with the European

powers in an informal meeting of foreign ministers. However, the main point is that the Europeans and the Americans decided to go collective for two reasons. For the Americans this was the perfect forum to defend their actions. For the Europeans this was the perfect forum to voice their doubts and anger concerning the American action. Nevertheless, the American reluctance to give much away in turn served to reinforce bilateralism in transatlantic relations.

Second, when bilateralism failed - which was not often the case - the Europeans attempted to put their multiple national cases to Washington via the unofficial meetings mentioned above.⁹⁰ The main issue discussed was the perceived illegality of the American-led invasion in international law. However, the most important diplomatic consultations were held at the bilateral level, with the above mentioned unofficial meetings serving as an important back up channel to the main bilateral channel of consultation. The Europeans went collective in their transatlantic relations to perceptibly achieve more than was possible alone. This happened - as is detailed above - again and again in late October and early November concerning especially the situation in international law.

Conclusion

In the context of inter-European relations during the Grenada crisis the following conclusions are salient. First, bilateralism was the dominant form of consultation between the European powers. Second, consultations in EPC were inefficient and could even be described as poor due to Greek mismanagement of the mechanism. Nevertheless, the collective consultations provided the necessary first drafting of later implemented bilateral decisions. Indeed, European-level proposals were made and taken very seriously by the member states of EPC. The Belgian and Italian governments attempted to mobilise EC opinion in order to shape the policy agenda in favour of a collective response to the crisis. Third, transatlantic relations were mainly bilateral, with unofficial meetings of NATO foreign ministers serving as a supplementary channel for consultation when bilateralism became bogged down. The commitment to bilateralism at the transatlantic level, however, was intellectually underpinned by paralleled collective discussions where frank views were exchanged. This also underlines the empirical fact - allied to our theoretical framework - that collectivism did make a difference in this case: collective resources were mobilised, a European agenda was heavily discussed, collectivism in Euro-American decision-making was also present at the fringes of the dominant bilateral channels.

⁹⁰ Interviews, London and Bonn, January 1994.

The Libya Crisis, 1986

European Reactions to the Crisis: A Short Chronology

Following terrorist attacks at Rome and Vienna airports in December 1985 Italy demanded a discussion by the Community foreign ministers to be held in The Hague on 27 January 1986. The Twelve issued a statement strongly condemning the attacks, but only in very general terms that were unacceptable to the United States. Cooperation was to be strengthened in areas including security at airports, control of persons entering and circulating in the Community, visa policies and the abuse of diplomatic immunity. It was also decided to set up a new Working Group on Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism.⁹¹ More significant was what the Twelve failed to do, which was to respond to increasing American sanctions against Libya, or indeed even to name Libya as being solely responsible for acts of international terrorism in Western Europe.

Following the bombing of the La belle discotheque in West Berlin, in which several American and European allied servicemen were killed, the Twelve held an extraordinary Ministerial Meeting in The Hague on 14 April 1986, convened at the request of Spain and Italy using the "crisis procedure" introduced in the London Report.⁹² The Twelve issued a statement, the crucial parts of which are:

"[...] 2. The Twelve consider that States clearly implicated in supporting terrorism should be induced to renounce such support and to respect the rules of international law. They call upon Libya to act accordingly [...]"

[...] 8. The Twelve are increasing their cooperation with other states [...]"

⁹¹ Nuttall, S.J. (1992) *European Political Cooperation* (Oxford, Clarendon Press), p. 303. Mention must also be made of Trevi at this early stage of the analysis. Trevi is the European Community Action Programme on Terrorism. The work is supervised by a steering group of senior officials from ministries of the interior meeting at approximately six-monthly intervals, and is carried out at the operational level by a series of working groups, also meeting twice a year. Trevi 1 deals with the exchange of information on terrorist plans and activities. Trevi 2 exchanges technical information with a view to combating terrorism and the disturbance of public order. Trevi 3 deals with internationally organised crime, and was added in 1985 (See: Nuttall, pp. 299-300).

⁹² *EC Bulletin*, 1981, No. 12.

