

**Societal Security – The Development of the European Social Model during the Cold War**

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This paper will show how the three biggest European nation states, i.e. France, Germany and Britain, adapted their national welfare policies to changing emphases in the European social agenda and vice-versa. It will show that convincing its citizens that the political system was effective and just, not least through the welfare state, was an important objective of post war politics, in which European social initiatives sometimes supported national efforts financially or ideologically. In particular, in the field of social justice and welfare, the Communist system promised the weakest segments of the Western populations a better life than under the Capitalists. Hence, societal security was an area of intense ideological competition which also found its reflection in the aspirations for the European integration process, manifest in the many Socialist ideals in early European institutional development, such as workers' participatory rights under the ECSC. The main question of this essay will seek to provide an answer as to the impact of European social legislation on national policies. It is the thesis of this essay that despite weak European institutions – in comparison to the powers of the nation states - in the first decade of the integration process, a convergence of national social policies happened. It will also be shown that this convergence process had a European component on the basis of which it will be argued that European social legislation provided reference points for national legislators leading to the convergence of national social policies.

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## I. Introduction

The concept of '*societal* security' is the guiding theme of this article and became the defining factor in what came to be the European social model. It is larger than *social* security, but includes social security in the sense of the post war welfare state. Societal security comprises all areas of non-military security and a just economic order - both in the sense of strengthening internal societal resilience against Communism - as well as social security in a Europe at the frontline in the Cold War. Hence, societal security emphasis the political effects of welfare spending and societal organisation in Western Europe defining itself against the Eastern block. For France, Germany and Britain, the Cold War , but also similar difficulties and needs in the immediate post war years acted as a causal incentive for convergence towards something which can be called the European social model. Although Jeremy Rifkin's idea of a "Social Europe" 'which is worth living for', instead of 'dying for the American dream' is exaggerated,<sup>1</sup> the 'European project' has had a strong social component from the very outset. The similarity of debates and approaches towards societal security in France, Germany and Britain will show a post war convergence in the three major West European states. The analysis of the national discourses will also show frequent reference to Europe – admittedly badly even differently defined – but this developing concept of Europe had the merit of being sufficiently vague to act as a focus for exactly this convergence in societal security for different countries, e.g. France, Germany and Britain.<sup>2</sup>

In Britain, the creation of the National Health Service (NHS) was a crucial development. Although the NHS became a core Labour policy, ideas of social responsibility had long since found their way into the Conservative establishment, too, e.g. the thinking of Anthony Eden.<sup>3</sup> The general elections in 1945 had ousted the Conservatives under Churchill from No. 10 and brought his war time deputy, Labour's Clement Attlee, to Downing St. The Labour Government delivered very effectively its core policy of social justice. Over

1 Jeremy Rifkin, 2004, *The European Dream: How Europe's vision of the future is quietly eclipsing the American dream*, New York.

2 For a working definition of 'societal security' see section V. of this paper, Method – Definition of Societal Security.

3 David Dutton, 1997, *Anthony Eden, A Life and Reputation*, London, p. 252.

the 1947-52 period, Marshall Aid bolstered the impression that the British economy was in good shape, while the standard of living steadily improved.<sup>4</sup> Arms spending, needed mainly because of the Korean War, however forced Hugh Gaitskell, Labour's Chancellor of the Exchequer, to increase military appropriations several times, to an historic high, just short of what Britain could achieve without reintroducing a war economy.<sup>5</sup> The social services suffered cuts, notably through the introduction of health care and prescription charges. The flamboyant Minister of Health, Aneurin Bevan and later Prime Minister Harold Wilson resigned from the Government over this issue. The crisis over cuts in social spending highlights an essential component of the problem of societal security, *i.e.* Korea in particular and the Cold War in general. Domestically, arms spending came in competition with welfare improvement. Each side argued that its policy was the best way to resist Communist expansion. This domestic struggle between arms spending and welfare approbations can be found in France, Germany and Britain and, hence, forms a *leit-motif* throughout the essay. Societal security is in that sense the opposite of military security and is very close to one of the core characteristics of the European integration process, *i.e.* non-military politics.

In Germany, the historical intention of welfare schemes, notably that of Bismarck's social legislation, had often been used to ease tension between social classes. Obviously, the post war SPD under Kurt Schumacher would not subscribe to such an objective, but saw one of the party's core credos in the pursuit of social justice. After the elections in 1949, the SPD was the largest single party in West Germany, but could not muster a majority in the Bundestag to form a government. The policy guidelines for the Opposition in Parliament were encapsulated in the 'Dürkheimer Programme'. Social justice was one of the guiding themes.<sup>6</sup> Further down the list came other issues with social implications, such as full employment, economic planning, satisfying the people's needs instead of pure profit orientation, social redistribution of wealth in a system of solidarity, social housing, care for the refugees, and a proper social insurance and pension system then woefully lacking in the young Federal Republic.

4 Kenneth Harris, 1995, Attlee, London, p. 419.

5 Kenneth Harris, Attlee, pp. 439, 447, 455, 470, 478.

6 Willy Albrecht (ed.), 1985, Kurt Schumacher, Reden – Schriften – Korrespondenzen, Berlin, p. 149-50.

On the conservative Right, the Christian Democrats (CDU) developed their concepts of the social market economy. Ludwig Erhard became known as its 'father'. He considered it one of the main duties of the state to set targets and create the right environment for private investment, which would then generate welfare by a trickledown effect through burgeoning incomes and profits.<sup>7</sup> The CDU's original agenda, the 'Ahlener programme', which was very close to the SPD in its social aspirations and mainly drafted by the CDU's trade union wing, was quietly dropped in favour of Erhard's strongly liberal concept of the 'social market economy'.<sup>8</sup> The German welfare state was not Erhard's achievement alone. Its development has to be seen in the context of the abundance of government revenues accruing from the 'economic miracle'.<sup>9</sup> However, CDU Chancellor Konrad Adenauer perceived the political importance of secure pensions, which made up one of the pillars of subsequent social security arrangements in the post war welfare consensus.<sup>10</sup> Unemployment, or rather the prevention of it, was another one and was at the forefront of Adenauer's societal security considerations. The idea of the social market economy and the German welfare state was to find a truly viable middle ground between the free market economy and the command economy.<sup>11</sup> This equilibrium in the middle with a social conscience became key to the European social model and, hence, the analysis of societal security in the early integration period should shed some light on the roots of this model.

Charles de Gaulle, too, was acutely aware of the importance of social aspects of the modern market economy and the mass society it served. Post war Western societies needed a human face. Otherwise, the whole Western system could easily forfeit the loyalty of its citizens.<sup>12</sup> De Gaulle thought that the only way success in the social field could be achieved was through the nation state, not through a still nebulous and comparatively weak 'Europe'. However, before he returned to power in 1958 the situation had changed. All the basic European treaties – the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Economic Community (EEC) and Euratom had been ratified. Their architects, including Robert Schuman, Jean Monnet, Konrad Adenauer, Walter Hallstein, Paul-

7 Rainer Barzel, 2001, *Ein gewagtes Leben Erinnerungen*, Stuttgart, p. 256.

8 Volker Hentschel, 1998, *Ludwig Erhard: Ein Politikerleben*, Berlin, p. 100.

9 Volker Hentschel, *Ludwig Erhard*, pp. 355-356, 366-367.

10 Volker Hentschel, *Ludwig Erhard*, pp. 369.

11 For an evaluation of the achievements of the German welfare state under the pressure of the historic challenge of German reunification, see Gerhard A. Ritter, 2006, *Der Preis der deutschen Einheit – Die Wiedervereinigung und die Krise des Sozialstaates*, Munich.

