The Role of the Policy Planning Staff in British Foreign Policy: Historical Lessons and Contemporary Insights

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Abstract

This article challenges the traditional approach to studying the creation of foreign policy within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Whilst most historical and contemporary research has focused upon the role of the Foreign Secretary, Permanent Under Secretary and senior overseas representatives, this article argues that an overlooked department – the Policy Planning Staff, and its contemporary successor, the Policy Unit – has had significant influence over the debate and direction of British foreign policy. Drawing upon documents received under the Freedom of Information Act, archival documents and interviews conducted with current and previous members of the Staff and the wider FCO, this article reveals the rationale for the planning department, its roles, structure, staffing and influence on foreign policy over time. It concludes that the department has been, and remains, a crucial part of the policy-making process and, therefore, warrants further attention from historians and those interested in contemporary foreign policy analysis.

Keywords

Foreign Policy; Diplomatic History; Foreign and Commonwealth Office; FCO; Policy Planning; British Foreign Policy; Foreign Policy Analysis; Policy Unit

Main text

The creation of foreign policy can be a complex process. In the British system the Prime Minister and their advisors, the Foreign Secretary, Cabinet, Parliament and civil servants from across Whitehall all contribute, with many Departments currently responsible for different elements of international relations as well as coordination and influence from the Prime Minister's Office, the Cabinet Office, the National Security Council (NSC), the Joint Intelligence Committee and all associated subcommittees and supporting secretariats.[1] Each

of these feed into a contested process that is further influenced by electoral necessities, the world of think-tanks, NGO's, scholars, lobbies, consultancies, the media and the public, as well as the need to balance British interests with values, long-term strategy with medium and short-term operational needs, and ambitions with realities.

Despite this, diplomacy and the representation of British interests overseas has traditionally been led by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). As a result, international relations scholars and diplomatic historians have examined the work of the FCO and its top civil servants – the Permanent Under Secretary (PUS) and their office, Heads of Mission and Heads of geographic departments – in an attempt to understand the development of foreign policy and decisions of international affairs. However, this article seeks to challenge this tradition by exploring the influence of a different FCO department; the Policy Planning Staff (PPS), including its contemporary successor the Policy Unit. Whilst there is considerable literature on the creation of policy focusing on national strategies,[2] foreign policy in general, British foreign policy specifically[3] and even micro studies of the workings of Whitehall and the FCO,[4] there is little research that has been conducted into the specific role of the FCO PPS in this process.[5] One exception here has been the work of Evans, who offers the most insight into the department and its work, but this has been as part of a broader context of analysing the creation of a British national strategy rather than focusing on foreign policy specifically.[6] Consequently, this article aims to undo this oversight. It does so by drawing upon documents received under the Freedom of Information Act and archival documents from The National Archives and the British Diplomatic Oral History Programme. These are supported by interviews with past and present consumers of planning documents within the FCO, as well as members of the PPS and the Policy Unit themselves. It reveals the historical background and rationale for the creation of the Staff as well as the changing roles and

responsibilities of the department in order to give a broad understanding of its significance and influence. In addition, the structure, staffing and selection of planners is investigated to demonstrate the importance of the department within the wider FCO, before assessing the limitations of the planners in the creation of foreign policy. This article concludes that this under-explored department has had a significant impact on British foreign policy in the past, continues to do so in the present and will persist as such in the future. As a result, further study of the Planning Staff can provide new and revealing insights into the creation of British foreign policy and thus deserves far greater attention from scholars.

The Foreign Office (FO) and Commonwealth Relations Office (CRO) had long acknowledged the need for planning before the establishment of a PPS. It was understood that two key weaknesses of bureaucracies were (and remain); that those who deal with the day-to-day have little opportunity to think ahead to anticipate or plan for policy problems; and that any complex machinery has difficulty in maintaining an overall view of objectives. Consequently, a number of attempts were made after the Second World War to rectify this problem within the British foreign policy machine. In particular, in 1949 a Permanent Under Secretary (PUS) Department was established to consider major and long term policy questions.[7] After the disaster of the Suez crisis the FO underwent further internal reflection leading the Assistant Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Con O'Neill, to look deeper into the concept of policy planning. His idea was to design a new capability that could provide "the quick and up-to-date collation of intelligence and for planning as a basis of policy" and he subsequently established a number of specialised groups under the Director of Research to summarise existing information and examine trends, a Planning Section run by one First Secretary within the PUS's Department and a Planning Steering Committee, with the PUS as chair, consisting of Under Secretaries and the Planning Section as secretariat.[8] The role of the

Planning Section was to provide "recommendations on immediate and long term policy in the light of current requirements".[9] In 1958, for example, its main effort was the production of three major Steering Committee papers on Middle East policy, but they also produced papers on topics as varied as "The effect of nuclear efficiency on United States policies", "The implications of Anglo/US interdependence" and "Control of arms supplies to the Middle East".[10]

By 1961, it was considered that the planning capability needed to be expanded further. To ensure that any planning function should not be entirely removed from all other responsibilities – to avoid working in an ivory tower – it was decided that the planners were best suited to working concurrently on European politico-military matters. Consequently, the PUS Planning Section was transferred to the Western Organisations Department (renamed the Western Organisations and Planning Department) where three planners, under the leadership of Peter Rambotham, spent the majority of their time working closely with the Ministry of Defence, forecasting to help the Chiefs of Staff plan where to place British forces and focusing on the development of NATO policy. Beyond this, the main functions of the planners at this time expanded to include the preparation of papers for the Steering Committee; planning connected with general strategic, and particularly nuclear questions; planning and some operational responsibility for subjects that cut across-departments; ad hoc studies for departments engaged in current business; and the routine work of coordination on questions for which no other department was responsible, such as the coordination of briefs for international Ministerial meetings and speech or lecture writing. The Planning Section was now also expected to be interdepartmental (especially working with Cabinet Committees and the Ministry of Defence), intergovernmental (focusing on working with planners in the United States and NATO's newly formed Atlantic Policy Advisory Group) and keep in

contact with unofficial opinion (particularly think-tanks and relevant periodicals).[11] However, the planners found it exceptionally challenging to keep up with all of these requirements. Administration and speech writing meant that finding time for long-term planning and following the ideas of external groups became increasingly difficult, whilst being sat within a dual department made it harder to focus on the broader, worldwide, foreign policy view.[12]

