Persistence and Decline of the Postwar British Aristocracy in the Foreign Office

For British studies during 1950's and 1960's, decolonization is the most common theme discussed regarding British foreign policy and the Foreign Office (FO). Britain gradually lost control of its colonies and reoriented its relationship with its former subjects into the Commonwealth. Domestically, between 1945 and 1951, the Labour Party worked to reshape Britain from the imperial upper class dominated society into the welfare state that on paper was meant to be more inclined towards the middle and working classes in Britain. Some examples of this included the Parliament Act of 1949 which further restricted the legislative power of the House of Lords, and the 1944 Butler Act which improved access to education. Additionally, with the election of the Labour Party, came hope of improved social mobility. This included offices of government which up to 1945 had been held largely by the British aristocracy. In *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, historian David Cannadine, found that in 1945 the FO branch of the Foreign Service (FS) was among the departments of the British government where the aristocracy still composed the majority of staff. Of the eleven Permanent Under-Secretaries nine were from the landed gentry, and it was nonprofessional positions like doorkeepers, cleaners, and porters that were held by non-aristocrats.[i]

Aristocratic control of positions of the Diplomatic Service (DS) of the FO was made possible by economic barriers and methods of recruitment that existed prior to 1945. There was a lack of economic assistance for university education along with the field training which was required to complete indoctrination into the DS. Cannadine estimated that an income of at least four hundred pounds a year was required to meet university costs for learning French and German, not including another language if one looked to be a diplomat outside Western Europe. Also, the FO required a period of residence abroad respective to the country of intended service, which ranged from 18 months to 2 years, and the costs had to be covered by the applicant. In

addition, there were three means by which aristocrats controlled methods of recruitment into the FO. First, to take the exams, one needed a certificate that was signed by the Foreign Secretary. Secondly, one could obtain a recommendation from someone in or out of the FO that was approved by the Foreign Secretary. Or, following 1907, approval from the FO's Board of Control, which was composed of senior members of the FO, enabled one to take the exams.[ii] In short, lack of funding for linguistic education and field training abroad limited the accessibility of professional positions in the FO for middle- and working-class individuals. However, even for those who met the financial requirements, the examination and selection process required approval by top officials in the FO. This allowed aristocrats to control who could enter professional positions.

Before discussing how recruitment changed with the reforms, it is necessary to understand how the FO reforms were influenced by public opinion. Lord Strang, a career diplomat in the DS during the 1930's and 40's and Permanent Under-Secretary at the FO from 1949 to 1953**,** in his book *The Foreign Office* and Sir Antony Eden in the White Paper Cmd. 6420 stated, "the primary task of the FS was to carry out whenever possible the foreign policies laid out by the British people, as represented by the Parliamentary majority, the Cabinet heading the government, and the Foreign Secretary as the specialist within the cabinet." Additionally, those in the FS were to assess political trends abroad and supply as accurate information as possible to the Foreign Secretary and Cabinet to make informed decisions on policy to secure British interests.[iiiiv] The people decided who were the policy makers but policy makers had the final say on foreign policy and matters of the FO.

In practice, members of the FO were expected to comprehend complex social and political relations that prior to 1945, were central to diplomatic negotiations with foreign powers.

For FO staff in Britain, this took the form of inter-department coordination, communication, and understanding of popular interests. Prior to the reforms of 1945, this responsibility fell to the secretaries of respective departments of the FO and the Consular Service (CS)**.** Consider three examples found in *The Foreign Office*. First**,** the FO commonly coordinated with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to secure territorial waters for fishing needed to feed Britain. Second, talks with the Board of Trade of the Home Office to support foreign trade, which was considered central to the British economy and the lifeblood of the nation. Lastly, talks with the Ministry of Defense and other security departments addressed potential dangers to British sovereignty.[v] Considering Lord Strang's time in office was from 1922 to 1953 this meant that policy included matters of economic well-being and national security. There were several reasons that shaped Strang's argument, though there are a few that can be noted prior to the FO reforms.

In the 1920's, Britain had come out of the First World War shellshocked and heavily in debt to the U.S.. Economic troubles with the global depression between 1929 and 1932 compounded financial and trade deficits. Britain had become increasingly reliant on imports from and exports to the colonies, but its hold on them was beginning to wane. This contributed to concerns about Britain's potential to economically recover and her ability to wage another big war. The Second World War saw the realization of these concerns with Britain having to fund another worldwide conflict with the years 1940 and 1941 being the worst as Britain experienced widespread devastation during the German Blitz. Britain was left in a weakened state that it had not been in prior to the war, foreign resources for domestic rebuilding, and management of the occupation zones meant foreign support was needed more than ever.

The Cabinet conclusions and memoranda of the Attlee government between 1945 and mid-1947 reinforced the importance of economic health and its connection to foreign policy

during the post war period. A cabinet meeting on October 15th, 1945 discussed a series of memoranda relating to concerns over the housing shortage in England and Wales. Local authorities in charge of reconstruction experienced difficulties because they were running low on building materials. In response, the Ministers of Health and Works called for a bill to extend financial provisions to purchase more supplies and meet demands for rebuilding.[vi] As Southern England, cities such as London, Manchester, and others-areas of high population that were impacted by bombing were priority for the populace to be rebuilt. Therefore, it was a priority of the government and FO.

Additionally, in 1946 and 1947 a consistent theme discussed in cabinet meetings, memoranda, and newspapers was the need to acquire increased food, coal, oil, and other imports from Europe and the colonies. A memorandum by the Minister of Food to the cabinet on October 22, 1946 found that given Britain's need to supply the British occupation zone in Germany and India the food outlook for Britain in 1947 looked disappointing. The bulk of U.S. food exports were redirected to nations like Japan and Italy with 390,000 and 120,000 tons respectively while Britain received a fraction of these quantities at 16,000 tons. In response the Minister of Food stated,

> "I cannot, at present, recommend the withdrawal of broad rationing. I have appealed to Canada for an extra 40 million bushels (1,100,000 tons)… It will not be easy to obtain extra wheat from Canada, but I think that if the matter were pressed… Some additional supplies would be forthcoming."[vii]

In response to these concerns, Cabinet meetings up to 1947 discussed ways to roll back the unpopular food rations that had been in place since 1940. For example, Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin on January 2, 1947 spoke about negotiations with American ministers to acquire "supplies of food stuffs required for the United Kingdom, the British Zone in Germany and India.

While matters had not been finally settled… he understood that on the particular points at the issue a satisfactory conclusion had now been reached."[viii] Improvements in imports from the U.S. and Canada had become important to Labour policy makers. The success of the FO in following policy demonstrated its commitment to policy and its ability to achieve said objectives. In turn, promoting a measure of public confidence that will be discussed later. In August of 1947, the newspaper the *Nottingham Journal* interviewed Bevin in response to the drain of dollar reserves from treasury to fund supplies for the German dependent zone. Bevin replied, his aim was "to encourage agricultural production in Germany in order to reduce the amount to be paid for food from abroad and leave all the dollars or other currency available for purchase."[ix] While the economy was a driver of policy cabinet conclusions and memoranda in summer of 1947indicate that this changed as the Attlee government and the FO became increasingly bold towards Europe.

The change in policy was due to a series of events between summer of 1947 and winter of 1948 that included the proposal of economic aid to Europe by George Marshall on June 5th of 1947. The failure of foreign ministers to reach an agreement on the reunification and rearmament of Germany at the second Council of Foreign Ministers in London in December of 1947. Lastly, the Communist coup in Prague in February 1948 and Berlin Blockade some months later. Tensions between the Soviet Union and Western Europe had begun to escalate over the consolidation of power in Eastern Europe and ongoing conflicts between democratic governments and communists such as in the Greek civil war from 1946-1949. In response, Bevin in a group of memoranda in January of 1948 recommended the formation of a 'Western Union' of democratic countries composing of Scandinavia, the Low Countries, France, Portugal, Italy, and Greece backed by American and dominion material aid. The outlined purposed by Bevin was,

"In some western countries the danger is latent but in Germany, France, Trieste, Italy and Greece the conflicting forces are already at grips with one another. The Soviet Government has based its policy on the expectation that Western Europe will sink into economic chaos…. We must also organize and consolidate the ethical and spiritual forces inherent in this Western civilization of which we are the chief protagonists."[x]

British perception of communist expansion in Europe, comparable to American views of communism in China, Korea, and Southeast Asia in the late 1940's to the 60's, viewed these incidents as monolithic and were linked to the Soviets. In turn, concerns rose over the possibility of similar political conflicts happening in Western Europe and the risk of military confrontation with the Soviet Union. Suspicion towards the Soviets was also fanned by the difficulty of communication between Britain and the Soviet Union between 1945 and 1946. In Bevin's address to the cabinet on the results of the first meeting of Foreign Ministers in Moscow on January 1, 1946, he discussed Iran, which had Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and a large body of oil imports for Britain, and Greece:

"The Foreign Secretary gave the Cabinet an account of a conversation which he had had with Marshal Stalin about the policy of the Soviet government towards Persia. Marshal Stalin had at first indicated that these proposals might form the basis for a settlement; but subsequently M. Molotov had said that the Soviet Government were not prepared to continue discussing the matter on this basis and the discussions had been broken off.

In the course of informal conversations Marshall Stalin had expressed the view that British Troops should be withdrawn from Greece. The Foreign Secretary … had made it clear that we intended to maintain our troops there until free elections could be held."[xi]

Soviet actions in Eastern Europe and the Middle east were viewed by Britain as an encroachment on British oil resources and indirectly Britain itself. Growing Anglo-Soviet confrontations resulted in strained communications between Bevin and Soviet Leaders. Soviet animosity about the developing Cold War left the Labour leaders suspicious and they evaluated a

shift toward the U.S. and Western Europe for security alliances**.** Bevin already held anti-Soviet attitudes as he had made several speeches against communism in the past. However, aristocratic FO staff naturally shared Bevin's position and were sympathetic towards the security policy. In turn, ensuring the persistence of Conservative policy—retaining aristocratic presence in the FO.