Henri Spaak and Jan-Willem Beyen, agreed for the most part with de Gaulle's views on the need for social responsibility. European integration needed concrete economic success, but also a social face. The much less tangible, but still real social aspirations for Europe are partly enshrined in the three treaties and although their social clauses have often been criticised as too vague and insubstantial to yield concrete results for the citizens, the formative aspect of such commitments to social objectives should not be underestimated. Against the background of the widespread acceptance of social values across the political spectrum and, in particular, by the above-mentioned political leaders, the introduction of a European social aspiration became another reference point for the implementation of national social legislation in the same spirit. In addition, social ideas reflected in the European treaties were less concrete than other aspects of the treaties, *notably* economic aspects, but comparisons in social policies and Cold War politics will show striking parallels of societal security policy between France, Germany and Britain, and indeed a European convergence, if not a European consensus, on these issues, is clearly discernible.

## II Research Question

This paper will show how the welfare concerns of the three nation states had much in common and where they adapted their national welfare policies to each other. These similarities became focal points for establishing a European social agenda. It will show that the welfare state was an important objective of post war politics, in which European convergence and comparison often acted as a focus for national policy-making. In particular, in the field of social justice and welfare, the Communist system promised the weaker segments of the Western populations a better life than under the Capitalists. Hence, societal security was an area of intense ideological competition which also found its reflection in the aspirations for the European integration process. This ideological threat must be seen as a strong incentive to the convergence of social policies in Western Europe. Beside military security, societal security will be shown to be the area where the Communist threat was counteracted in an increased convergence of social aspirations across Western Europe. Such comparison with social policies of other European states is notoriously hard to prove, but the parallels in societal security needs and social policies between France,

12 Charles de Gaulle, 1970, *Mémoires d'espoir*, Paris, pp. 111.

Germany and Britain will be shown to be irrefutable. It is the thesis of this essay that despite weak European institutions in the first decade of the integration process, national social policies did converge. It will also be shown that this convergence process had a 'Europe' component on the basis of which it will be argued that common social ideals provided a European reference point for national legislators leading to the convergence of national social policies.

### III. Methodological Premises and Research Design

For this purpose, this paper will look at the three major Western European countries, France, Germany and Britain in the immediate post war period, the 1950s. France and Germany were among the initiators of the European integration process and the founders of the European communities. Therefore, France and Germany, the largest and the core countries in the early *petite Europe*, are excellent candidates for any analysis of early European integration and societal security in it.

However, what reason is there for looking at Britain, which initially cold-shouldered the whole project, believing – even hoping – that it would fail? The reason is precisely this marked difference. In 1945, Britain had emerged victorious from World War II. It was still a world power, with prospective nuclear capability, and a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. It had not suffered invasion, occupation and almost total economic collapse as had France and Germany, and still had its Empire – important considerations for Britain's leaders when it came to decisions on European integration. In 1950, little discussion was needed and the Schuman Plan was rejected in favour of Britain's world-wide commitments. By the end of the 1950s the picture was markedly different. Notably in terms of trade shares Britain had clearly lost ground. France, which had stood only very shakily among the victors, was now recovering more quickly than Britain from the effects of the war. Germany had not only caught up but had actually overtaken Britain and France in economic performance, the main theatre of post war emulation in the West. Hence, Britain presents an interesting contrast to the two key EEC members and analysis of its societal security policies helps neatly to round off the picture as a third example of the development of these policies in the framework of the emerging 'Europe'.

As regards sources, parliamentary speeches will form the main sources of the historical analysis, for a number of reasons.

Firstly, parliament is the core institution of the representative democracy of the three concerned countries.<sup>13</sup> It is the forum for the consideration of policy direction, such as on societal security or European integration. In this sense, the parliamentary process reflects the soul-searching process of the nation in its quest for political positions. Therefore, parliamentary debates reflect the widest variety of political positions on societal security in the national contexts and also the deliberation process leading to national positions in the European integration project itself, which necessarily incorporated and adapted major societal security policies to the wider context.<sup>14</sup>

Secondly, in the 1950s the three national parliaments were, of course, the legitimate institutions empowered to enact decisions on societal security. This is the main difference from journalistic sources, which are detached from the decision-making process, at least institutionally. But the content of well-informed newspaper articles often finds its way back into parliamentarians' contributions to debates and in support of arguments. Thus, the indirect influence exercised by the press also finds its reflection in parliamentary discourse. Furthermore, the main criticism of conventional political history is that it is all too often confined to an unduly limited set of sources, *i.e.* mainly government files.<sup>15</sup> As a result, governmental positions have been looked into very thoroughly. However, such files do not reach far beyond an inner circle of ministers, civil servants, and advisers.<sup>16</sup> For a detailed analysis of government policy this is a valuable approach, but that is also its limitation in that only the central players are considered.<sup>17</sup> In parliamentary debates non-governing party leaders' and backbenchers' contributions go well beyond these limits. They include the positions of the Opposition and those of individuals who may well have specialist experience without corresponding governmental responsibility. Therefore, par-

13 For the central position of Parliament in the British polity, see Richard Crossman (Lab.), in Hansard 1950, 476, c. 2039; see also, Bellenger (Lab.), in Hansard 1958-59, 599, c. 1406.

14 Nassima Bougherara agrees that official and publicly accessible documents provide the most comprehensive political picture - in contrast to often narrow and specialised classified government documents, see Nassima Bougherara, 2006, *Les rapports franco-allemands à l'épreuve de la question algérienne (1955-1963)*, Bern, p. 11.

15 See Oliver J. Daddow, 2004, *Britain and Europe since 1945: Historiographical perspectives on integration*, Manchester, p. 36.

16 See Oliver J. Daddow, *Britain and Europe since 1945*, p. 155.

liamentary speeches as a source form a middle ground between a somewhat detached angle of journalistic sources and a sometimes too narrow perspective of government papers.

Thirdly, in the 1950s European integration was still very much a venture the future of which was almost entirely unpredictable. The ways and means and not least the ultimate goal of European integration remained highly controversial. This included quite important societal security issues such as issues of social security, social justice, participation rights and the commitment to full employment on national and European levels. Hence, parliamentary debates are a valuable source for societal security issues in the context of European integration.

#### **IV. Definition of Societal Security**

As the term 'societal security' suggests, it has several components which interact with each other. The following working definition is intended to provide a guide to what societal security comprises, how it will be used throughout this paper and how it will be supported by subheadings:

Societal security is closely connected to the development of the welfare state in the post war era. Under the following heading of 'National discourse', the convergence of important national policy fields will be shown, but also national peculiarities. The National Health Service (NHS) plays a prominent role for Britain. Societal security goes beyond the boundaries of social security arrangements in its political implications, which the topic of class struggle under 'Capital versus Labour' will deal with for France and Germany. Unemployment and the perceived need to stiffen internal resistance to Communism through the welfare state will be other issues in this section. Early initiatives for a common European social policy will be dealt with under 'European prospects'. The subheading, 'And the world for Britain' refers to capitalist and colonial exploitation and the related Communist threat within the British Empire and Commonwealth and was introduced because of Britain's particular position resulting from its role as the last European world power.