[...] 11. In order to enable the achievement of a political solution, avoiding further escalation of military tension in the region with all the inherent dangers, the Twelve underline the need for restraint on *all* sides".⁹³

Paragraph eleven was explosive for European-American relations: it implied to Washington that the West Europeans compared American conduct with the likes of Libya and Syria. The Twelve had hoped that they had done enough to prevent an American strike on Tripoli. The US, in fact, had already decided to bomb Libya and the attack was actually taking place as the foreign ministers of the European Community met in The Hague. Incidentally, the Hague declaration also prescribed for the following measures to be taken against Libya: staff of Libyan diplomatic and consular missions were reduced and the movements of those who remained were highly restricted, and visa requirements were made stricter, but there were no economic sanctions as Washington had demanded.

The situation required immediate discussion among the Twelve, and once again the "crisis procedure" contained in the London Report of 1981 was initiated. At the request of Spain and Greece, the Presidency convened a meeting in Paris on 17 April, taking advantage of the foreign ministers' presence there for a meeting of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. The tone, set by Herr Genscher, was a desire for European solidarity. No statement was issued, but the Twelve reaffirmed their belief in a political solution and their desire to avoid any further escalation. On 21 April, meeting in the Hague, the foreign ministers decided not to either break off diplomatic relations with Libya or to impose economic sanctions: European-American relations were in "crisis" as the main international crisis was dying down.

In the early phases of the crisis - from early March to early April - the Western Europeans maintained constant contact with the US State Department via the "Political Dialogue".⁹⁴ The State Department used the meetings between the Dutch Ambassador to Washington (the Presidency of EPC) in order to gather information on Western European reactions to the American threat to use force against Libya. The EPC partners - through the Netherlands Presidency - used the 'Political Dialogue' to emphasise: that they did not think force was the solution to the problem, that they were prepared to do more to fight state terrorism in

⁹³ *European Political Cooperation Documents* (Bonn: Federal Printer, 1988) English edition, pp. 243-244. Italics in my emphasis. Hereafter cited as *EPC Documents*, page number.

⁹⁴ Interviews, Washington, D.C., January 1993.

TREVI⁹⁵ and in the EPC framework, and, that "it was wrong of the State Department to single-out Libya as the only state sponsoring terrorism. Others existed, Iran and Syria to name but two".⁹⁶

Second, it was easier for the United States to deal initially with the Western Europeans in that American aims were to: construct a common "Western" strategy to state terrorism, with a European-level response underpinning it. When it was clear that the EPC partners could not agree on a common anti-terrorism policy Washington reverted to more traditional bilateral contacts.⁹⁷

Third, the State Department had a real need to exchange intelligence on a European-wide level. The "Political Dialogue" with the partners provided some limited exchange of information. The British and the West German governments were the most open in this respect, whereas the French were predictably loathe to share any intelligence information with any other country.⁹⁸ In return the Dutch Presidency received daily briefings from the State Department Ambassador for Counter-Terrorism At Large, Mr. "Gerry" Bremmer.⁹⁹ This facilitated a certain amount of intelligence cooperation in both EPC and bilaterally between several EPC Member States and the United States.¹⁰⁰ Additionally, as mentioned above, the United States took a considerable interest in the activities of Trevi from the late 1970s on. It was more reasonable, from an American viewpoint, to expect that effective cooperation against terrorism would depend on bilateral and collective cooperation between interior ministries in Western Europe and North America. Regular meetings - twice yearly since 1985 - have occurred between interior ministry officials from both sides of the Atlantic in order to coordinate national anti-terrorism policies.

Fourth, the EPC Member States wished to maintain links with the US in order to differentiate their own position from that of Washington. The 'Political Dialogue' conversations highlighted that, the EPC partners - especially France -

⁹⁵ TREVI: See note 91.

⁹⁶ Interviews, Paris, January 1994.

⁹⁷ Interviews, Washington, D.C., January 1993. Also see, Galbraith, E. (1987) *Ambassador in Paris: The Reagan Years* (Washington, D.C., Regnery-Gateway), p. 57.