In January 1943 changes to the FO were proposed by Foreign Secretary Antony Eden in the White Paper Cmd. 6420. Eden stated in the White Paper that the reforms were a response to criticism of the DS on three central issues. First, that the recruitment of diplomats was from too small an educated circle that represented private interests rather than the whole country. The circle was viewed to have been composed of aristocrats who either got their positions based on connections or because the FO mostly recruited from the establishment universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Second, given the conditions prior to 1945 that members of the FO were recruited under, current staff were not believed to have sufficient understanding of modern economic and social questions to address the growing relationship between international politics and economics. Lastly, opportunities to obtain an education and training in these subjects should be more accessible.[xii]

Sections of the proposals for the reforms that were meant to address these criticisms fell into the following categories:[xiii]

(1) Amalgamation of the Services and Regarding of Posts,

(2) Recruitment and Training,

(3) Conditions of service at home,

(4) Administration,

(5) Superannuation Bill,

(6) Subordinate Staff,

The *Amalgamation of the Services* merged the various services of the FS into a single body that was later known as the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO). In the paper Eden said he believed combining the knowledge of the economic, industrial, and shipping affairs of the Commercial Service with the Consular and DS's that handled the press, public, and foreign officials would produce staff that fit modern expectations for a member of the FO.[xiv] Essentially, new members were expected to possess a combination of the skills that prior to the reforms different branch services of the FO covered, credentials that the middle- and working-classes believed the existing aristocratic staff of the FO did not possess.

Recruitment and Training. To facilitate the recruitment and training of new service members changes to the examination and recruitment process, following initial selection, were made. The proposals broadened the scope of individuals able to take the entrance exams by removing the requirement for a certificate of approval and was replaced with an open competitive selection process that was available to anyone who qualified. This was chosen by one of two methods. Both Methods I and II had candidates take the entrance examination but Method I applicants, who nominally lacked university credentials, then had to take additional examinations and papers on their intellectual capabilities up to honors levels. Method II applied to those who met qualifying tests and academic qualifications, or were selected by the Foreign Secretary on recommendation of the Civil Service Commissioners. Applicants under Method II then proceeded to interviews and the studentship period without additional examinations.[xv] Geoffrey Moorhouse in his book *The Diplomats* found that of the two methods the second was the predominant mode for those who applied to the FO up to 1969 when it became the sole method after Method 1 was abandoned due to the lack of applicants.[xvi] The merit of one's intellectual ability had become the main mode of examination for applicants. Also, selection by

personal recommendations was limited and had to be run through the Civil Service instead of senior officials at the FO. The power of FO aristocrats to control applicants had been given over to the middle- and working-classes of the Civil Service.

Financially, the reforms also presented several changes meant to assist the financing of applicants in training and, in cases, members of the FO. During the studentship period when candidates were expected to study abroad the reforms introduced financial aid for the eighteen-month to two-year period. Public funds were allocated to cover all expenses related to travel, board, and training.[xvii] Additionally, the *Conditions of Service at Home* and *Subordinate Staff* sections acknowledged that many overseas staff had been subjected to great personal expenditure having to fund their own transfers, housing, and more. Secretaries of the FO that resided in Britain and higher service members did not struggle with these costs as their salary was deemed sufficient. But for FO officials that were abroad, special grants based on personal economic circumstances were provided.[xviii] Aid from the public funds removed the need for personal equity to complete the studentship period when candidates were not on the FO's payroll.

Lastly, to facilitate the transition of FO staff, the *Superannuation Bill*, implemented in the Foreign Service Act of 1943, gave power to the Foreign Secretary to terminate the employment of any member of the service of the rank First Secretary or above that was found undesirable in the eye of public interest.[xixxx] That power previously could not be used on anyone that was under the age of 60 unless found guilty of misconduct or removed under medical conditions. The Foreign Secretary now enjoyed expanded powers to remove and appoint upper staff whose abilities aligned with the needs of the FO.

Considering the changes to the FO made in the reforms, conditions that allowed aristocrats to control membership of the FO were removed and people from the middle and

working classes backgrounds could begin to fill professional positions in place of aristocrats. However, according to Cannadine, aristocrats were still appointed to positions in the FO until 1961. In 1961, former British diplomat Harold Nicolson commented that,

> "today, it is as difficult for an aristocrat to enter the foreign service as it would be for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle".[xxi]

While the Labour Party passed the FO reforms in 1945 the fact that it took until 1961 for the transition of staff in the FO from aristocratic to the middle- and working-classes to be completed begs several questions. First, why did Labour support for advancement of the middle- and working-classes, unlike the Welfare state, not effectively translate to reforms in the FO during the Attlee government between 1945 and 1951? Additionally, what did or did not happen, under the succeeding Conservative governments of Churchill, Eden, and Harold Macmillan between November of 1951 and 1961 that contributed to the delay and implementation of the reforms? I consider these questions through three avenues. First, the attitudes and decisions of British governments from 1945 to 1960. Second, the relationship between FO recruitment and the disparity between education in establishment universities and provincial colleges. Third, how changes in political and social values in Britian because of the Cold War, Suez, and more influenced support for the reforms.

Entering office on July 26, 1945 with a majority in the House of Commons of 393 out of 640 seats and successfully concluding peace in Europe at the Conference in Potsdam in early August. Attlee, Bevin, and the rest of the Labour government were quick to push the adoption of the reforms originally proposed by Eden in the Churchill wartime cabinet. Despite the early energy to drive social and political change, by late 1945 and early 1946 leftist publications began to question the lack of progress in the implementation of the reforms for the FO. "The subject of

FO reform is not new to readers of *Truth.* It is grotesque that so much attention has been paid to the issue in the press, and so little in Parliament. On the reformation of the FO may hang again, and at no distant date."[xxii] The *Daily Herald*, covering Commons Labour official Miss Jennie Lee, along with other House Labourites, also criticized Attlee's decision to appoint Conservative Alexander Cadogan as British representative to the UNO. The "background of discontent was that the DS was almost wholly in the hands of people who apparently did not understand this government's philosophy. We would like the appointment of people representing the Labour Government."[xxiii] Cabinet resistance to Commons Labour demands and the continued appointment of aristocratic officials to the FO, such as Lord Strang as Permanent Under Secretary in 1949, show the direction of policy Attlee and Bevin was not in favor of following the reforms and aristocratic recruitment continued throughout the Attlee government.

The reasons why Attlee and Bevin were resistant to demands of House Labourites were the result of several factors. Prior to being appointed Foreign Secretary by Attlee, Bevin was the Minister of Labour for Churchill in the wartime cabinet alongside other Labour leaders including Attlee and Hugh Dalton. Serving in the wartime cabinet provided valuable connections that later formed the Labour government in 1945. But Commons Labourites such as Harold Laski and other leftist politicians became suspicious that their leaders were unwilling to shift away from the Conservative policy to a more socialist policy. Historian Alan Bullock, in *Ernest Bevin: Foreign Secretary*, explained that the stance of Bevin and other Labourites had changed in 1937 when Bevin, Attlee, and other Labour leaders had adopted Churchill's statement that the achievement of a unity of policy in foreign affairs and defense was pivotal for the good of Britain.[xxiv] For Bevin, the uncertainty of the immediate post-war years for Britain with respect to its place among the rising powers of the U.S. and the Soviet Union meant the prospect of removing the

FO's most experienced staff was undesirable. In a debate in the Commons on February 20, 1946 Bevin said,

"With regard the FS, I take the very strong view that the young men who are passing their examinations today and entering the Service are a typical reproduction of the general opinion of the country as a whole and I have no intention, so long as I am in office, of taking the top posts away."[xxv]

Bevin's statement affirmed two things: his commitment to Conservative policy in the FO for the duration of his time as Foreign Secretary, and the top positions of aristocrats in the FO would be secure for the foreseeable future. If Bevin was unwilling to remove aristocratic staff from the FO despite having the power to do so it meant that he was at least satisfied with the abilities of the current staff of the FO to conduct foreign policy laid out by the Labour cabinet.

Unlike Bevin, Attlee did not fully agree with the policy that Churchill and Conservatives put forward in the wartime cabinet. On one hand, Attlee expressed that,

"it will be our aim to maintain the British Commonwealth as an international entity. If we are to be able to carry our full weight in the post-war world with the U.S. and the Soviet Union it can only be as a united British Commonwealth."[xxvi]

Attlee realized the importance of the colonies to the continuation of Britain's standing in the world and the significance that the empire still held in British society. However, in August 1945 a series of letters between Attlee and South African Field Marshal Jan Smuts, Attlee stated,

"I do not disagree with your diagnosis of the threatening situation in Europe, more particularly in the Eastern countries. The growth of Anglo-Russian antagonism on the Continent , and the creation of spheres of influence, would be disastrous….. I think we must at all costs avoid trying to seek a cure by building up Germany or by forming blocs aimed at Russia. Such an obvious threat to Russia that we should thereby harden the Soviet Government's present attitude in Eastern Europe and help to give actual shape to our fears."[xxvii]

Attlee's letter suggests both that Labour leadership was divided on how to approach the Soviet Union, and lacked a coherent plan on foreign policy. Also, it begs the question that if there was disagreement on approach to foreign policy, who in the Labour cabinet made decisions regarding policy in the FO?

British Journalist Kenneth Harris in his biography *Attlee*, quoted reviews by Attlee from *The Observer*, where Harris worked, of the first volume of Bullock's books on Bevin's life. Attlee said prior to joining the FO Bevin was knowledgeable about industrial, financial, and social conditions in other countries. Also, Attlee commented that the relationship he had with Bevin was the deepest of his political life as Bevin was the living symbol of loyalty.[xxviii] Attlee recognized how Bevin's time as a union leader and in government under Churchill gave Bevin the credentials that fitted the experience and intellectual criteria of the FO. That was the reason Attlee made Bevin Foreign Secretary. Additionally, when Bevin came under fire from Laski and other Labour opposition in August 1945 Attlee responded,

> "You have no right whatever to speak on behalf of the Government. Foreign Affairs are in the capable hands of Ernest Bevin."[xxix]

The rebuke towards Bevin's critics meant that despite the opinions of other Labour members in government, or Attlee's own opinion on matters of policy, he trusted matters of policy, and the FO, to Bevin. Therefore, Bevin had the political protection and autonomy to administer the FO as he saw fit. Thus, the Conservative policy in the FO would not change until 1947.