On the basis of this analytical structure, it will be argued that a development of societal security policies on the European level can be traced from the very outset of the European integration process and that Europe provided a forum for discussion and a focus for

17 For a critique of the necessary limitations of "secret" or government files see, Nassima Bougherara, *Les rapports franco-allemands à l'épreuve de la question algérienne*, p. 12, footnote 6.

national societal security policies which led to the process of European convergence of societal standards and policies. Societal security was hence based in all three countries on the premises of a just economy, of non-military security - both in the sense of strengthening internal societal resilience – as well as social security policies which were tailored to achieve these aims against the background of the Communist threat.

## V. National discourse

Particularly the Socialist Parties in France, the Social Democrats in Germany and Labour in Britain emphasised the potency of welfare policies as an antidote to Communism. Patent instances of social injustice were seen – in particular by left-wing Labour MPs – as one of the main reasons for such success as Communism achieved in Great Britain.<sup>18</sup> Although, this was quite limited, it is no coincidence that the last two Communist MPs lost their seats when Labour's reform crusade petered out in 1951. However, at the same time the voters also firmly rejected any idea of a return to the squalor, unemployment and social distress of the inter-war period.<sup>19</sup>

It is very important, also, that in building up the Welfare State, as we have done in the United Kingdom, we have created a factor of resistance on the Communist front. (...) We were able to show Europe, Western Europe in particular, that there was an alternative to pre-war capitalism.<sup>20</sup>

Labour, thus, did not just count the realisation of social security in Britain among its achievements, but also saw Labour Britain as a shining example for Western Europe how comprehensive societal security could be achieved. Social democracy was the solution between the Communist lure and capitalist raptors. It offered hope for shaky governments and poverty-stricken masses on the continent. For the states closer to the Communist front line, the idea of a just society for all was crucial. France had a long tradition of strong left-wing representation in political life. Issues of social responsibility, justice and improvement were consistently introduced, stressed and upheld on this side of the political spectrum, and gradually won almost universal political support from the whole politi-

18 See Bevan (Lab.), in Hansard 1951-52, 500, c. 1512.

19 Bill Coxall, Lynton Robins, 1998, *British Politics since the War*, London, p. 17.

20 Ernest Davies (Lab.), in Hansard 1951-52, 495, c. 877.

cal establishment, as recognised by the Christian-Conservative *Mouvement Républicain Populaire* (MRP).<sup>21</sup> This is not an isolated incidence. The trade union wing of the German CDU advocated similar positions on social policies as the SPD. There was no return to the social appeasement of Bismarckian times.<sup>22</sup>

### Capital versus Labour

In Germany, the times of class struggle were long gone, to the extent that Helmut Schelsky felt it right to characterise West German post war society as “classless”, having lost its elites in the two world wars and their aftermath (the aristocracy removed by the Nazis, the Nazis removed by the Allies).<sup>23</sup> However, just as in France, the political argument for a socially fair society had ripened into a consensus among all parties. This was reflected by strong voices in parliament calling for the improvement of protection of employment and at the workplace, rights of participation of workers and social security, in general.<sup>24</sup> Not least the trade-union wing of the conservative CDU welcomed participatory rights as part of the middle way encapsulated in Ludwig Erhard’s ‘social market economy’ concept.<sup>25</sup> Even the Liberals (FDP), who traditionally stood strongly for entrepreneurial freedoms, thought that participation of the workers in the ownership of companies would be beneficial, although the managerial decision-making process should not be hampered by ‘counterproductive’ influences, *i.e.* by the inappropriate exercise of rights of participation.<sup>26</sup> The classic struggle between Labour and Capital was, therefore, all but replaced by this social consensus, for social improvement in Germany.

Truly in a Western European sense, social justice was seen as a vital aspect of the defence of Western societies in general and the Federal Republic in particular. Therefore, the material advantages of the Western system had to be seen, felt, and believed in by the people, if their internal resistance to the siren voices of the egalitarian East was not to wa-

21 Alfred Coste-Floret (MRP), in JO, 2ème Lég., 17/11/53, p. 5208I.

22 See Adenauer (CDU), Chancellor, in VDB, WP I, 5, p. 23C.

23 See H. Schelsky, (ed.), 1965, *Auf der Suche nach der Wirklichkeit; gesammelte Aufsätze*, Düsseldorf.

24 Wessel (Z), in VDB, WP I, 7, p. 79AB; see also, Wellhausen (FDP), in VDB, WP I, 7, p. 106C; see also, Ollenhauer (SPD), in VDB, WP II, 4, p. 46C.

25 von Brentano (CDU), in VDB, WP II, 4, p. 29A.

26 Dehler (FDP), in VDB, WP II, 4, p. 60D.

ver – as shown by a cross-section of MPs from all parties in the Bundestag.<sup>27</sup> The danger of political subversion on the basis of social unrest was recognised across the board:

The idea that the low standard of living in which most of the German people now subsists should be further reduced by more taxation cannot possibly be entertained. Our standard of living lags well behind those of the British, the French or of the US. If you still persist, the outcome will be Bolshevism and the radicalisation of our people.<sup>28</sup>

As early as 1950, the big political issue was the ‘guns or butter’ balance between spending on the military or allocating precious funds to the cause of societal resistance against the perceived Eastern threat. Although before the creation of the *Bundeswehr* in 1955, actual security spending on the arms side could only go into a heavily restricted federal police force, the political debate was still raging. The SPD would obviously argue for social security first, in order to achieve societal security:

We mustn't forget one thing: in the long run the policy of armed peace, which the western democracies have to pursue now, and which must be at the expense of the standard of living of the masses, is a great burden for the democratic orders of these countries. (...) Here in Germany, the social safeguarding of our democracy must take precedence over military considerations.<sup>29</sup>

Echoing the doubts many entertained as to whether a German army could in fact be effective against an overwhelming Red Army, the SPD argued that government spending on social security would be a much better defence against Communism and thus achieve just as much societal security.<sup>30</sup>

27 Adenauer (CDU), Chancellor, in VDB, WP I, 98, p. 3565D; see also, Schumacher (SPD), in VDB, WP I, 98, p. 3572B- 3573A; see also, Wessel (Z), in VDB, WP I, 98, p. 3581A; see also, von Merkatz (DP), in VDB, WP I, 125, p. 4768B; see also, Schmid (SPD), in VDB, WP I, 191, p. 8194AB, Ollenhauer (SPD), in VDB, WP I, 255, p. 12327C; see also, Letter from Schumacher to Adenauer concerning the position of the SPD on the German contribution to Western defence, 6 February 1951, in: Willy Albrecht (ed.), Kurt Schumacher, Reden – Schriften – Korrespondenzen, p. 884.