⁹⁸ Pardalis, A. (1987) "European Political Cooperation and the United States", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, p. 288.

⁹⁹ Interviews, London, January 1994.

¹⁰⁰ The United Kingdom and West Germany shared considerable amounts of information with the United States in the course of the crisis. Interviews, London and Paris, January 1994.

did not wish to jeopardise the Euro-Arab Dialogue due to a lack of US understanding of the situation,¹⁰¹ that the EPC members were more aware of explicit linkages in international affairs and less willing to contemplate military retaliation against terrorism than was the US, and that the partners favoured quiet diplomacy instead. With respect to each of the above points the State Department Libyan Desk in the Middle East Bureau disagreed. The partners - save the UK - were perceived to be too naive and soft on Libya.¹⁰² On 10 April the State Department cut links with the Dutch Ambassador to Washington on the issue of terrorism. At that phase of the crisis bilateral diplomacy was the preferred channel of consultation. Ambassador Vernon Walters was dispatched to Europe on a strictly bilateral basis on the tenth.

Fifth, the Ad-hoc EPC Working Group on Terrorism¹⁰³ was in constant contact with its State Department counterpart throughout the crisis. It is at this level that the real nitty-gritty of US-European relations were hammered out. Nevertheless, in a crisis situation the Working Group has little chance of influencing the policy decisions of Prime Ministers, Chancellors or Presidents. Even the Political Directors in London, Paris and Bonn had extremely limited opportunities to influence national leaders in policy formulation in the heat of the crisis between 10-16 April.¹⁰⁴ The important point to be made, however, is that EPC Working Group on Terrorism had considerable contacts with the American foreign policy process in the course of March and April 1986. This is not to claim that the analyses of the Terrorism Working Group had much impact on US policy: But the Middle East experts in the State Department 'at least registered EPC's existence and the differences of emphasis in European anti-terrorism policies'.¹⁰⁵

Analysis

In the period of the Libya crisis it is a fair assessment to state that relations between the European powers were mainly carried out at the bilateral level. However, EPC served as an important "back up" channel to the main bilateral

¹⁰¹ Interviews, Paris, January 1994.

¹⁰² Interviews, Washington, D.C., February 1993.

¹⁰³ The working group was set up in December 1985 at the initiative of the British and Italian governments following airport bombings in Rome and Vienna. It "usually met in the Hague on Thursday mornings under its Dutch Presidency". Interviews, London, Autumn 1993.

¹⁰⁴ Interviews, London, Paris and Bonn. January 1994.

¹⁰⁵ Quotation from an interview conducted in Washington, D.C., February 1993.

bargains between London, Paris and Bonn. Three important collective meetings in EPC were held in the week of the bombing and determined to some degree the continental European response to the American action. In transatlantic relations bilateralism was also the norm in consultations between the European powers and Washington - mainly due to the fact that London sided with Washington. But the pertinent question is why? What does the present case tell us about Europe's ability and inclination to propose and mobilise collective resources in crises? What does the case tell us about the way in which the European agenda is shaped? What does the case tell us about building consensus between the European actors and the United States?

A number of possible explanatory factors must be brought to bear on the question. First, it can be convincingly argued that the United States used bilateralism as a means to divide and rule the European powers. As in the Polish case Washington, for instance, might theoretically talk to Paris but not inform either London or Bonn of the talks. Washington attempted on several occasions to 'play off' London, Paris and Bonn against each other. On important issues - such as London's decision to allow use of American bases in the United Kingdom to stage the attack on Libya - Britain failed to consult with France and West Germany. When the important meeting of EC foreign ministers did finally occur - on 17 April - London had already decided to go ahead whatever the opposition in Europe might be. Collectivism was an important element in explaining continental reaction to the bombing, but not for gauging transatlantic contacts. The continental European members of the EC proposed European solutions to the problem of Libyan state terrorism in the aftermath of the December 1985 airport bombings. A mobilisation of resources was accompanied by the commitment to discuss the problem in EPC using criteria for "useful" agenda items that were collective and European-wide. Consensus-building measures were built into this process via compromise and the thrust of threat posed by Libyan terrorism on European security. This was especially keenly felt by the Mediterranean members of the Community.