Additionally, outside leftist opposition the reception of Bevin as Foreign Secretary by the FO and Conservatives was very positive. At the start of Bevin's career Moorhouse argued from career diplomat Paul Gore-Booth's memoirs that for Booth and other diplomats in the FO, the

initial perception of Bevin was comparable to the disquiet most of the FO previously held towards George Curzon in 1924. But before long Booth wrote that**,**

"We were in for a highly favorable surprise…in my diplomatic lifetime, no Foreign Secretary engaged the loyalty and affection of the whole DS as Bevin did."[xxx]

Other diplomats Moorhouse cited also shared these opinions. Bevin had the approval of FO staff for much of his career, making him a more effective Foreign Secretary which in turn inspired a degree of public confidence in aristocratic officials.

Publicly, Gallup polls between December 1945 and 1950 reveal that approval of Bevin as Foreign Secretary was at the lowest points in 1945 when he was first appointed. In 1945 Bevin had a 47 to 18 percent approval. However, this drastically changed in the February 1946 poll where results show a 73 to 12 percent approval. The rest of the polls up to 1950 had an approval rating between 54-58 percent.[xxxi] After initial doubts Bevin was consistently approved by the public even through the developing Cold War. Successful addressing of economic issues by the FO, like improved imports to address rationing, alleviated public concerns enough that public confidence in Bevin remained.

In parts of Bevin's career when he was not as popular, such as in 1950, Gallup polls show a 43 to 28 percent approval. [xxxii] Aside from unpopular rearmament, another explanation for the decrease in support came up in the newspapers in mid to late 1949 was the devaluation of the Sterling. Articles on devaluation found that despite intentions to fix the gold-dollar reserve depletion, it was viewed that,

"Sir Stafford Cripps's refusal to devalue is correct despite the well-known contrary views of the United States Treasury."[xxxiii] "The chancellor's firm refusal to consider devaluing the pound has been based entirely on the

hope of restoring Britain's trade to its prewar condition. It would amount to… the export drive was flagging seriously, result in lowering the prestige of the pound."[xxxiv]

The opposition by the Chancellor of the Exchequer Stafford Cripps to devaluing the sterling because it posed a danger to the balancing of British trade is what is important to understand here. As mentioned previously, trade was considered a key component to the economic life of Britain. The newspaper coverage of Cripps' connection between devaluation and its negative impact on trade meant that devaluation, in turn, became a concern for the British public.

Gallup polls conducted in the months October and November after devaluation show a 40 to 24 percent disapproval in October and a 44 to 21 percent disapproval in November. Both polls show only 4 percent believed the devaluation had no impact.[xxxv] The weakening of the sterling's purchasing power was not popular even before effects of devaluation could have been felt. But the backlash towards the end of Bevin's career did not produce substantial calls for change in the public or newspapers. General approval by the public, the FO, and the cabinet government made the prospect for opposition to challenge Bevin's policy impossible.

Another explanation for why the Labour cabinet was not compelled to enforce the FO reforms was mentioned by Eden in the reform proposals. Eden stated,

"The effects of the new system of recruitment and training which is contemplated will not, of course, be felt for some years after its introduction. For a number of years there will be no new entry. At the top of the service there will be men who have stayed at their posts during the war…the FS will be understaffed while the tasks which face it will have multiplied."[xxxvi]

The merger of duties in the FO that stemmed from the amalgamation of the services had two impacts. First, it increased the expected time for potential applicants to become a full

member of the FO. This was due to increased requirements for education for skills in finance and socio-economic expertise, varied lengths of examinations and interviews based on academic credentials, and the studentship period extended the expected time for applicants to obtain a professional position in the FO. Second, which Lord Strang addressed, to cope with the growing complexities of the national and international community the FS required an expansion of staff to fill the growing list of new functions the FO was given following the reforms. A few examples mentioned included the need for analysts and propagators to digest and spread information, and publicity specialists to collect information from an increasing number of service sources from the international public.[xxxvii] It was not just the top positions and diplomats' roles that changed, but the FO needed more staff to fill new specialized jobs. In turn, the demand for university graduates and staff to teach larger bodies of potential applicants was needed. All of this increased the time needed for new middle- and working-class applicants who intended to apply to the FO to be produced.

When it comes to the lack of change in the FO between 1950 and the snap election of 1951debates in the Commons provide insight. In 1950, there were no debates or mention of needs to pursue further change to staff in the FO. In a 1951 debate in the Commons on May 25th, Ralph Morley asked Foreign Secretary Morrison,

"if the necessity for securing members of the diplomatic staff men and women who have had working-class experience and understand modern trends of thought, he would revise the method of entrance of the FO."

To which House Labourite Kenneth Younger responded,

"No, Sir. A thorough reform of the FS… published as a White Paper in 1943 has been carried out in recent years. The system of recruitment has been recast to facilitate the entry of candidates with suitable qualifications from all sections of the community."[xxxviii]

The disagreement between Younger and Morley exemplified that House Labourites had different opinions on the FO reforms. In addition, because there was little debate about the lack of implementation of the FO reforms during the final years of the Attlee government**,** political support for change in the FO was not prominent enough to cause change. Harris also argued that changes to the FO in the later years of the Attlee government did not happen for several reasons. The most important reasons were Labour's policy of welfare before profit, along with past success in precuring financial and material aid.[xxxix] The success of the staff of the FO to deliver on political and popular expectations between 1945 and 1949 meant there was a lack of political demand for change in the FO, even among House Laborites, and it was placed on the back burner compared to more immediate issues.

When Ernest Bevin died in March of 1951, his successor Lord Herbert Morrison inherited a growing mess of foreign affairs. But, unlike Bevin, Morrison struggled with these problems because he had a rocky relationship with Attlee and the staff of the FO. Harris cited from Attlee that the press "They were for Morrison. The worst appointment I ever made. He spent his life organizing—Foreign Policy was about negotiating. Jim Griffiths should have got the job."[xl] Morrison by career was a party campaigner and organizer with time in office as Minister of Supply. Morrison did not share the same credentials that Bevin had as a union leader and in turn did not command the same respect or support.

Also, from March of 1950 to April of 1951, international challenges to British interests deafened any chance of aristocratic FO staff of being replaced by middle- and working- class applicants for the remainder of the Attlee government. The Korean war, while having a 63 to 31 support rating for sending troops and weapons, increased unpopular military costs which were considered a risk to the welfare state because of looming bankruptcy.[xli] Also, third world anti-

colonial movements threatened British resources and markets that supported the welfare state. The Peoples Republic of China's desire to obtain Hong Kong risked British access to markets on mainland China. Iran's Prime Minister Mosaddeq's nationalization of the oil fields of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company cut British access to important oil resources in the Persian Gulf. Harris stated that while these events did not directly damage confidence in the FO, criticism fell on Morrison and other members of the Labour cabinet government.[xlii] Because policy failures fell on Attlee and Morrison rather than the staff of the FO there was no shift in public opinion to support change in the FO.

The damage to the Labour government was reflected in the 1951 Gallup polls; results show government ratings were at an all-time low throughout the year. Approval ranged between 31 to 35 and disapproval from 54 to 60. Where in 1950 some confidence in the Labour party allowed for a slim victory the same was not to be in 1951.[xliii] Attlee's attempt to procure a larger majority with snap election backfired and the Labour party was voted out before progression of new blood into the FO really began. Attlee and Bevin, like Eden, may have accepted that change was inevitable if Britain was to keep up with the world. But, of the changes they did make there were many social, economic, and geopolitical reasons that stalled progress towards transition. One of them was the results of financial aid for, and reforms to post-war universities in respect to creating a new middle- and working-class recruitment pool for the FO.

Comparable to the FO reforms, changes to universities were initially discussed in 1943 in a white paper. Later known as the Butler Act in 1944, the President of the Board of Education addressed the causes for the reforms and what they entailed for all schools in Britain. In respect to progress of educational reform it was said,

"Changes set out in subsequent paragraphs cannot be achieved at once. It will be possible to fit the schemes for educational reform, into… social reconstruction and to introduce the various portions… when the necessary buildings, the equipment and the teachers become available."[xliv]

Proposed changes would take time as Britain was economically drained and infrastructurally devastated by the Second World War. Fiscal and material resources were needed to rebuild and expand schools but limited progress was expected in the immediate post-war years. Expansion of universities would allow for the accommodation of a larger student body that the FO could later draw upon as the existing staff under Bevin retired and new specialist positions in the FO opened. However, because the Butler Act had been prepared just prior to the Attlee government coming to office little had been done and the Labour cabinet was left with starting the education reforms.

In respect to collegiate education the white paper said,

"As things now stand, the great mass of pupils leaving the elementary schools do not pursue any formal education. A start will have been made by the extension of secondary education and by continued part-time education. By these means increased educational interest in later years should be stimulated. While the more serious and solid studies that have formed the backbone of adult education… must be maintained, there will be room for new methods and new approaches to meet new demands. It has to be admitted that the provision of scholarships and bursaries is still inadequate. The aim of a national policy must be to ensure that high ability is not handicapped by … lack of means in securing university education. The scheme is designed to secure… those in the humane studies, … to fill the higher posts in industry, commerce and the professions.[xlv]

The lack of financial support for students was viewed as the main cause for the small student body size in universities. Expansion of scholarships and grants for science, mathematics, economics, and humanities meant that those educated in socioeconomics would increase over

time. But questions remained about how much aid was provided, and how this affected the eligible body of university graduates who could apply to the FO remained.