28 Seelos (BP), in VDB, WP I, 98, p. 3585C, translation mine; the original quotations can be obtained from the author.

29 Ollenhauer (SPD), in VDB, WP I, 190, p. 8111AB, translation mine.

30 Ollenhauer (SPD), in VDB, WP II, 47, p. 2239B; see also, Strobel (SPD), in VDB, WP II, 71, p. 3766A.

The more radical ideas on the left such as socialisation, participatory rights and equality independent of class, were strongly represented by the trade unions. France may serve as an example of the wide acceptance of such ideas among the membership of mass organisations. The trade unions' reciprocal relationship with the different Socialist parties was reflected in the political agendas of these parties and beyond into a social consensus. The adequate representation of workers in social and political institutions is an example of one core postulate. As a consequence, one can see French governments – regardless of whether Socialists were present – pressing for this very same objective in the European integration process,<sup>31</sup> for example in the composition of the ECSC High Authority and subsequent European communities.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, under the EEC and Euratom Treaties, too, special provisions were made for the vocational advancement of workers and for the raising of their standard of living, a clear reflection of French government policy.<sup>33</sup>

The Cold War strand of this argument was that the Socialists, in particular, had always made their opposition to Communism clear, as the quotation shows. “Finally, has not war already broken out in all countries in Western Europe as a social war – conducted by the Fifth Columns which could well turn into a civil war preceding foreign invasion?”<sup>34</sup> Just as in Britain and Germany, the great fear in France was that Soviet subversion would take root among the weakest sections of the population, the victims of poverty and social inequality.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the Socialists, especially, stressed the importance of satisfying the needs of the many over the profits of the few.<sup>36</sup> Only this kind of social justice could stabilise Western societies and help to strengthen their resistance to Communism.<sup>37</sup> This Socialist rationale of social justice being the best defence against Communism became widely accepted in the French political establishment. It is, hence, not too surprising to find originally socialist ideals of equality, social justice and participation reflected in the developing European institutions. Their logic was accepted into early European integra-

31 See for example Bonnefous, (UDSR), Chair of the Committee for Foreign Policy, in JO, 1re Lég., 25/7/50, p. 5918I; see also, André Denis (MRP), in JO, 2ème Lég., 7/12/51, p. 8968I.

32 Philip (PS), in JO, 1re Lég., 25/7/50, p. 5942II; see also, Bardoux (RI), in JO, 2ème Lég., 7/12/51, p. 8939I; see also, Alfred Coste-Floret (MRP), in JO, 2ème Lég., 7/12/51, p. 8946II, see also, Lefebvre (MRP), in JO, 3ème Lég., 2/7/57, p. 3157II.

33 Maurice Faure (RRS), Secretary of State in the Foreign Office, in JO, 3ème Lég., 16/1/57, p. 72I-II.

34 Le Bail (PS), in JO, 1re Lég., 2/12/48, p.7327I, translation mine.

35 Cot (URR), in JO, 1re Lég., 25/10/50, p. 7179II.

36 Leenhardt (PS), in JO, 1re Lég., 24/11/49, p. 6214III.

tion steps, because, in the Cold War setting, it also had the function of strengthening the Western camp internally and binding the peoples of the Six, even if the implicit hostility to the Communist bloc was not usually spelled out formally in official statements.

Therefore, societal security in post war Western Europe was achieved by a wide acceptance of socialist ideals as a political consensus. This reduced the old tension between classes to a degree that the stability of Western democracies could not be threatened internally by Communist subversion. The European integration process is one element in this strategy of generalised social improvement. The external threat of Communist expansion was another matter, but the objective of making Western Europe internally safe through social and economic advancement was achieved.

#### Economic policy as Social policy

In France, the original social and political conception on the Conservative side of the political spectrum also sought a general improvement of living conditions. However, the role the state should play in achievement of this aim was defined differently: "(...) social progress is an automatic by-product of economic growth and the intensification of trade."<sup>38</sup> In the national economy and in European economic integration, this meant a hands-off approach, *i.e.* diametrically the opposite of the Socialist conception of the planned economy. Prominent Socialists objected and pointed to historical experience – it was, they said, this very economic growth which had resulted in the cut-throat competition of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and had even led to successive wars of economic domination, notably with Germany. What they wanted was economic integration with Germany.<sup>39</sup> The objective was clearly to put an end once and for all to the Franco-German enmity which had cost so many lives and had inevitably, quite apart from the bloodshed, also considerably worsened living conditions, in particular those of the poorer parts of society. Socialists argued that if economic integration was to produce positive social outcomes, it could not be run on the principles of the free market economy. A 'Europe' of that kind was not worthwhile, because it must prejudice in favour of the materially

37 Mendès-France (RRS), President of the Council, in JO, 2<sup>ème</sup> Lég., 8/10/54, p. 4652II.

38 Giscard d'Estaing (IPay), in JO, 3<sup>ème</sup> Lég., 17/1/57, p. 93II, translation mine.

39 Le Bail (PS), in JO, 1<sup>re</sup> Lég., 25/11/49, p. 6286I; see also, Mollet (PS), President of the Council, in JO, 3<sup>ème</sup> Lég., 22/1/57, p. 215II

stronger class and, therefore, against the working class.<sup>40</sup> That would lead back to the old vicious circle under which Germany had become economically dominant. Driven by the wrong forces, such as the magnates of the Thyssen and Krupp type, this was also the economic reason for German expansionism and aggression. There had to be a social conscience, and social improvement must become a political objective for European integration. The logical consequence was a Socialist plea for a European *planned* economy.<sup>41</sup> Although this claim became weaker over time, the aspiration for human progress was at the very heart of the Socialist movement and remained strong as a moral force, as the Socialist President of the Council, Guy Mollet, to great applause from his own party, put it in 1956: “My government believes that economic expansion and social progress must go hand in hand.”<sup>42</sup>

Based on similar arguments as in France, the German Conservative government under Adenauer rejected the SPD plea for exclusive investment in social security. To arrive at security, the CDU argued, one had to do both, to make effective the right military *and* social security arrangements. However, Adenauer agreed fully with the Opposition that defence spending must not be allowed to prevent the Federal Republic from properly discharging its social responsibilities.<sup>43</sup> In this conviction, he was the exponent and leader of opinion in the coalition and enjoyed the support of the conservative parliamentary majority.<sup>44</sup> However, for Adenauer, societal security was dependent on what the state, the economy and essentially his Budget could afford. Like the French Conservatives, he stressed that economic performance was the basis on which social spending could be afforded.

As I have stated before, the best social policy is a sound economic policy which provides, for as much as possible, work and bread. However, in the aftermath of the war, there will always be a high percentage of people in Germany who do need extra help (...).<sup>45</sup>

40 Le Bail (PS), in JO, 1re Lég., 25/11/49, p. 6287I.

41 Le Bail (PS), in JO, 1re Lég., 25/11/49, p. 6286II, III.

42 Mollet (PS), President of the Council, in JO, 3ème Lég., 23/10/56, p. 4290I, translation mine.

43 Adenauer (CDU), Chancellor, in VDB, WP II, 61, p. 3123A.

44 Gerstenmaier (CDU), in VDB, WP I, 17, p. 411.

45 Adenauer (CDU), Chancellor, in VDB, WP I, 5, p. 26C, translation mine.

Very much in the Conservative tradition, social justice was, therefore, not an end in itself, as for the SPD, but a means whereby social conflicts could be solved and injustices remedied. Even on the Conservative side of the Bundestag, particularly among the small Catholic Centre Party, critics called for action ensuring more social equality and justice: “The Chancellor’s argument that the best economic policy is also the best social policy is valid only if the working class works in partnership with employers who think and act in a socially responsible way.”<sup>46</sup> Even the FDP agreed with that. However, they were the most articulate advocates of a sound economic policy as the best social policy. The reflection of the German post war social consensus was that even the most liberal party in the Bundestag argued strongly that the main aim of any economic policy must be social welfare.<sup>47</sup> The importance of the welfare state increased over time. For the SPD it was a matter of social conscience; the CDU/CSU naturally invoked the “Christian” ethos. For both the emphasis was on raising the standard of living.<sup>48</sup> “I fully agree with my colleague Ollenhauer [SPD] that real freedom can only exist in a just social order.”<sup>49</sup> In the concept of ‘Social Market Economy’,<sup>50</sup> both currents found their reflection.