Second, EPC was only used as a mechanism for the transmission of information between the national foreign ministries of the European powers.¹⁰⁶ Political Cooperation was used as a back up channel to the main bilateral channels of communication. However, the analysis must also highlight the central importance of collectivism in European policy coordination. Three meetings of EC foreign ministers took place in mid-April on 12, 15 and 17, but no concrete measures against Libya were implemented. Bilateral channels were the most significant in conveying information between the European powers at short notice - for reasons of efficiency. However, the main points are that:

¹⁰⁶ Interviews, London, Paris and Bonn, January 1994.

collective solutions to the problems of state terrorism were proposed, a European agenda was thrashed out at the three foreign ministers meetings in April, collective compromises were reached and later formed the basis of a continental European - minus the United Kingdom - approach to fighting state terrorism.

Third, the European powers have extensive national political, economic and cultural links with North Africa and the Middle East. In the Libyan case France, Spain and Italy had special interests to protect (investments, cultural links, Europeans living in Libya and so on). Italian fears were confirmed when Libya launched a missile attack on the Italian island of Lampedusa on 18 April after the American bombings.¹⁰⁷ This being said, however, those links in terms of trade with Libya, for instance, were carried out via the relevant articles of the then Rome Treaty. This was nothing if not collectivism in action.

Fourth, British policy towards the crisis implied an acceptance of American counter-terrorist policy towards Libya. This implied labelling Tripoli as being the main instigator of international terrorism (something that was not accepted in Paris, Bonn or Rome). Number 10 ordered its foreign office not to consult with the other European powers.¹⁰⁸ When negotiations were attempted by the French or the Germans with the British they were normally done at the bilateral level.¹⁰⁹ This did attenuate the European collectivist approaches outlined above. However, this also highlights the inherent tension between those states in EPC that preferred the bilateral channel (the United Kingdom) and those who preferred a collective channel of communication and a collective solution (the rest).

Fifth, however, French policy towards the crisis was confused between President Mitterrand and the Gaullist Premier Jacques Chirac (who had day to day control of the Quai d'Orsay through his Gaullist foreign minister). 'Cohabitation' implied that relations between Paris and the other European powers were carried out in conditions of abnormal administrative circumstances in Paris. This in itself reinforced bilateralism between the European powers. London and Bonn preferred to speak directly with the Elysee. It also encouraged bilateralism in relations between Paris and Washington: the State Department generally preferred to deal directly with both the Elysee and Chirac separately.

Sixth, West German policy towards the crisis emphasised a genuine multilateral slant through Political Cooperation. Bonn attempted to influence London not to allow American use of USAF bases in England, in that Germany

¹⁰⁷ See: Guazzone, L. (1993) "The Gulf of Sidra Incident, March 1986", *International Spectator*, June, n° 2.

¹⁰⁸ Interviews, London, January 1994.

¹⁰⁹ Interviews, Bonn, January 1994.

feared a backlash against its own nationals living in Libya.¹¹⁰ West German attempts to influence the British were highly limited. Both the Federal Chancellor and his FDP foreign minister were worried about German commercial links with the Middle East. All contacts of any importance between London and Bonn were, however, bilateral. Nevertheless, the ground work for the bilateral discussions was always previously laid in the various multilateral fora in west Europe. Bonn's preferred solution would have been a collective/multilateral one had conditions permitted.

That is not to deny, however, that neither EPC or NATO were never used as forums for both inter-European and transatlantic consultation. Political Cooperation, as its name suggests, never inferred the integration of national foreign policies. In the Libyan crisis, as in the Polish and Grenada crises, EPC was used as a back up channel for consultation when bilateral arrangements in Europe failed to bear sufficient fruit for the European powers. But the pertinent question is why? However, was collectivism an important contributor to decisions reach bilaterally? Were collective resources either proposed or mobilised? Did a European level agenda emerge that was distinct compared to the American and British unilateral agenda's?