Receipts by the University Grants Committee from 1948 to 1951 consistently show that of the universities that obtained the most treasury grant funding included the universities of London, Oxford, Cambridge, and Glasgow. The receipt published in July 1951 for the academic years 1948-1949 and 1949-1950, respectively, there was a total of £13,800,391 and £19,608,116 of grants given by the Grants Committee. The University of London received £4,195,195 from 1948-1949, and £6,384,116 the following academic year. Oxford and Cambridge together received £1,685,535 and £2,096,266.[xlvi] Grants for the academic year 1950-1951 were £22,420,201 in total grants with £7,387,519 going to London, and £2,182,264 for Oxford and Cambridge.[xlvii] Despite economic concerns in the later years of the Attlee government because of renewed military spending, increases in university grant funding continued each year. Thus, the Labour cabinet seemed less concerned about the costs compared to improving access to university education.

Also, the distribution of funds to the universities of London, Oxford, Cambridge, and Glasgow begs the question how serious the Labour party was about creating a diversified recruitment pool for the FO. In the case of London university, being in the largest city in Britain, this made sense as it also had one of the largest student bodies — but not for Oxford, Cambridge, and Glasgow. Consider one explanation. Since establishment schools already had methods for preparing students to work in the FO, and Eden and Bevin supported the status quo in the FO, establishment schools where aristocrats were traditionally recruited were in turn granted preferential grant funding. Thus, this stance on university funding supported the status quo in the

FO. If this explanation holds, the Attlee government was not serious about creating a diversity of class in the applicant body for the FO by providing similar support to provincial colleges.

The Attlee government may have passed the FO reforms in 1945 but the conditions of postwar Britain and meager support for provincial colleges limited the ability and desire of Bevin, Attlee, and the Labour leadership to pursue the reforms. Labour leaders recognized that because the reforms were going to take some years and they had to make do with the methods of recruitment and staff that the FO already had. Instead choosing to focus on more immediate problems such as maintaining the Empire because it remained center too economic health and national pride of Britain. The Attlee government, in their compliance with the policy set forward by the preceding wartime Churchill government, missed the opportunity to progress changes in the FO. Thus, the first opportunities for middle- and working-class individuals to join the FO would not appear until later Conservative governments.

For the succeeding Conservative governments from Churchill to Macmillan between November of 1951 and 1961, with improvements to the groundwork for changes in education and FO training laid out by Labour, only time and supportive political and social conditions in Britain were needed to see a transition of staff in the FO. However, according to Historian Anthony Adamthwaite in his article *Overstretched and Overstrung*, like the later Eden government, the 2nd Churchill government between November of 1951 and March of 1955 contributed little to reforming the FO. Reasons included disputes between Churchill and Eden on policy and matters of the FO, the escalating cold war, and the economic crisis inherited from the Attlee government overshadowed potential progress put forward by Eden.[xlviii]

When the Churchill government stepped into office in October of 1951 the set under Labour continued. However, where the Churchill government inherited beneficial conditions

such as improvements to funding for higher education and moderate public support of 44 to 29 approval as the December Gallup Poll indicates, the Conservatives also inherited an economic crisis. Overspending by the Attlee government during efforts to build the Welfare state and continued overseas military commitments left Britain on the verge of bankruptcy.[xlix] This is supported by cabinet memoranda and conclusions in late 1951 and early 1952 where various cabinet officials expressed the severity of the situation if action was not taken. The conversation started on October 31, 1951 when the Chancellor of the Exchequer Richard Butler sent a memorandum to the cabinet stating,

> "We are in a balance of payments crisis, worse than 1949, and in many ways worse even than 1947. Confidence in sterling is impaired, as witness the large discounts on forward sterling in New York,…, increasing the deficits and the drain on our gold and dollar reserves. We need an urgent review of all Government expenditure so as to cut out waste and – far more important – to cut out and slow down expenditure on work which is valuable but not essential in times of crisis."[l]

The economic situation quickly became the focus of the Churchill government and constrained options for change or reform of different branches of the government. The reduction of government expenditure on the FO was revealed by Eden months later in a memorandum on June 18, 1952 where he stated that,

> "The essence of a sound foreign policy is to ensure that a country's strength is equal to its obligations. If this is not the case, then either the obligations must be reduced to a level at which resources are available to maintain them, or a greater share of the country's resources must be devoted to their support. If,…, it must be assumed that the maintenance of the present scale of overseas commitments will permanently overstrain our economy, clearly we ought to recognize that the United Kingdom is over-committed and must reduce the commitment."[li]

Britain's overseas commitments were viewed as overextended given the economic situation and with support from Eden it was advised that a reduction of said responsibilities was

in order. A few obligations that could be cut back were included in the memorandum such as decreased foreign aid, decreased support for NATO, and a reduction of service members abroad in recommended locations. What the layoff of service members meant was that the integration of non-aristocratic officials into the FO was not feasible at the time. Diplomat and Conservative MP Anthony Nuttings in a Commons debate on the 17th of November stated that,

> "The staffs of the FO and FS have been reduced by 186 and 422, respectively, since 1st January last. The staff and organization of the FO and FS will be further reviewed during the course of 1953."[lii]

Cuts to expenditure and FO staff throughout 1952 made opportunities for recruiting outside the aristocracy nonexistent.[liii]

While the full consequences of reduced staff in the FO and Britain's role in the world would not come into play until the succeeding Eden government, it marked a point where thought on Britain's status as a power socially and politically began to diverge. Adamthwaite argued that despite the arguments of people like Eden for realistic withdrawals there were many in Britain that held onto the belief of "grandeur before growth." Churchill's opposition to any overseas withdrawals contributed to conflict on policy between him and Eden and created divides within different branches of the government including the FO.[liv] Despite having a good reputation in the FO, Eden's uneasy relationship with Churchill damaged trust for Eden in both the public sphere and FO officials that supported Churchill.

Examples of arguments between Churchill and Eden Adamthwaite provided included Egypt and Sudan in 1952 where there were those that agreed with Eden believed that prolonged resistance to nationalists in the colonies would lead Britain to being expelled and humiliated. But others believed inaction towards international challenges and the economic crisis risked placing Britain in an insoluble situation.[lv] Eden governed over a divided and less efficient FO that luckily

did not face major challenges during the Churchill government but it created distance between Eden and his own party and the FO that would become important during his government between 1955 and 1957.

As stated by Eden himself in a Commons debate weeks after becoming Foreign Secretary again in 1951,

> "I am not going to attempt to give the House today a comprehensive world survey—how could I do it? I have been in the FO a few weeks and I am hardly abreast of the daily telegrams; there is so much to catch up with that has happened before. It would take far too long even if I were to attempt it, and it would be to much like a dreary catalogue of a troubled world."[lvi]

The growing complexity of the international affairs and information exchange meant that the job of the FO became more difficult, especially as Churchill and the cabinet made staff cuts to the FO. With these cuts, the FO was unable to keep up with work, tanking morale. Adamthwaite supports this with FO reports that found since 1950 FO officials complained about paperwork, telegrams, and committee meetings had more than doubled alongside the need for urgency to respond.[lvii] FO officials were not only upset at Eden for causing political friction during his spats with Churchill, but they also complained about declining working conditions. Efficiency of the FO was clearly in decline and when considering that the effectiveness of the FO under Bevin was one of the reasons that criticism was kept at bay during the Attlee government it begs the question what the popular response to these problems in the FO and Churchill government was.

Gallup polls asking for the approval of Eden as Foreign Secretary between December of 1951 and February of 1955 found a slow downward trend in approval. The December 1951 poll results show a 66 to 5 percent approval, that by April of 1954 found Eden had a 59 to 19 percent

approval. Polls between the two dates, except for March of 1953 which had a 68 to 9 percent approval, show a growth of disapproval with a decrease in both those that approved of or were undecided about Eden.[lviii] The lack of significant change in confidence in Eden suggests that despite his declining approval within government it did not have much effect on Eden's public standing. Even Eden's lowest point of approval in 1954 is explained by newspaper publications in January. The *Birmingham Daily Gazette* in an article titled "If the Prime Minister retires" stated,

> "In all the speculation about the possible retirement of Sir Winston Churchill, it is being assumed that Mr. Eden will be his successor as Prime Minister and leader of the Conservative Party. The assumption is almost certainly correct, but …, that does not mean he would succeed to the leadership of the party automatically. Mr. Butler has some following in the party of the Conservatives would clearly operate it again on Sir Winston's retirement."[lix]

Opposition to Eden in the newspapers was based on competition within the Conservative party over Churchill's successor rather than failures as Foreign Secretary. There were no publications about understaffing in the FO or other internal problems, or coverage of the FO failing to meet expectations of foreign policy throughout the Churchill government. Therefore, from the public perspective it seemed that the FO was doing fine despite staff cuts and there was a lack of knowledge about declining conditions in the FO.

While economic problems inherited from Labour meant the Churchill government had problems that prevented extensive support for change in the FO there were actions taken by Churchill starting in 1952 and education reorganization under Minister of Education David Eccles in 1954 that promoted improvement to education for middle- and working-class in provincial colleges. For starters, University Grants Committee receipts published in May 1953

reveal that despite government policy to cut expenditure that grant funding for universities was not impacted and continued to increase. Establishment schools such as Cambridge and Oxford respectively saw total grants in 1951 grow from £1,096,839 to £1,388,405 and £1,085,425 to £1,307,884 the following year. The exception was the University of London which saw grants drop from £7,387,519 in 1951 to £7,056,571in 1952. Provincial colleges, with some exceptions, also experienced increased funding such as Manchester University receiving £1,051,035 in 1951 and £1,279,380 in 1952, or Sheffield University with an increase from £531,916 to £845,885, with other colleges experiencing an increase of grant funding in at least the tens of thousands of pounds.[lx] Another University Grants Committee document for 1954 shows increases in grant funding with Cambridge and Oxford respectively receiving £2,149,610 and £1,668,325. London University grants rising to £9,235,599. The provincial colleges either retaining similar grant sizes compared to 1952 or slightly decreased like Sheffield University from £845,885 to £839,543 in 1954.[lxi] In large, university funding was not affected by government efforts to reduce expenditure as both establishment and provincial universities continued to receive increases to grant funding.