Our economic policy aim is the social market economy (...) it lies equidistant between the command economy and the free market economy of the Manchester brand. (...) for the elements of order in it are freedom as well as restraint. We strive for freedom as the driving force behind competition and we want restraint in the form of independent control of monopolies, to prevent the abuse of freedom.<sup>51</sup>

This was not a welfare state, yet, but an economic concept which might produce welfare and hence, still economic policy as social policy, albeit on the basis of the societal security consensus in Germany outlined above. Britain had gone much further. The prestige project of the post war years was the concrete implementation of the welfare state. The National Health Service (NHS) – introduced in July 1948 – became the flagship of the British welfare state and represented the effective implementation of one of Labour’s key policies – a social policy as an end in itself and in the service of societal security. The fundamental principle of solidarity was the basis for a nation-wide healthcare system of

46 Wessel (Z), in VDB, WP I, 7, p. 77B, translation mine.

47 Dehler (FDP), in VDB, WP II, 4, p. 60B,D.

48 von Brentano (CDU), in VDB, WP I, 98, p. 3618C.

49 von Brentano (CDU), in VDB, WP I, 191, p. 8230.

50 German original: Soziale Marktwirtschaft.

the most comprehensive kind ever introduced.<sup>52</sup> Though the brainchild of the Liberal William Beveridge, this quintessentially Labour creation was a reflection of Labour's working-class roots and with them the deeply engrained commitment to the concept of a fairer society. However, it was at the same time exposed to the dangers inherent in the Socialist conviction, in the early post war period, that reasoned planning could be the guiding principle for every aspect of future life in Britain. What had to be organised was, hence, social justice and care for those in need. For the NHS, the Labour government was, on the one hand, keenly aware of cost considerations.<sup>53</sup> On the other hand, it was also very sensitive to the danger of failure in such a large-scale and prestigious project. Although the Tory opposition criticised the teething problems sharply, most prominently on the issue of cost,<sup>54</sup> no one seriously envisaged its abolition when the Conservatives regained power in 1951.<sup>55</sup> The newly elected Conservative government was to make cuts, deeply resented by those Labour MPs who believed passionately in healthcare free at the point of delivery as a key element of social justice.<sup>56</sup> Nonetheless, the fact remained that in the NHS Britain was equipped with a relatively comprehensive, even generous healthcare system. Not only were the national welfare provisions on the Continent woefully lacking in comparison, plans for European welfare policies, which emanated mainly from the Socialist wing of early Continental European enthusiasts, seemed rather idealistic in the negative sense of the word, seeking the ends without accounting for the means. Thus, the relatively comfortable situation Britain enjoyed in the welfare system must be seen as one of the reasons why the British governments, especially the Labour governments, viewed the European integration project with so little enthusiasm.

Their reservations might be seen as justified where, in the early post war years, what looked like pie-in-the-sky dreaming of a better Europe was on offer rather than real social security schemes on the Continent. The provision for relatively minor social funding under the ECSC was unlikely to dispel such scepticism, however important for the – small – number of beneficiaries. And one can argue that social concerns triumphed for once over

51 Blank (CDU), in VDB, WP I, 7, p. 90A, translation mine.

52 Hastings (Lab.), in Hansard 1950, 472, c. 1007-8; see also, Kenneth Harris, Attlee, p. 423.

53 Cripps (Lab.), Chancellor of the Exchequer, in Hansard 1950, 474, c. 59.

54 Lucas-Tooth (Con.), in Hansard 1950, 472, c. 1004-6; see also, Peake (Con.), in Hansard 1950, 472, c. 1015, 1018.

55 Roy Jenkins, 2001, Churchill, London, p. 852.

56 See Fernyhough (Lab.), in Hansard 1951-52, 500, c. 125-8.

profit, in Labour Britain, while economic success came first under the Conservative governments in France and Germany. However, in the long run, the more fundamental tendency of accepting social policy as a vital part of societal security and as an ideal for a better Europe can be found in all three countries and consequentially also in the spirit of the European Treaties. The European social model has ever since acted as a guiding light for the convergence of European social standards.

### Unemployment

Arguably the most important obstacle to such social progress was the problem of unemployment. In reference to the ongoing European economic integration process, free movement of workers was a major issue. Even in the early stages of European cooperation, freedom of movement was seen as a basic principle, fundamental to the idea of economic integration itself. The fear expressed by the more nationalistic voices in France was that a mass of underprivileged workers from other European countries – mainly from Germany - would swamp the French economy, threatening the collapse of the comparatively generous French social security system. Furthermore, the fear of ‘dumping wages’ was seen as a threat to French workers.<sup>57</sup> Hence, Gaullist opposition members argued that European economic integration would spell the end of full employment, which France had approached in the 1950s.<sup>58</sup>

Countering such fears, one of the central aims of the Schuman Plan was full employment, with the clear objective of security and decent living standards for the workers.<sup>59</sup> However, the maintenance of full employment was difficult, in both the national and the European contexts, because it was only one variable – and not really the dominant one, as the Socialists would have liked – in the competitive market economy which had been generally accepted as the basis of economic life. Experience with the implementation of the Schuman Plan also showed that the least efficient sections of French heavy industry, mainly iron foundries and coalmines, had to be shut down, because they could not compete in the common market for coal and steel. Although the High Authority had organ-

57 Rochet (PC), in JO, 1re Lég., 24/11/49, p. 6256II.

58 Gaston Palweski (RPF), in JO, 2ème Lég., 17/11/53, p. 5208I; see also, Bretin (UFF), in JO, 3ème Lég., 22/1/57, p. 194II.

59 Alfred Coste-Floret (MRP), in JO, 2ème Lég., 17/11/53, p.5208I.

ised schemes to ease the competitive pressure and minimise closures, the main victims were French miners. Resulting redundancies were paraded by the opponents of the ECSC as evidence of its failings.<sup>60</sup> Similar consequences were foreseen for the EEC.<sup>61</sup> In line with Marxist rhetoric, the Communists suspected that it was in the interest of the magnates and managers to have a pool of unemployed, a situation facilitated, they argued, by the successive European communities.<sup>62</sup>

This worried the French Socialists as well, although they did not condemn the integration effort outright. Instead, the social responsibility incumbent upon the High Authority to combat unemployment and to get the unemployed back to work was stressed.<sup>63</sup> To provide for the security of the ordinary worker was one of the central duties of the states and had to be reflected in European economic integration, too.<sup>64</sup> Supporters of the ECSC and the EEC were at pains to point out that unemployment was a transitional problem which would be overcome by coordination efforts in the High Authority and, later, the Commission. Ultimately, it was hoped that the integration process would result in the modernisation of the less competitive areas of the French economy. Higher employment figures and securer jobs must be the consequence.<sup>65</sup>

In Germany, too, the core economic and social problem in 1950 was seen as being that of the danger of mass unemployment.<sup>66</sup> In the first years of the Federal Republic, the spectacle of well over a million seeking work was an unwelcome reminder of the circumstances in which the Weimar Republic had succumbed, essentially over this very issue. By the time of the beginning of the second Adenauer government in 1953, however, the picture had changed radically for the better. There were jobs for all and Adenauer was in the comfortable position of having surplus funds to deploy on a long list of social desirables.