First, EPC was used as a consultation mechanism and not as a bargaining channel between the European powers. Meetings did take place at critical junctures of the crisis, but the main inter-European deals were done bilaterally.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, three critical meetings of EC foreign ministers did take place in April 1986 prior to the American attack on the 16th. The meetings were used to clarify past inconsistencies or doubts arising from previous decisions reached bilaterally. This indicates that - in a post facto sense - European-level resources were mobilised, a distinct European policy agenda was in existence and consensus building measures were introduced in order to find common solutions to common problems. This was greatly facilitated by Italian and French leadership in EPC. Additionally, collective consultations between the US and west Europe in NATO fringe meetings underlines to the American administration that Europe was united on anti-terrorism policy, but that its preferences were different to those of Washington.

However, EPC was always of little importance to Washington. The American policy of divide and rule (mentioned above) towards the European powers also had a decisive impact to some degree on the relative importance the Europeans themselves did or did not attach to Political Cooperation. Indeed, the

¹¹⁰ Interviews, Bonn, January 1994.

¹¹¹ See: Pardalis, A. (1987) "European Political Cooperation and the United States", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, June, p. 278.

Europeans tended to prefer more straight-forward bilateral dealings both among themselves and with Washington.

Second, as was shown in the previous cases, the political will on the part of the continental European powers to use EPC was attenuated by the lack of resources at the European level to implement a Euro-wide response.¹¹² Resources were not mobilised to a degree necessary to present a fully effective protest against the American bombing. As mentioned above, EPC was used as a back up channel to the main bilateral avenue of consultation. The above-mentioned national interests of London did not auger well for policy coordination in Political Cooperation. Nevertheless, three meetings of EC foreign ministers were called in one week during April 1986. This also implies that the continental Europeans would have gone even more collective if the British had not undermined the very nature of EPC consensus by openly aiding the Reagan administration. The will was there to go beyond mere intergovernmentalism.

In April 1986 unofficial meetings of NATO foreign ministers emerged as an important if yet subordinate arena to bilateralism for transatlantic bargaining. But the pertinent question is why? Why did the European partners decide to 'go collective'? First, informal meetings of foreign ministers from the NATO countries provided a highly convenient forum for the multilateral discussion of the Libya crisis.¹¹³ The Americans had failed to put their "atlanticist" policy of military retaliation against Libya forcefully enough to Paris, Bonn and Rome (Number 10 had already accepted the wisdom of the American attack by early April).¹¹⁴ Vernon Walters mission to Europe in early April (mentioned above) had failed to convince the European powers - except London - of the correctness of American anti-terrorism policy. Europe - excluding the United Kingdom - decided to mobilise in collective opposition to the United States bombing. The protest was led in part by France, Germany, Italy and Spain. It was backed up with an agenda that had been previously agreed in successive meetings of European foreign ministers. The agenda held that sanctions were the most effective form of punishing those renegade states/groups that support international terrorism. This was at odd with the Anglo-American view, but served to galvanise the members of the European Community to organise collectively as opposed to entirely bilaterally.

¹¹² Interviews, Paris, January 1994.

¹¹³ Interviews, London, January 1994.

¹¹⁴ For a full general discussion see: Keukeleire, S. (1994) "The European Community and Conflict Management" in, Bauwens, W. and Reyckler, L. (eds) *The Art of Conflict Prevention* (London, Brassey's), pp. 137-179.

Second, and conversely, the Western Europeans put forward their objections - via the unofficial meetings and via Walters -towards the then possible use of American military force against Libya. Their pleas failed. Ambiguity was not present in the consultations. Each country stated its position on terrorism without ambiguity. No common ground between the EC(11) and Washington/London could be found. This served to reinforce bilateralism in American relations with London, Paris, Bonn, Rome and Madrid. However, as stated above, the European reaction was grounded in deep collective policy coordination and exchanges of information.

Third, when the Walters mission failed (a mission grounded in multilateral coordination) the Americans turned to the unofficial meetings, but the substantive differences of interpretation remained. London and Washington then ceased contact with Paris, Bonn and Rome on the Libyan issue on the day before the bombing (15 April). All contacts of any substance at the transatlantic level were bilateral before and after that point. Nevertheless, the Walters mission was a recognition of the multilateralism matters thesis by the Americans. Not everything could be sorted out by bilateral means.