The reason for the lack of decrease in university funding was mentioned in a cabinet meeting on the 28th of July 1953 when Chancellor of the Exchequer Richard Butler inquired various cabinet officials about potential reductions to government expenditure. To which Minister of Education Florence Horsbrugh, with support of other cabinet members, replied,

> "There was little she could do to cut down the cost of education without major changes in policy. The lowering of the school leaving age would meet with serious political opposition and would not in practice lead to any great reduction in the number of teachers unless the excessive size of some classes were maintained."

In response Paymaster General Lord Cherwell asked,

"Whether the large rise in expenditure in 1963-64 could be accounted for by the fact that children now entering school would by that date be receiving university and technical education."

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Viscount Woolton also inquired if there had been excessive grants being made to university students around the England-Wales area. Horsbrugh replied that there was already an income test in place to screen for the eligibility of university students to receive grant funding.[lxii] It was expected since the Attlee government that a post war growth of student body size would occur and by early 1950's when this began the Churchill government were the one's contending with how to respond given pressure to cut expenditure. The answer, following the defense of existing university policy by Horsbrugh, was not to cut grant funding due to worries of public and political backlash from failing to meet expectations that this generation would enter university by the 1960's, with government support.

In addition, with the appointment of Viscount David Eccles as Minister of Education in 1954, he expanded support for provincial education with a proposal to the cabinet on the 12th of November that stated,

"The countryside has suffered from the enforced concentration on building schools for new communities on the outskirts of towns. 36 percent of the children in rural areas (compared with 9 percent in urban areas) are being taught in all-ages schools, and no building to relieve this position has been allowed since 1952."

He purposed the following to improve access to education in rural areas,

"All rural areas to be reorganized on the basis of a four to five year programme, and work to value of not more than 5 million to be started; the ban to be removed on buildings technical colleges."[lxiii]

A proposal that was approved by the cabinet at a meeting on the 29th after Eccles explained the following,

"It had been the main concern of his predecessor to provide school-places for the growing number of school-children, which was rising from 5 millions in 1947 to 6.75 millions in 1957. The time had now come to tackle the problem of overcrowding in schools and to make a start on the improvement of existing schools, especially in rural areas."[lxiv]

Eccles worried about the oncoming influx of students in provincial education, pushed through the November 1954 reforms that funded the building and/or expansion of provincial schools and colleges and increased funding for grants that allowed provincial colleges to support the growing student body. In turn, they provided a larger body of middle- and working-class people that would be competitive with applicants from establishment schools. This would be important come the Macmillan government in 1957.

With the retirement of Churchill from politics in April of 1955 and Eden's succession as Prime Minister, the prospect for middle- and working-class individuals to get into the FO was improving. Eden had a progressive mindset about the changing role of the FO and the importance of these changes to Britain in the postwar world when he proposed the FO reforms. Improved financial aid for provincial colleges and reforms started by Eccles some months prior meant on paper opportunities for change in the FO may have been possible by the time Eden resigned. By 1954 economic limitations that plagued the Churchill government were fading. Even if Eden's relationship with FO officials was uneasy, His awareness of these issues would suggest he could have acted to improve the situation. However, Eden did nothing despite having the power as Prime Minister to build a cabinet that would have been supportive of this goal. Thus, this begs the question why did Eden not work to change the FO during his time as Prime Minister? Also, as would become clear by the end of his government, why was it popular dissatisfaction with the FO between 1956 and 1957 that became the catalyst for change under the succeeding Macmillan government?

When discussing Eden's lack of motivation for FO reform it in part can be explained by his general exhaustion on handling matters related to the FO. Adamthwaite argued, the growing complexity of work in the FO and persistence of political and popular opposition to Eden's desired policy had, by Churchill's retirement, made Eden pessimistic over continued involvement in the FO.[lxv] By 1955 Eden was comparable to Churchill. Years of struggle in the FO had worn him out. As Prime Minister, Eden lacked the psychological vigor and the popular or political support needed to address problems in the FO as well as challenges that laid ahead. Also, since the Eccles reforms had just taken place, it's unclear if Eden's support would have made any difference. Rather, following the first half of 1955 Eden's government would be busy with and shaped by various scandals and crises that threatened the government and FO's reputation: the spy scandals involving senior FO officials Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean in late 1955, and the Suez Canal incident between late 1956 and 1957.

When Eden took over as Prime Minister suspicions of Burgess and Maclean had existed since their disappearance in July of 1951. Between 1952 and 1954 there were some Commons debates and newspaper publications that covered the topic but also reveal that the reality of the diplomats being Soviet spies had not been discovered in the public sphere yet. Some examples in Commons debates on July 2nd, 1952 and October 22nd, 1952, when the matter was first brought before the government by American Lieutenant Colonel Lipton and British Colonel Gomme-Ducan respectively, questioned House member and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Sir Harold Nutting about the status of the two missing diplomats.

Colonel Lipton asked,

> "What date were the appointments of Mr. Guy Burgees and Mr. Donald Maclean officially terminated?"

To which Sir Harold Nutting responded,

"The appointments of Mr. Guy Burgess and Mr. Donald Maclean were terminated on 1st June, 1952,…. It is because the search for them was continuing."[lxvi]

In October Colonel Gomme similarly asked Nutting if he or the FO was able to make any further statements on the disappearance of Burgess or Maclean. Nutting responded,

"No, Sir…. Inquiries are continuing into these cases as I have often informed the House. As to the possibility of a public inquiry, an open inquiry of this kind could not be held without revealing highly confidential details and methods used in the current investigation."[lxvii]

Debates show that FO officials were aware of domestic and allied officials' concerns about the missing diplomats. Those diplomats were high ranked members in the FO, recruited through the old recruitment system. With the anti-Soviet attitudes of the British public and anti-communist stance of America, if the diplomats were discovered to be Soviet spies it risked damaging the reputation of the FO and the Eden government. Thus, the FO was unwilling to reveal details regarding the diplomats knowing the backlash this would cause.

But by 1955 news regarding Burgess and Maclean changed when the diplomats were discovered to be Soviet spies. An article published on the 20th of September by the *Daily Herald* titled "Wrong men, right ties" stated,

"For over four years officialdom has tried to hush up the real story because it is a scandalous one that reflects on the FO, its recruitment, and its quite astonishing tolerance of social behavior that in any other occupation would have earned Maclean and Burgess the sack. Maclean and Burgess had the right social background and wore the right old school tie. In the anachronistic atmosphere of the FS…, this signified that they were gentlemen fit to associate with the other gentlemen."[lxviii]

The discovery of diplomats being Soviet spies had the effects the FO expected: compounding concerns around the Cold War, criticism fell on the FO and the Eden government because of the diplomats' connections to the British establishment and their recruitment method. It was believed that, as opposed to methods of the Civil Service where recruitment was based on open competition, the autonomy of the FS from the Civil Service enabled the FO to be infiltrated. This belief supported the newspaper's claims that officials hid the truth regarding the diplomats since their disappearance. In turn, the government and FO were framed as being complicit with the infiltration because of the diplomats' elite background.

An article published by the *Manchester Evening News* on November 7th reflects this narrative stating,

> "Whatever the government contrives to say on the Burgess-Maclean spying affair,…, it cannot erase its stain on our FO and security services. Any more ill-judged attempts to whitewash the whole affair,…, will merely increase the mystery and public uneasiness and further convince our American allies that we do not take security seriously."

The popular view was that the FO's failure to act on Burgess and Maclean was a threat to British security interests and meant that the FO, namely its aristocratic leadership and senior officials, had failed their job in the eyes of the public. As a result, public confidence in FO officials was damaged and this contributed to increased calls for change in the FO. In the same article, the *Manchester Evening News* argued,

> "For the sake of allied co-operation, the FO, and the prestige of this country, then, … the Government would do well to consider holding a secret inquiry into our security services and another into FO recruitment and routine."[lxix]

Similarly, the *Birmingham Daily Gazette* stated in its article published on November 7th,

"Sir Anthony Eden and Mr. Harold Macmillan, Foreign Secretary, have consulted… whether there should be some form of inquiry into recruitment and promotion in the FO. Many Conservative M.P.s share the doubts raised about the effectiveness of the present system. Mr. Morrison is also expected to propose that there should be a secret judicial inquiry into the efficiency of the Security Services."[lxx]

From September to Early November of 1955 calls for investigation into the FO and its method of recruitment appeared on either the headlines or within the first few pages of many publications. The spread of information about the case decreased the FO's credibility as popular demand for the government to address the situation created an issue that Eden and Conservative leadership in parliament could not ignore, and in response planned Parliament debates in the Commons on the 7th of November and Lords on the 22nd to address the situation.

In the Commons, the debate on the 7th, which Macmillan and Eden attended, questions regarding action against the FO are stated by Leader of the Opposition and former Foreign Secretary Morrison,

"FO people have survived and their ideas are not quite the same as those of the postwar, reformed recruitment. There are survivals but time will solve that problem. They are largely university men. Recruitment to the FS, so far as I know, is substantially the same in principle as recruitment to the home Departments. The question I want to submit for the consideration of the Prime Minister and the Government,…, is based on the fact that the FS is separate from the home Civil Service. I suggest to the Government that in these circumstances, and in the light of these unhappy and beastly incidents. I still think, in view of public apprehension,..., that there should be an inquiry into recruitment to and promotion in the FO and into the administration of the FO."