60 See Biscarlet (PC), in JO, 1re Lég., 25/7/50, p. 5932I-II, in JO, 1re Lég., 26/7/50, p. 5986I; see also, Croizat (PC), in JO, 1re Lég., 25/7/50, p. 5962II; see also, Martel (PC), in JO, 2ème Lég., 7/12/51, p. 8931I-II, 8933I; see also, Gaston Palewski (RPF), in JO, 2ème Lég., 17/11/53, p. 5195I; see also, Nocher (Indépendant), in JO, 2ème Lég., 19/11/53, p. 5305I; see also, de Monsabert (RPF), in JO, 2ème Lég., 20/11/53, p. 5350I; see also, Musmeaux (PC), in JO, 2ème Lég., 23/12/54, p. 6794I,II.

61 Duclos (PC), in JO, 3ème Lég., 22/1/57, p. 219II; see also, Duprat (PC), in JO, 3ème Lég., 5/7/57, p. 3307II.

62 Vuillien (PC), in JO, 3ème Lég., 17/1/57, p. 124II.

63 Lacoste (PS), in JO, 2ème Lég., 7/12/51, p. 8921III; see also, Gouin (PS), in JO, 2ème Lég., 7/12/51, p. 8926II; see also, Naegelen (PS), in JO, 2ème Lég., 7/12/51, p. 9001.

64 Beauguitte (Independent), in JO, 3ème Lég., 16/1/57, p. 68II.

65 Philip (PS), in JO, 1re Lég., 25/7/50, p. 5942I.

66 Storch, (CDU), Minister for Employment, in VDB, WP I, 17, p. 438D, 439B.

The fundamental commitment to full employment, which for the SPD should have been a goal in its own right rather than a consequence of the boom, became also a highly desirable political objective among the Conservatives. The call for the business community to be held to its social responsibilities under the Basic Law came more often from the SPD, but many Conservatives wholeheartedly agreed.<sup>67</sup> The FDP took a more “economic” approach, emphasising that skilled workers must be available in sufficient numbers.

One very real concern in the late 1940s and early 1950s was a shortage of workers in France. German migrant workers, particularly from the border regions, went to fill the gap.<sup>68</sup> Easier access for German workers to the French economy was authorised, foreshadowing the later freedom-of-movement provisions in the European Treaties. The granting of equal rights for German workers in the French social security system is another early indication of what became common practice and legal requirement in integrated Europe in later years.<sup>69</sup> It might be of no great significance, but in British parliamentary debates one finds little expression of the fear of *un*employment, but rather an emphasis on the importance of employment. Again, Britain was in a better position than the Continent. In the early 1950s, the British economy was performing far better than any of the Continental economies. The welfare system dealt reasonably satisfactorily with the relatively few dropouts. Full employment was a reality and was hailed as a major achievement of Labour’s policy.<sup>70</sup> Leading Conservatives such as Eden were also committed to full employment as a policy objective and the Conservative position moved slowly in that direction in the 1950s.<sup>71</sup> The Labour government, supported strongly by their backbenchers, linked the issue with European integration in a negative way. “Might I further ask that whatever line we take we shall say that no supra-national authority will be allowed to interfere with the Socialist Government’s planning for full employment?”<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, a major factor

67 Ollenhauer (SPD), in VDB, WP II, 4, p. 44D; see also, Echhardt (GB/BHE), in VDB, WP II, 4, p. 62B, The reference is to Art. 14(2) of the Basic Law, which provides that property and wealth must be used responsibly, if possible in the interest of the community.

68 Storch (CDU), Minister for Employment, in VDB, WP I, 103, p. 3784A, 3784D.

69 Storch (CDU), Minister for Employment, in VDB, WP I, 103, p. 3785A.

70 King’s Speech at the opening of Parliament 1950, in Hansard 1950, 472, c. 39; see also, Cripps (Lab.), Chancellor of the Exchequer, in Hansard 1950, 474, c. 52; see also, Marquand (Lab.), in Hansard 1956-57, 561, c. 92; see also, Bill Coxall, Lynton Robins, *British Politics since the War*, p. 21.

71 David Dutton, Anthony Eden, p.257-8, 267-8.

72 Harold Davies (Lab.), in Hansard 1950, 476, c. 38; see also, Harold Wilson (Lab.), in Hansard 1956-57, 561, c. 65; see also, John Edwards (Lab.), in Hansard 1958-59, 599, c. 1390.

as regards employment was the recent nationalisation of the coal and steel industries.<sup>73</sup> Labour deliberately chose the steel industry as the first step towards shifting the primary economic concern from profit to the satisfaction of the nation's needs.<sup>74</sup> And this newly-won guarantee for a large number of jobs over which the Labour government had direct control through nationalisation became a major obstacle to any commitment to European integration. The first of the European communities – the ECSC – concerned, of course, these very industries. The Labour government, and notably the British miners themselves, were not prepared to see control of vital activities handed over to an unproven European authority.

In general, however, the Liberal and Conservative opposition did not see integration efforts on the Continent in such a negative light:

There is nothing more likely to lead to unemployment than the restriction of trade. So this offer made by the French Government and people, which has now been accepted by Germany, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands (...) is designed to achieve these purposes.<sup>75</sup>

For the Labour government, economic realities induced a cautious attitude towards the apparent attractions of idealistic European economic integration, which stated, for example, full employment as an aim, while the six countries in fact suffered a considerable degree of unemployment.

Thus, domestic social policy objectives were a major factor in preventing the Labour government from taking a more positive line towards early European integration projects, most notably the Schuman Plan. Full employment was therefore not an isolated issue in British domestic politics, but part of a larger societal security concept, which had repercussions on political decisions in Britain's European policy.

## **VII. European prospects**

73 Osborne (Lab.), in Hansard 1950, 478, c. 1804; see also, Thomas Hörber, 2006, *The Foundations of Europe*, Wiesbaden, Economic Security/The Nation/Nationalisation, pp. 300, The Schuman Plan (ECSC), pp. 306.