Conclusions

In the context of inter-European relations during the Libya crisis the following conclusions are salient in understanding Europe's response: First, bilateralism was the dominant form of consultation between the European powers during the crisis. However, collective responses to the American bombing were also fashioned in EPC. This is an important point. Consultations in EPC served as a convenient back up channel to the dominant bilateral arrangements. Collective resources were mobilised, a Europe-wide agenda was set in contradistinction to American wishes and a certain degree of consensus was present in inter-European politics on the need to tackle terrorism by economic and not military means. Second, transatlantic relations were mainly bilateral, with unofficial meetings of NATO foreign ministers serving as a supplementary back up channel to the main bilateral arrangements. However, the unofficial meetings are important clues to the fact that the crisis induced a mixture of individual, bilateral and multilateral west European responses to the crisis - the single most important being bilateral.

III. General Conclusion

Inter European Relations: In the three crises it is a fair conclusion to state that relations between the European powers were generally bilateral in nature: each of the powers had interests to protect, each did not want to pass on decision-making sovereignty to smaller powers in West Europe and bilateralism is a tried and tested means for quick and efficient communication and bargaining between two powers in a crisis management situation. European Political Cooperation functioned as a back up to the main bilateral channel of inter-European communication. However, to return to our guiding theoretical principles. When did national leaders decide to go collective and to what extent did they do so? Did the Europeans mobilise collective resources in order to produce collective policies? To what extent did the Europeans pursue a collective agenda in European institutions? The previous analyses highlight that collectivism/multilateralism was important to the European powers in the three cases. In the Polish case foreign ministers meetings in NATO were especially well organised and a number of important west European initiatives from sanctions, to aid to trade were first broached there. European Political Cooperation was also important as an inter-European 'clearing house' for ideas and dispositions towards the crisis. Leadership was taken by Federal Germany for obvious reasons, but in order to preserve German national interests.

For as William Wallace correctly stated more than a decade ago: "When it comes to a crisis, every member government would like Political Cooperation to be more effective, more solid and faster-moving in its defence of vital concerns: whether it be Mediterranean instability and relations with Libya..., or sanctions against Argentina after the Falklands invasion, for Britain, or the European developments in Poland, for Federal Germany. The crisis over, most governments again hesitate to make additional commitments to achieve the solidarity for which that have called".¹¹⁵ The reactive nature of the EPC system is well-documented.¹¹⁶ Of course, all foreign policy is reactive to a certain extent, but EPC is perhaps less prepared and thus less able to play a role in shaping events than foreign policy at the national level. Christopher Hill has

¹¹⁵ Wallace, W. (1983) "Introduction", in, Hill, C. (ed) *National Foreign Policies and European Political Cooperation* (London, Allen/RIIA), p. 11.

¹¹⁶ Van Praag, N. (1982) "Conclusions: The Limited Potential for Crisis Management", in, Allen, D. and Wessels, W. (eds) *European Political Cooperation* (London, Butterworths), pp. 104-109; Williams, P. (1991) "European Crisis Management", in, George, A.L. (ed) *Problems of Crisis Management* (Boulder, Col, Westview Press), pp. 500-515; Hill, C. "EPC's Performance in Crises", in, Rummel, R. (ed) *Towards Political Union* (Baden-Baden, Nomos Verlag).

correctly described EPC's performance in crises as "being less than satisfactory".¹¹⁷ This served, in the present authors opinion, against effective collective action in any of the three crises or in other like crises. Thus, in the case Afghanistan the member states hesitated for several days before convening a meeting in order to discuss the Soviet invasion of December 1979; in 1980 the member states failed to react to Carter administration policy in relation to Washington's boycott of the Moscow Olympics; in 1982 the member states failed to get to a collective grips with the Lebanon crisis; in 1983 the member states failed to react one way or the other to an American intervention in a third world country (Grenada); in 1986 the Europeans failed to come up with a feasible alternative to the American policy on terrorism. The list of crisis failures in EPC collective action is legion.