A notion that Commons Conservatives were divided on but was less well received compared to Labour counterparts. Commons Conservatives like Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Brooman-White counter-argued,

"Let us be quite sure before we embark on investigations. There are four quite separate issues, and they have been confused in the public mind. I will try quite briefly to deal with each of these four headings. The first is: what is the ground for demanding at the present stage that there should be an investigation into the security services? Public interest has been aroused, but let us try to see this in proportion. I do not think that because they have failed to make an arrest in this case there are adequate grounds for an inquiry, which can do no other than impede their day-to-day work. This is not justified unless there is, over the whole field, a feeling that they are falling down on their job."

The debate concluded with Eden making a series of statements, but for concerns related to the FO scandal he said,

"I do not want to stress the personal side of it too much, but I should like to say how much I agree with one observation which fell from the right hon. Member for Lewisham, South (Mr. H. Morrison), that whatever mistakes there might or might not have been in this business, one thing which is quite certain is that nobody at the Foreign Office at any time, no senior official or other official, tried to cover up any form of disloyalty to the State. [lxxi]

Commons M.P.'s recognized that regardless of the need for an inquiry, the damage to the reputation of FO in the public sphere was the main concern. Rather than a unanimous affirmation of allegations leveled on the FO, the response was divided along party lines. Labour, under Morrison, pressed for investigation into areas of the FO criticized by the newspapers and public. Commons Conservatives and cabinet officials like Macmillan and Eden opposed the notion and public perceptions that the FO retained elitist leanings. Rather, they argued this was an isolated case that was not reflective of the FS**,** and that this was a failure of the security services instead of the FO. Thus, the need for an inquiry into FO recruitment, officials related to the case, or calls for bringing the FS under the control of the Civil Service were claimed to be not necessary. That motion was further supported in the House of Lords later that month.

On the 22nd the Lord's debate on the spy scandal noted information presented in the Commons weeks earlier and responded to Labour and popular calls for investigation. Led by Viscount Astor it was said,

"My Lords, to return to the DS, there is no doubt that this affair has been a severe blow to the prestige which the DS and the FO should, and deserve to, have. Nowadays one of the troubles is the lack of respect for prestige. As a result, there has grown up among the public a feeling that everybody is as good as anybody else, and that people in the DS are no better than they. In my view, the FO must consider its public relations."

Lord Conesford responded,

"As the result of these events, various inquiries have been suggested. It has been suggested that there might be an inquiry into recruitment to the FS. It has been suggested that there should be some general inquiry into our security service. I confess that I do not see such a necessity. That is, perhaps, because I have confidence in Her Majesty's Government and know that this is a matter on which they will satisfy themselves without an inquiry."[lxxii]

Unsurprisingly, the Lords supported the conclusions of Commons Conservatives and with a majority in the Commons, it meant that demands to conduct general inquiries into the FO and the recruitment methods would not get anywhere. One explanation for the Conservative dismissal of media pressure can be found in Gallup polls run before and after the debates. When it came to polls that addressed approval of Eden before the debates September polls reveal that Eden had a 63 to 21 percent approval. A rating that December polls show was hardly affected because Eden had a 61 to 26 approval.[lxxiii] Because Eden held popular support**,** Conservatives were able to mount a defense of the FO in the Parliament debates. The spy scandal had not damaged the reputation of the government or its leaders enough in the public eye, so a statement on the issue was enough to calm public concerns.

As a result, after the November 7th Commons debate the matter was left to Macmillan to investigate, repudiate staff in the FO, or do what he saw fit. Part of the actions that Macmillan had taken was mentioned in a Commons debate on the 21st when it was asked if Macmillan had taken any action in the FO in response to ongoing criticism, to which Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Robin Turton responded,

> "No officials were dismissed or transferred as a result of the inquiries into the Maclean and Burgess affair. One was asked to resign in consequence of such inquiries."[lxxiv]

The spy incident had done little within the government to press for a change of staff in the FO with allegations leveled against the FO amounting to a minor internal investigation and only one member of the FO being asked to resign. Additionally, Robert Rhodes James in his biography *Anthony Eden* argued that in response to remaining public concern Eden, in cooperation with Attlee, agreed to the creation of an all-party conference of Privy Councilors to investigate the security service and to prevent another Maclean/Burgess scandal as a compromise.[lxxv] This helped to reduce political opposition to the Parliament's decision by Labourites and other left-wing politicians. In short, criticism was deflected away from the FO and towards the security services dismissing the incident and allegations as comparable to McCarthyistic witch hunts. The lack of criticism of the FO in the newspapers following the Parliament debates suggest that these measures were successful in preventing further public and media outcry.

But, despite the success of the Eden government to placate the media and opposition, the incident left concerns regarding the FO that had several ramifications. First, where government response had silenced the newspapers, Gallup polls suggest that the scandal had an impact on public perceptions of the government. A government poll taken in December shows a narrow

approval of 44 to 40 percent.[lxxvi] The scandal left a wound in public confidence in the aristocratic government and policy under Eden. That mark going into 1956 would compound with the Suez crisis and other concerns in Britain to leave the reputation of the existing FO irreversibly damaged.

Before discussing how the Suez Crisis impacted the FO there was a statement by Eden during the November 7th Common's debate that provides insight to his view on the FO reforms of 1945 and their ongoing progress. Eden stated,

> "When I asked the Cabinet to approve those reforms, my main concern then was to prevent the continuation of the FS in its various departments, to prevent having a FO that did not go abroad. That seemed utterly wrong in these modern times and it seemed that the thing to do was to bring all four Services together and to make it possible for members of all four to move from one to the other according to where they were best fitted to go."[lxxvii]

Despite being the main proponent of the FO reform proposals in 1943 it seemed that by 1955, given his exhaustion with the FO and growing distractions, Eden had become much more reserved in intent to press for changes outside the amalgamation of the FS branches. For Eden, reform of the FO had taken the backseat but the motives for this shift were less clear.

Some explanations for this change, as James argued in *Anthony Eden*, are mentioned when comparing letters between Eden and various FO staff over his time as Prime Minister. Letters found by James reveal support for Eden in the FO had by 1956 shifted. James also argued that when Eden had become Prime Minister his approach to foreign affairs disgruntled members of the FO as he was viewed to be emulating former Foreign Secretary George Curzon. It was believed that Eden had been absorbed by **"**the great game**"** and behaved more as a politician rather than a career FO diplomat. [lxxviii] Given Eden's position as Prime Minister this made sense. However, it created the impression among FO officials that Eden was distancing himself from

the FO and was losing his touch in foreign affairs. FO officials knew by 1955 that Eden had a very tumultuous career as he oversaw the decline Britain in the 30's, fought through WWII and the wartime cabinet, and witnessed the stress the postwar FO contribute to the decline of Bevin and Churchill's careers. It is not unreasonable to see why FO officials had concerns about Eden's change in behavior after having worked with him for decades. Their concerns, along with public memory of the recent spy scandals, would prove to be valid going into the FO's greatest crisis with Suez.

The Suez Crisis between 1956 and 1957 is considered by historians to be a major turning point in British history as it marked a last attempt to demonstrate that Britain was still a player in global politics and could pursue its interests without the assistance of allied powers like the U.S. The importance of Suez to British leadership and public was a multi-layered issue but in respect to the backlash it had on the FO it was public sentiment about the intervention in Suez and the canal's connection to British economic well-being that made the event pivotal. For the Eden government it was mentioned by Macmillan in a set of cabinet conclusions during October of 1955 that,

"British Oil companies owned investments in the Middle East valued at 600 million pounds. The United Kingdom economy was now dependent on the oil produced in the Middle East area and,…, would become increasingly dependent on this oil. An asset of vital important to us… and adequate steps should be taken to protect it. Both the Egyptians and the Saudi Arabians had been attempting to undermine our position in the area."[lxxix]

A statement that Eden in a following meeting on the 20th supported saying,

"The main objective of our policy should be to protect our vital oil interests in the Middle East. The allocation of the Egyptian High Aswan Dam project to the European consortium,…, would be of immense value in restoring the prestige of the West and particularly of the older European Powers."[lxxx]

Because of the canal's significance Eden and other members of the cabinet believed that the security of the canal was bound to the security of Britian itself. In turn, it meant that "adequate steps" to ensure control of the area and promote relations with imperial possessions was priority in policy. Thus, when Egyptian Prime Minister Nasser seized the canal on July 26th, 1956 the action became an attack on first, the FO and British government who were tasked with propping up the empire to secure resources from the Commonwealth and Arab countries. Second, the international prestige of Britain as the canal was a symbol of British global influence.

Once news of the seizure of the canal reached Britain newspaper rhetoric was diverse but had some consistent themes. For example, *The Scotsman* on July 28th, 1956 stated that the action was concerning because,

> "Egypt has seized the canal but she is in no condition to run it efficiently. Unrestricted and proper working of the canal is vital to the interests of many nations. To secure those vital needs many agreements have been made. Now Egypt at a stroke has decided that she will tear these up. The only immediate arbitrament would be force-armed force. That can be ruled out, one hopes. This is a matter concerning… consultation and coordination."[lxxxi]

The paper's call for the use of diplomacy rather than military intervention, as was the case in Korea, was reflective of public disinterest in retaining armed forces when the home islands were under economic strain, relying more on a capable FS that could secure these needs through cheaper and non-provocative means. A Gallup Poll in August, when the British government decided to respond to Nasser's seizure of the canal through diplomatic and economic pressure, shows early support for the FO's and government's initial response with a 59 to 25 approval rating. Another Gallup Poll released in September asked if Britain and France should have militarily intervened against Egypt supports this conclusion with a 65 to 22 percent in favor of not taking military action like in Korea.[lxxxii] There appeared to be trust in diplomats of the FO

from the public to be able to resolve the situation without the need for commitment of military personnel.

However, while the early action by the FO was met with approval there was internal pressure by Eden and the cabinet government that created a divide between popular and government views of response to the Canal. In a cabinet meeting on July 27th Eden addressed the cabinet about the developing situation in Suez stating,

"Her Majesty's government would take a most serious view of this situation and that any failure on the part of the Western Powers… to regain control over the Canal would have disastrous consequences for the economic life of the Western Powers and their standing and influence in the Middle East."