74 Churchill (Con.) in Hansard 1952-53, 507, c. 22.

75 Clement Davies (Lib.), in Hansard 1950, 476, c. 1927; see also, Eccles (Con.) in Hansard 1950, 476, c. 1973-4.

On this long road of social adaptation, it was recognised from the outset of the European integration movement that living standards and welfare provision varied very considerably across Europe. The convergence – in an upward direction – of these standards among the Six was widely seen as desirable.<sup>76</sup> France, in particular, feared the levelling *down* of welfare standards.<sup>77</sup> However, in the key sections of the French parliament, this danger was not seen as an insuperable obstacle to European integration. The divergence of social security standards was, indeed, seen as militating in favour of integration, because the resulting benefits would inevitably tend to approximate living standards and increase societal security all over Europe. The reason for the French misgivings was that France had already achieved relatively high welfare standards. A key concern was the problem of lower standards in the largest Member State, Germany.<sup>78</sup> For one thing, this meant lower production costs, which made competition for French companies harder. Furthermore, lower standards in Germany could well lead to popular dissatisfaction and even the kind of unrest that had blighted the inter war years.<sup>79</sup> In France, there was a political consensus that the economic and democratic development of Germany was in France's best interest.<sup>80</sup> That was another reason why it was stressed that the general trend must go in the direction of levelling-up welfare standards.<sup>81</sup> Not surprisingly the Socialists argued for better welfare standards, shorter working hours and a general improvement of the standard of living for the ordinary citizen, in order to give the European integration effort popular legitimacy and a grass-roots following, not least in France.<sup>82</sup>

76 Mollet (PS), in JO, 2ème Lég., 8/10/54, p. 4643I; see also, Crouzier (IPay), in JO, 3ème Lég., 17/1/57, p. 96I; see also, Temple (IPay), in JO, 3ème Lég., 17/1/57, p. 110II.

77 Bonnefous, (UDSR), Chairman of the Committee for Foreign Policy, in JO, 1re Lég., 25/7/50, p. 5918II, 5919I; see also, Maurice Faure (RRS), in JO, 2ème Lég., 7/12/51, p. 8958I; see also, Beau-guitte (Independent), in JO, 3ème Lég., 16/1/57, p. 68I; see also, Crouzier (IPay), in JO, 3ème Lég., 17/1/57, p. 95II; see also, Galicier (PC), in JO, 3ème Lég., 5/7/57, p. 3305II.

78 Devinat (RRS), in JO, 1re Lég., 25/11/49, p. 6350I.

79 Jaquet (PS), in JO, 2ème Lég., 17/11/53, p. 5200II.

80 Kaufmann (RPF), in JO, 1re Lég., 25/11/49, p. 6341III; see also, Gaborit (RRS), in JO, 1re Lég., 25/7/50, p. 5945II; see also, Daniel Mayer (PS), in JO, 1re Lég., 25/10/50, p. 7191III; see also, Monteil (MRP), in JO, 2ème Lég., 11/2/52, p. 586II.

81 Terrenoire (MRP), in JO, 1re Lég., 24/11/49, p. 6253III; see also, Le Bail (PS), in JO, 1re Lég., 25/11/49, p. 6287I; see also, Bonnefous, (UDSR), Chairman of the Committee for Foreign Policy, in JO, 1re Lég., 25/7/50, p. 5919I; see also, Engel (MRP), in JO, 3ème Lég., 17/1/57, p. 91I; see also, Giscard d'Estaing (IPay), in JO, 3ème Lég., 17/1/57, p. 94I; see also, Courant (IPay), in JO, 3ème Lég., 17/1/57, p. 117II; see also, Cot (RS), in JO, 3ème Lég., 22/1/57, p. 197I.

82 Lapie (PS), in JO, 3ème Lég., 5/7/57, p. 3316II.

Further indications of the roots of European social policies can be found in the demands expressed for the assumption of social responsibilities as one of the earliest currents in the European Movement. The recommendations of the Council of Europe with regard to refugees, full employment, human rights and freedoms and a new European social order are good examples.<sup>83</sup> “As a basis of European thinking social legitimacy must be developed as well, and also be tried out in practice. It is the great goal of increasing prosperity for all.”<sup>84</sup> From a German perspective, too, it was agreed that the convergence of social standards in the member states should be fostered.<sup>85</sup> However, the aspirations for a European social order still remained ideals – mostly not more. With enhanced social justice as the goal, the social provisions in the Schuman Plan were ambitious, *e.g.* increasing employment in the coal and steel industry and improving living standards in general.<sup>86</sup> The convergence of per capita incomes between the six member states had been one of the few indisputable successes of the ECSC.<sup>87</sup> And the link between economics and social affairs was generally accepted.<sup>88</sup> And as the common market developed into a major economic factor, European social policies also became part of societal security arrangements, essentially still made by the governments. In this context, the power of the aspiration to a European social order should not be underestimated. Concrete results took the shape of bilateral social security agreements, such as that between France and Germany of 10 July 1950, which provided for the equal treatment of nationals of both countries in their reciprocal welfare systems, for example.<sup>89</sup> However, this example also shows that the European spirit of freedom of movement, in this case, and the commitment to cooperation between the European partners also had a social side.

83 Pünder (CDU), in VDB, WP I, 103, p. 3753CD; see also Social Clauses in the Atlantic Charter, quote in: Wessel (Z), in VDB, WP I, 125, p. 4778C.

84 von Merkatz (DP), in VDB, WP I, 68, p. 2495D, translation mine.

85 Preusker (FDP), in VDB, WP I, 182, p. 7590A; see also, Hallstein (CDU), State Secretary in the Foreign Office, in VDB, WP II, 200, p. 11329CD; see also, quotation of Paul-Henri Spaak in, von Brentano (CDU), Foreign Minister, in VDB, WP II, 208, p. 12000D; see also, Elbrächter (DP), in VDB, WP II, 208, p. 12013B.

86 ECSC Treaty Art. 2; see also, Preusker (FDP), in VDB, WP I, 182, p. 7586BC, 7589CD; see also, Report of the Economic Affairs Committee on the ECSC, in VDB, WP I, 182, p. 7638C, Albers (CDU), in VDB, WP I, 183, p. 7713C.

87 Hellwig (CDU/CSU), in VDB, WP II, 200, p. 11361C.

88 von Merkatz (DP), in VDB, WP I, 184, p. 7813A.

89 Willenberg (FU), in VDB, WP I, 251, p. 12065C.

As in the case of France, for Britain the prospect of equalised social standards was not all that attractive. It would have meant in effect pooling one's own resources with weaker competitors, which could well translate into lower social standards at home. The issue arose already during the early phase of the Schuman proposals. One example was the fear that the proposed High Authority might try to impose a common European wage level in the coal and steel industries, which would leave British steelworkers and miners much worse off. This strengthened the Labour case for a reserved attitude towards European integration. The Opposition was, as usual, more optimistic, but the high level of social security in Britain served to strengthen doubts as to the wisdom of any precipitate espousal of the principles of the Schuman Plan.

Just like the positive example of cooperation between France and Germany before, this British caution towards European integration is clear evidence of the impact of societal security concerns on the European integration process. Another of these European focal points became the European Social Charter – adopted by the Council of Europe and opened for signature on 18 October 1961. Nowadays, the Social Charter forms, in large parts, the section on fundamental rights in the prospective European Constitution. It would be naïve to expect that the European integration project could be pursued regardless of the influence of the nation state, in particular in the field of the social responsibility of the state for its citizens. Beyond concrete achievements such as the European Social Charter, the extraordinary phenomenon of the post war period is that these states took 'Europe' as a focus for the convergence of their national policies. Societal security plays a major role in this development, perhaps precisely because most social aspiration remained a matter of ideals only, at European level. Because they are still only partly fulfilled, they can still act as a magnet for further integration for the benefit of the European peoples.