In the absence of clearly defined common objectives, when is an issue likely to become the object of collective deliberations in EPC? The case studies suggest there are two situations where this is likely. The first is where broad common interests are at stake or are threatened. This was the case in Poland where the Nine/Ten were united for their concerns for the political and economic situation in Poland. This was also partially the case in the Libyan crisis given that the European powers attempted to fashion a "European" response to the American agenda on Libyan terrorism. However, where such general common interests are involved it has proved difficult to contain the divergent interests that exist beneath them with decisive coordinated manoeuvring, or achieve a rather disorganised exercise in collective cost cutting.¹¹⁸ Leadership in collective action is often not present as is the demand for collective action. These two elements are the key to explaining the move towards bilateralism away from collectivism in policy coordination in the three cases.

The second situation where Political Cooperation seems appropriate, and more likely to be successful while conditions hold, as was illustrated by the Polish crisis and the dilemmas that it posed for European political and economic security. Crucial in Poland was the special interests of the Federal Republic of Germany. Bonn ensured that European initiatives - either by France and Britain or in EPC - were low-key to ensure that ordinary Polish people were not punished for the acts and omissions of others.¹¹⁹ In this case cooperation worked (a) because Bonn took an active leadership role and (b) other states - especially France - continually reassessed their interests and organised their

¹¹⁷ Hill (1992) op. cit, p. 101.

¹¹⁸ de Schoutthe, P. (1986) *La coopération politique européenne*, (Brussels, Editions Labor), p. 65.

¹¹⁹ Interviews, Bonn, January 1994.

foreign ministries to be receptive to collective action in both EPC and in NATO. There was both leadership and a demand for collective cooperation.

However, once the European powers decide to act collectively one can generally discern a diminishing scale of effectiveness. Passive political cooperation is one thing, active is another. Beyond mere consultation come joint diplomatic demarches. These were seen at their most effective in relation to Poland, with both broad appeals and joint ambassadorial demarches in Washington, Moscow and Warsaw. Here the Ten especially benefited from British behind the scenes diplomacy in late 1981 (Britain held the Community Presidency at this time), and from West German contacts with Moscow and Warsaw. Whatever its shortcomings one must never underestimate the usefulness of traditional diplomacy. What might be called declaration and demarche diplomacy has undoubtedly given a concreteness to Europe's common identity in the eyes of third parties, particularly in Washington. This was undoubtedly partly the fruit of EPC given its 'first draft' qualities.

Transatlantic level consultations: At the level of transatlantic relations between the European great powers and the United States consultations tended to be bilateral: each of the European powers did not wish to trade in sovereignty for a (perceived) fictitious European unity in policy towards the crises; external American pressure, as noted above, divided the European powers in each of the three crises on their response; and bilateralism is the tried and tested traditional means for conducting European-American relations. However, bilateralism was always supported by collective moves behind the scenes. Collective European proposals were periodically backed up with a mobilisation of collective resources in order to achieve policies distinct from those of the United States. For instance, unofficial ministerial meetings in the framework of NATO served as a supplementary channel for transatlantic bargaining when bilateralism became bogged down. This is even more surprising given that both Grenada and Libya were out of area for the alliance. However, consultations were of generally mediocre quality given the (obvious) reluctance of the United States to cooperate with the European partners in the collective sense. Washington was unwilling to accept criticism of its policies. Nevertheless, in each of the three cases there was collective European leadership in NATO: the Germans took the lead during the Polish crisis; the British took the lead in the Grenada crisis and the Dutch Presidency of EPC took the lead in the Libyan crisis along with the French and Germans. Varying degree of leadership in transatlantic cooperation and demand for transatlantic cooperation were present in each of the three crises. Indeed, one could argue that a European bloc emerged in NATO meetings (either official or fringe meetings of foreign ministers) in each of the crises. The policies were periodically built upon European internal compromises and consensus building measures. Agenda's were set accordingly and resources were mobilised in order to put forward a collective "European" response to American policies.



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