Also, information given to the cabinet during the meeting provided estimates on the impact to oil supply, trade, and more if the situation in Egypt persisted. Estimates on oil supplies claimed that because some 70 million tons of oil passed through the Canal with 60 million destined for Britain and other Western European countries it was predicted, even with efforts to conserve fuel, Britain would only last six weeks on current supplies if imports were disrupted or diverted.[lxxxiii] The bottom line presented to the Cabinet was that the government had a timeframe of six weeks before Britain began to face economic consequences from supply shortages. Also, unlike the Burgess-Maclean scandal, broad popular criticism meant it would be more difficult to deflect or downplay the incident.

In response, discussion of potential actions that could be taken against Egypt by cabinet ministers like Macmillan, Selwyn Lloyd, and others concluded the following,

"The Cabinet- (1) Agreed that Her Majesty's Government should seek to secure, by the use of force if necessary, the reversal of the decision of the Egyptian Government to nationalize the Suez Canal Company. (4) Appointed a Committee of Ministers consisting of :-- Prime Minister, Lorde President, Chancellor of the Exchequer,

Foreign Secretary, Commonwealth Secretary, Minister of Defense – to formulate further plans for putting our policy into effect."

Justifying these actions on the basis that,

"Failure to hold the Suez Canal would lead inevitably to the loss one by one of all our interests in the Middle East" [lxxxiv]

The Cabinet Government and FO leadership under Selwyn Lloyd, while willing to pursue peaceful alternatives, were not afraid to apply military force to restore the movement of goods and resources through the canal. This meant that by early to mid-September, when the effects of the supply disruption started to be felt in the public sphere, the Eden government would have been pressured to act against public will. Gallup Polls supported this estimate with approval ratings for how the government had handled the crisis had a 42 to 40 percent approval rating in September compared to August's 59 to 25.[lxxxv] September marked a shift in public opinion at the lack of progress with Suez and newspapers began to say the following,

"To date the Government's handling of the Suez crisis has in some respects been wanting in firmness, but … it has won majority support both at home and abroad by its extreme restraint and by patent anxiety to keep the debate on a rational basis."[lxxxvi]

Papers continued to praise the governments diplomatic and economic measures against Egypt but by September some questioned the effectiveness of the policy in restoring international control over the canal. Additionally, a Gallup Poll in September asked what action the government and FO should take if Egypt would not capitulate to the demands of Western European countries. Among the speculated options the option which had the least support was the one that said if Egypt rejected an ultimatum that conceded control to Britain or international authorities' troops should be sent to occupy the canal with a 49 to 34 percent disapproval rating.

Alternatively, the most supported options were to continue or tighten economic and political measures against Egypt with 58 to 21 percent approval, and to refer the matter to the United Nations with 81 to 12 percent approval.[lxxxvii] There was a disconnect between Commons Conservative and cabinet government and the people. On one hand the government saw the escalation of the Suez crisis as justifiable as it was in defense of British interests and policy. But popular belief differed. In short, the public, opposed to a decade ago, viewed British independence and international prestige as less important compared to economic stability at home. This meant the cabinet government's willingness to use military force to enforce control over the canal was at odds with what most people in Britain believed was the best method to achieve success at Suez. But, despite this public information, the extended blockage of goods to Britain and M.P. criticism pressured the Eden government to take military action in late October.

As other historians have argued, the invasion of Egypt between October 29th and November 7th and eventual failure of the operation to secure British interests in several ways was the straw that broke the camel's back for the reputation of aristocratic leadership in both the FO and the central government. As James in his biography *Anthony Eden* argued, the invasion of Egypt both surprised and divided Britain anywhere from MPs in parliament, regardless of party, down to families in the peripheries of Britain. Outside of universities and intellectual communities who largely opposed Suez, there was no clear consensus. It was only as days passed with Anti-British demonstrations at home and abroad in Arab countries that it became apparent that time was not on Britain's side. Additionally, James argued in the case of the FO the invasion of Egypt had two effects. First, there was a general disgruntlement at Eden and other politically connected FO officials for keeping lower ranked members in the dark about government intention. Also, with mounting pressure on FO ministers both at home and abroad

and a growing deluge of reports and telephone calls most ministers were unable to properly coordinate during Suez. This led to threats of resignation within the FO, though few followed through with said threats.[lxxxviii] Eden and the cabinet government's lack of communication of plans for Suez had several repercussions, to the public it reenergized suspicions the aristocratic government was out of touch with public opinion. Gallup Polls in early November support this conclusion as there was a 44 to 37 percent disapproval of the government's actions in Egypt.[lxxxix] An indecisive majority, but one that provides insight to public leanings even with the confusion surrounding Suez. While few FO officials resigned in protest to Suez, divided sympathies in the FO further hampered the ability for the FO to coordinate a proper response.

It is worth noting that while there was opposition to seizing control of Suez Gallup Polls on November 10th and 11th, a week after Britain and allied forces had gained control of the canal, show that popular opinion flipped with a 53 to 32 percent approval.[xc] This can partly be explained by optimism that the operation was going to reopen Suez. This became problematic following U.S. diplomatic pressure and growing resentment from Arab states. Britain was forced into ceasefire and eventual withdrawal over the course of late November and early December. Public optimism was betrayed as a Gallup Poll in December reveals that 49 to 36 percent of people approved of military action taken against Egypt. In addition, another Gallup Poll asked after beginning military action, if Britain and France should have continued until the whole of Suez was occupied. 34 percent believed Britain should have continued despite international and domestic opposition while 53 replied that it was right to accept the ceasefire.[xci] The public was pleased with restoration of British control over Suez and were fine with a ceasefire as there was an impression that the government and FO had succeeded in their objectives. But as Britian

withdrew from Suez on the 22nd of December the action was not well received in both Parliament and the public sphere.

In the newspapers, such as with the *Birmingham Daily Post* on the 3rd of December after interviews with Labour M.P.'s such John Strachey, it was said,

> "In a few weeks' time this country is going to wake up to the fact that we have marched into Egypt, marched out of Egypt, caused the canal to be blocked, stopped our oil, made every Arab in the world into our enemy,…, all for nothing. As soon as we have made our withdrawal from Egypt negotiations with Nasser over the canal will have to be taken up exactly where the British Government broke them off."[xcii]

In another example in the *Liverpool Daily Post* on the 1st of December that covered Conservative M.P.'s like Lord Hinchingbrooke, it was said,

> ""Some of us fear that over this weekend the Government is taking the basic decision which will bring about our withdrawal from Port Said before our objectives have been secured. I refuse to allow the government of my country to throw it away," adding that the withdrawal decision would split the party."[xciii]

The response was divided but regardless most people in Britian were dissatisfied with how the operation concluded and eyes began to turn towards who was responsible for the failure. Most began to turn towards government leadership and decision makers in the cabinet and Parliament, or those who were believed to be responsible for coordination of the operation like diplomats in the FO.

The crisis reignited public opposition to aristocratic influence in government and by association the FO. The image that aristocratic officials in government and the FO's ability or willingness adapt to modern economic and diplomatic values in social politics was tarnished and this left a social and international mess for the succeeding Macmillan government that

contributed to Macmillan's efforts to push for a transition of staff in the FO and complete the FO reforms leading up to 1961.

When Macmillan succeeded Eden as Prime Minister in January of 1957 he inherited an economic crisis at home, failing relations with Britain's greatest economic and military ally the U.S., and a decline in popular support and confidence for his party following the failures of Suez. Initially, all signs pointed towards the Macmillan government being tumultuous at best. But, despite being an aristocrat as well as the Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time of the Suez he was not associated with the disaster and avoided criticism from the public and parliament. This left Macmillan a degree of political maneuverability between 1957 and 1961 allowed him to react to reemerging popular demands for reform of the FO and Britain.

According to historian Nigel Ashton in his article *Harold Macmillan and the "Golden Days" of Anglo-American Relations Revisited, 1957–63*, it was argued having witnessed the failures at Suez, damage caused to Britain by American response, and public reception to imperial activities in late October and early November of 1956 , Macmillan was left with the reality of a weakened and dependent Britain required a shift in government and foreign policy to adapt. [xciv] Macmillan, unlike previous governments following 1945, recognized after Suez that Britain could not operate on the world stage as independently it had prior to the end of WWII. Britain's increasing dependence on foreign aid continued to drive policy but because the empire had lost its public appeal Macmillan had to develop alternative means of achieving British interests. Thus, a policy of global cooperation, namely with the U.S., became central to how Macmillan ran Britain and policy in the FO. Macmillan was willing to appease the U.S. if it meant restoring a special relationship like what had existed between Churchill and Roosevelt if it allowed Britain to influence the U.S. in ways that benefited British interests. However, problems

arose from the unwillingness of American policy makers such as President Eisenhower, Secretary of State John Dulles, and others to work with British officials who supported the Suez operation.[xcv] Despite the close relationship that Macmillan had with Eisenhower American anti-colonial sentiments, along with rampant anti-communism/McCarthyism created obstacles in 1957 for FO officials to engage in diplomacy with the U.S..

The reasons why American leaders associated colonialism and communism with FO aristocrats are numerous but can be summarized as follows. Aristocrats had centuries of work and monopoly on positions in the FS and even in the postwar years administered British imperial domains. Recent events surrounding Suez with the aristocratic government under Eden and FO officials not resigning or objecting to the operation only reinforced the association of British aristocrats with colonialism. There were also concerns over communist infiltration and/or influence in the FO after the Burgess-Maclean spy scandal that further degraded trust.

With discontent for the FO both at home and abroad, Macmillan was placed in a position where a change of staff in the FO had appeal. Bringing a new generation of FO officials that were not associated with the aristocracy would appease the public and open additional avenues of cooperation with the U.S.. Though the incentives for change were apparent to Macmillan it leaves questions about what Macmillan did to progress these changes leading up to 1961.