### **VIII. And the World for Britain**

For Britain, societal security also had a global component which was a consequence of the imperial past. Colonial responsibilities forced to the fore the issue of world-wide justice and equality in political and material terms. "My Ministers [Winston Churchill's Conservative Government] will continue to work for the progress and well-being of the peoples of My Colonial territories and protectorates. They will seek to ensure that measures of social and political advancement and of economic development are promoted in

the interests of all races.”<sup>90</sup> Well-meaning, as was to be expected in a Queen’s speech, but nothing more than mere ideals. For Labour, this world-wide perspective of Britain entailed a notion of world-wide societal justice. And Labour MPs in particular saw the gap between reality and aspiration in government policy towards overseas territories. Malaya was only one example.

I put it to Members on both sides of this House that if we are to induce millions of Asiatic and African fellow human beings to turn to the democratic way of life, then we, for our part, must be prepared to extend to them, far more than we have done, our wealth, our service, our energy and our experience. Is it not well worth doing that? If we are not willing to do this it means that grave doubts will arise because our professions are not consistent with our practice.<sup>91</sup>

It is not surprising to find such calls for greater societal justice extended to the Commonwealth and indeed the whole of the world by Labour MPs. Such currents of idealism had always run strong in the party. The world-wide Communist threat, which exploited social injustice in the capitalist bloc, in the Western colonial arrangements and in the British imperial system, constituted a strong incentive to work ever harder towards the achievement of the political objectives of greater societal justice. As a leading world and colonial power, the societal security considerations of Britain were different and indeed more complex than for continental European countries, notably Germany; more complex in the sense that for Britain a wider array of responsibilities had to be taken into account for their policy of societal security. Both main parties were clear about that, and Labour’s call for greater social justice for the colonies is clear evidence of this. This is another reason, in the field of societal security, rendering Britain’s more general caution towards European integration intelligible. It supports the impression gathered from primary sources that Britain considered the whole European integration project rather from a standpoint of utility, starting from a substantially higher welfare level than France or Germany, a more practical attitude which militated against immediate ECSC membership.<sup>92</sup>

Nevertheless, early signs of the success of European integration for France and Germany did not go unnoticed in Britain and after a time some of its leaders were compelled

90 Queen’s Speech 3/11/53, in Hansard 1953-54, 520, c. 4.

91 Sorensen (Lab.), in Hansard 1950, 478, c. 1329; see also, Harold Davies (Lab.), in Hansard 1952-53, 507, c. 419.

92 See, David Gowland, Arthur Turner, *Reluctant Europeans*, p. 53.

to concede that the venture had positive potential and was one which Britain might neglect at its peril. Hence, a tendency towards a more positive view of European integration had already gained ground among some British MPs by the mid-1950s. From 1956 on, there was a loose pro-European network slowly drawing Britain towards membership.<sup>93</sup> The EEC, the FTA and later EFTA showed the change in Britain's attitude to involvement with 'Europe' and vice-versa.<sup>94</sup> Still, in particular where societal security is concerned, Britain's commitment to European initiatives remained weak; a fact which has really only changed in the most recent years under the Blair government, which signed the Social Charter as one of its specifically pro-European acts.

## IX. Conclusion

It has been shown above that there were a number of societal security concerns from the beginning of the European integration process. Although, in general, social provisions are spelled out with less emphasis in the European Treaties than, for example, economic policies, societal security concerns were part and parcel of the political process of the creation of the European communities and the debates above showed that such concerns were consistently borne in mind by the responsible politicians, regardless of their political affiliation. In addition, it has become evident that some core Socialist political demands came to be part of the post war consensus. The implementation of many welfare and social policies, such as, for example, social justice, participatory rights and also the ideal of full employment, was a question of responsible political practice, again regardless of partisan politics. The social conscience of Conservatives such as Robert Schuman perfectly illustrates the way in which many non-Socialists had fully accepted the merit of some Socialist ideals, albeit on the basis of a Christian social-responsibility ethos.<sup>95</sup> Hence, it has been shown here that many social ideals were reflected in the spirit of the European Treaties and in the ways they were subsequently implemented by the same politicians who had

93 G.R. Wilkes, 2002, *British Attitudes to the European Economic Community, 1956-63*, Cambridge, p. 460.

94 This argument is further supported by a steady increase in public opinion in favour of European integration up to an all-time high of 75% in the mid-1950s. This must have had some impact on the policy decision to draw closer to Europe. For statistical evidence, see R. Inglehart, 1977, *The Silent Revolution*, Princeton, p. 346.

95 See Declaration of May 9th, 1950, in : René Lejeune, 2000, *Robert Schuman Père de l'Europe*, Paris, p. 215, 216; see also, Robert Schuman, 'Pour l'Europe', p.47, in : René Lejeune, *Robert Schuman Père de l'Europe*, p. 225

already signed up to societal security in the sense of social responsibility and justice in their own countries.

In recent years there has occurred a more formal development of a kind of European social policy. This policy is closely connected with economic integration. European social responsibility developed out of the freedom of movement within the Common Market, particularly because it is the movement of *human* labour, not just goods, services or capital, which is liberalised.<sup>96</sup> Although the Treaty does not admit explicitly the competency of the EU for social affairs, the implications for the development of the common internal market are fairly generally accepted among the member states, witness the mutual social security arrangements which have been made between the member states.<sup>97</sup> Indeed, in recent years, a European social policy has developed which is to some extent critical of national social policies, because, according to the Commission, the member states pay for welfare without fostering labour – in the sense of productive employment – or the improvement of skills.<sup>98</sup> This article has shown that this recent development of a formal European social policy has its roots in a much deeper and longer convergence of social policies. As this article has shown, the process started with the creation of the European communities, which allowed of a broad approximation of social aspirations all over Western Europe, as explicitly shown for France, Germany and Britain. Indeed, in societal security one finds the mutually reinforcing developments of a convergence of national societal security policies and reasonably similar national societal security problems between the member states. This convergence reflects very clearly the action of the fundamental forces behind European integration: similar needs, mutual trust, common benefits in the community and a modest but unflagging element of idealism.

Hence, the more modern development of a European social policy should not be seen as in competition with national social policies, but rather as complementing a convergence process which leaves enough room for specific national solutions where needed, while making the most of the huge European potential for finding the best solutions for similar policy challenges. This paper has also shown clearly that the Cold War context was a logical incentive for European convergence, not least in societal security. Hence,

96 Patrick Talacker, *Europäische Sozialpolitik*, in: Roland Sturm/Heinrich Pehle (eds.), 2006, *Die neue Europäische Union: Die Osterweiterung und ihre Folgen*, Frankfurt, p. 182.

97 Patrick Talacker, *Europäische Sozialpolitik*, p. 183.

98 Patrick Talacker, *Europäische Sozialpolitik*, p. 192.

there is some truth in argument that it was easier to come together in this setting. One of the merits of this analysis of societal security is, however, the realization that this field is a bit more complex than military security of the Cold War period. It has been shown that the European social model defined itself against both extremes of totalitarian Communism and unrestrained Capitalism. And the values of social justice, social responsibility and solidarity have been deducted as forming a societal consensus in Europe even deeper than the Treaties. Hence, social issues along the concept of societal security can be seen as a lasting foundation of Europe which is not dependant on the antagonism of Cold War and the values of which are still strong ideals to be maintained in the present.