To help prepare and ease the transition in the FO Macmillan brought in several ministers and secretaries that, like him, were progressively minded. One example: Similar to Macmillan's time as Minister of Housing, due to Eccles' support for provincial education he was supportive of policies that benefited the middle- and working-classes. Thus, in October of 1959 Eccles was reinstated as Minister of Education. But, more important for the FO was Macmillan retaining Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd. Lloyd, alongside his Commons representative Joint Under-

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Robert Allan, began to introduce a series of changes to the FO between 1957 and 1960 that advanced policies that favored middle- and working-class applicants. These included funding and revising recruitment methods and supporting the removal of older staff in the FO through changes to the Superannuation bill section of the 1943 FO reforms in the 1959 FS bill.

While reforms to education in 1955 provided a pool of middle- and working-class recruits by 1959 talks emerged in Parliament between 1959-60 around FO staff changes. In a Commons debate on November 19, 1959 the matter of training and selection of overseas FS officers was brought into question by the Labour led Dunfermline Burgs parliament constituency. Speaker of the group M.P. and Academic at the University of Edinburgh Alan Thompson asked the following,

"For some years I was employed as a university teacher and during that period I made the acquaintance of a number of students who were interest4ed in a diplomatic career,…, with varying degrees of success. This case led me to look at the figures of FS recruitment and the kind of people who are accepted. Only one out of ten came from the sons of semi-skilled workers. There were no sons of unskilled workers. These results seem to be much more biased in favor of the higher social status than the Home Civil Service results.

When I wrote to the Foreign Secretary about it his answer was that there was a lack of applications from the provincial universities, yet the figures do not show this to be so. In 1948 to 1956, 272 applied from all the remaining universities in England and Wales. Yet not one was successful."[xcvi]

Concerns over the lack of recruitment of university graduates from provincial colleges were brought before the Commons. Progress started under the Attlee government in 1945 had produced applicants from provincial universities as early as 1948 but none had been recruited. In response to these concerns, Joint Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Robert Allan made the following statement,

”I can say that the FO is in very close contact with, and takes the liveliest interest in, the works of the Commission. We naturally do this because, although the question of selection is finally with the Commission, it is proper and possible for us to have discussions and make suggestions to the Commission.

Perhaps I could briefly remind the House of the methods used for selection. The 1943 reforms took into account that applicants might not have had the chance of learning a foreign language before they entered the Service. In 1943 and immediately afterwards, few applicants had had the chance of a full university training so a second method, known as Method II, was introduced for both the home Civil Service and the FS candidates. In 1948, when there had been time for candidates to have completed full university courses, the original method of the long examination coupled with an interview was re-introduced and referred to as Method I. The late Ernest Bevin,…, did not like examinations.

He decided, in agreement with the Civil Service Commission, that Method II only should be used for selecting Foreign Service entrants. Method I was therefore used for the home Civil Service only. The 1957 review,…, suggested that the Foreign Service might be losing good recruits because of its reluctance to use Method I. Both of them are now open to any candidate wishing to join the FS.[xcvii]

Joint Under-Secretary Allan acknowledged that while there were two methods of recruitment, Method II was favored. Method II was favored because the FO leadership believed younger candidates lacked the educational credentials that Bevin expected. This in part makes sense for two reasons. First, the reforms changed the required academic credentials that were expected of younger applicants but some years were expected before applicants could meet expected changes. Also, because both the Attlee and Churchill governments did little to promote provincial colleges, recruitment defaulted to traditional schools. Therefore, FO recruitment, in line with Method II, continued to favor traditional schools whose applicants better met required academic credentials. Method II became an obstacle for applicants from provincial colleges. Thus, in the late forties and early fifties, most applicants from provincial colleges applied

through Method I. Hence the rejection of applications from provincial schools that M.P. Thompson inquired about.

This was left unchanged by postwar British governments until Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd reviewed the state of FO recruitment in 1957. The result of said review was that the FO was losing applicants from non-aristocratic classes by continuing to only recruit from Method II. But, when the FO began to recruit applicants from Method I in 1957, people from middle- and lower-class backgrounds were more likely to get accepted. But when did new blood begin to enter the FO?

A Commons debate on July 11, 1960 answers this question. When Conservative M.P. Baron Peyton inquired Joint Secretary Allan about increases to FO recruitment that had occurred over the previous two years. Allan responded,

> "The increase of 186 in the last two years is largely attributable to additional commitments,… There has also been an improvement in the recruiting position which has helped us to meet these and other outstanding commitments."[xcviii]

Macmillan and Lloyd began to expand the staff of the FO starting in 1958 to address problems of efficiency that had existed since 1952. The result was, as Allan stated, improvements to FS recruiting services and recruitment for the FO in turn. Also, considering that the studentship period lasted from 18 months to 2 years, recruits accepted in early 1957 would have by mid to late 1958 completed their studentships and received a professional position in the FO.[xcix]

Lastly, to help promote the transition of staff after 1958, Lloyd proposed to the Commons in November of 1960 changes to section five of the original 1943 FO reforms. Known as the FS Bill of 1959, it was first put forward to the Commons on the 28th of October with support from

Allan and other Conservative M.P.'s such as Edward Boyle. Allan addressed the purpose of the bill and questions of M.P's as follows,

"Up to 1943 it was virtually on medical grounds only that a FS officer could be retired early and still receive a pension. This meant that a man who was not considered up to his job had either to be retired without a pension or posted where he could do least harm. In 1943, … the FS Act of that year … provided that, if the Foreign Secretary recommended and the Treasury agreed, men so retired could receive a special increase in pension and in lump sum. In this Bill we are seeking to include the FS within all the provision of the 1949 Act. That Act, …, entitled all home civil servants to retire voluntarily after reaching the age of 50 without complete loss of pension rights. But only FS officers below the rank of Second Secretary have had this right. … More important, it is a Bill that enables the Foreign Secretary to retire,…, those whose services, though no fault of theirs, has lost its full value.[c]

A motion that saw no objection from Commons Conservatives and elicited the following response from M.P. Philip Noel-Baker of the Labour opposition,

"I only desire to say,…, that we are in agreement with all the principles of the Bill. We think it is desirable in the public interest that these changes should be made, and we shall therefore vote for the Bill."[ci]

Opposition to the FS bill was minimal and the bill was passed.

The FS Bill of 1959 made two changes that led to an increase in the mobility of provincial applicants into FO and removal of the old. First, it expanded the powers of the Foreign Secretary to retire staff of the FO to the minimum age of 50 if the member's service was deemed to have lost its value. Also, it incentivized the retirement of older staff in the FO by bringing retirement and pension rights in line with the Civil Service act of 1949. Members of the FS now had the ability to voluntarily retire without risk of losing pension benefits and, with approval of the Foreign Secretary and Treasurer, pensions could be increased. In short, the days of aristocratic officials in the FO were numbered as long-standing members were now faced with a

decision. Retire and receive compensation with assurances by the state or risk being forced out as more provincial replacements were recruited.

When it comes to the public reception of these policies, little about either the FS bill or FO recruitment is mentioned in newspapers between 1957 and 1960. But Gallup Polls covering the Macmillan government and Selwyn Lloyd show a different story. Polls on approval of the Macmillan government between 1957 and 1960 were unsurprisingly at their lowest when Macmillan entered office between October of 1957 and May of 1958. Results show that approval remained between 30 to 38 percent approval and disapproval remaining at 42 percent. However, by November of 1958 poll results reveal an approval between 46 to 53 percent.[cii] While new FO recruitment policy and the FS bill may not be the only explanation for this growth of approval, considering that the dates corresponded with changes in the FO and debates in the Commons this at least supports that there was support for these changes.

Like polls on government approval, a poll in February 1958 reveals Lloyd had 36 to 34 percent disapproval. But, as polls got closer to November of 1959 a poll in June of 1958 shows a 37 to 22 percent approval, and another the following June with a 51 to 16 percent approval.[ciii] Lloyd's reputation in 1957 and the first half of 1958 were, like other aristocrats in the Macmillan government, predictably low as the events of Suez were still fresh in popular memory and little, to public knowledge, had been done to demonstrate change. But as efforts to integrate a new generation of FO staff began in the latter half of 1958, Macmillan and Lloyd's progressive policy caused public opinion to shift.

With support for Macmillan's progressive FO policy by cabinet ministers like Lloyd and Commons Conservatives public confidence in his government was repaired and remaining political opposition to FO reforms faded. Therefore, after the 1959 FS bill, Macmillan replaced

aristocrats in the FO to the point where, Cannadine argued, by 1960 only three percent of officials in the FS were aristocrats. By 1961 aristocrats in the FO, while not gone as High Commissioner of Canada Derick Amory and Ambassador to Washington David Ormsby-Gore are evidence, were no longer favored as they were rarely recruited by the FO.[civ]

In short, Macmillan's desire to reform the FO was a reaction to popular and international criticism that resulted from Suez. Building his cabinet around like-minded officials Macmillan supported a new generation of FO officials through the changes to recruitment policies in 1957 and expanded powers of Foreign Secretary in the FS bill of 1959. The following years leading up to 1961, these reforms ended favoritism of aristocratic recruitment and replaced aristocrats in the FO with middle- and working-class applicants from provincial colleges.

In conclusion, the FO reforms of 1945 aimed at limiting aristocratic influence took until 1961 because of a combination of political, educational, and social conditions. Reforms lagged due to provincial colleges lacking financial support, a shortage of available alternatives to existing FO aristocratic officials, and lack of popular support for immediate change. With the exception of the David Eccles education reforms in 1954, the Attlee and second Churchill governments did little to change the status quo in the FO. But, with the failure of the Eden government and FO aristocrats during the Suez operation between 1956 and 1957 public sentiment shifted in favor of a change of staff in the FO. The succeeding Macmillan government began to disfavor aristocrats in the FO in place of a new generation of middle- and working-class officials in attempt to placate his supporter base at home and support his foreign policy of decolonization and rectify relations with the U.S. Therefore, it took until 1961 for the favoring and recruitment of aristocrats in the FO to end, and the 1945 reforms to be realized.

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