In 1962, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan appointed a new committee, under the chairmanship of Lord Plowden, to examine representational services overseas. The committee was established to consider the ongoing prospects of a separate FO and CRO and to make recommendations for the future.[13] As part of this process, FO planners gave evidence and recommended that their section be made independent, sitting outside of the Western Organisation Department.[14] When the 1964 Plowden report was published it offered some criticism of past planning and recommended that both the FO and CRO placed greater emphasis on this process, stating that planning should be an attempt to foresee the choices that Britain was likely to face in the next five years and to formulate broad policy accordingly. As a result, of these recommendations the independent PPS was founded in 1964 working directly under a Deputy Under Secretary and leaving the responsibilities of coordination and speech writing in the newly renamed Western Organisations and Coordination Department.[15]

These changes were formalised through a circular to all departments from the PUS, Harold Caccia on 10 January 1964. In it he stated that the object of planning in overseas affairs was not to provide prescriptive courses of action but to broadly assess British interests and priorities, check the assumptions upon which current policy was based and against the best estimate of the course of future events, and to subsequently recommend policy changes to

Ministers .[16] Planners were also to take responsibility for the distribution of planning papers and following-up to ensure that appropriate action was taken once they had been approved. In addition, as coordination responsibilities were removed, the planners were expected to expand their responsibility of keeping in touch with outside opinion and develop links with universities, journalists and scientists, and to participate in seminars on related topics.[17] To staff the new department two officers were taken from the Western Organisations and Planning Department – John Thomson and Crispin Tickell before he was succeeded by Robert Wade-Gery – and they were directed under the leadership of Michael Palliser who wanted to be involved in all of the Secretary of State's policy meetings but continued to emphasise the importance of the staff's independence.[18]

To further support this change a Planning Committee (in addition to the existing Steering Committee) was founded. Whilst the Steering Committee was set to commission, consider and comment on planning papers and decide whether they should be passed on to a Cabinet Committee or other Government Departments, the role of the Planning Committee was to commission planning papers, examine first drafts and provide overall supervision of planning work. It was to consist of the Director of Research, Head of the PUS' Department, Head of Planning and was to be chaired by the relevant Deputy Under Secretary.[19]

In addition, the CRO – following a directive from the Cabinet Secretary Norman Brook that other departments should follow suit – had established its own planning unit in 1959 dealing with general Commonwealth policy and coordination. It had just one First Secretary responsible primarily for planning, supported by a Clerical Officer, and similarly worked through an Assistant Secretary to a Steering Committee presided over by the PUS. Work focused on producing a paper with country chapters looking ten years ahead and a second

paper on the British legacy in the Commonwealth in order to draw out lessons on its value.[20] However, the Plowden report recommended that, in anticipation of the merger between the FO and CRO, the two planning departments should be combined. This was completed shortly after the official unification of the two Departments in October 1964.[21]

By this stage it had also been established that there was a difference between the role of the production of papers by the planners and those in geographical or technical departments. In a meeting of the Committee on Representational Services Overseas, held in February 1963, the Head of the Western Organisations and Planning Department, John Barnes, explained that political departments would normally produce papers which fell exclusively within their territory, unless there was a particular reason as to why not. Instead, planners were generally responsible for looking at broader, cross-cutting issues. Similarly, as Barnes and the Deputy Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Francis Rundall, stated, there remained a distinction between planners, intelligence and military planning. At this time research for the Joint Intelligence Bureau (which would be subsumed into the newly created Defence Intelligence Staff in 1964) remained within the PUS' department, as did military planners. It was felt that the link between intelligence and military planning was significant enough to keep them together and separate from the Western Organisations and Planning Department.[22] Nonetheless, the timing of the establishment of the independent planners almost exactly coincided with an intensive cross-Whitehall study of British Defence Policy. The incoming Labour government placed a budget cap on defence forcing a full reappraisal of Britain's main strategic positions and a new defence review to be launched in 1965. As a result, a Long Term Study Group was established in the Cabinet Office in 1964 and the Planning Staff were forced to spend a significant amount of time cooperating on these issues in order to feed into the areas of overlap between foreign and defence policy.[23]

By 1966 it was clear that the planners were starting to have an impact. Since 1964 28 of the 49 papers considered by the Planning and Steering Committee had been prepared by the Planning Staff. Planners had become integrated into the internal machine and were invited to relevant meetings by other departments, including taking part in the regional Heads of Mission Conferences.[24] On 12 November 1968 the PUS, Paul Gore-Booth, sent a circular to FCO departments and missions reiterating the Planning Staff's terms of reference in the merged offices. In it he reemphasised the understanding of planning based on what had been established by Caccia four years earlier but added "Put another way, the aim is to get at the essential questions, to identify alternative policies and, looking ahead, to illuminate the likely consequence of such alternatives in terms of Britain's national interest".[25] He also agreed that whilst planners were expected to be aware of day-to-day events – indeed they received a full circulation of telegrams – they were also to remain free from operational responsibilities and pressures of urgent work in order to provide a broader view of policy.[26]

However, there had also been a number of minor amendments to the department since 1964. Firstly, an additional Secretary (now totalling three) had been added. Secondly, the Steering Committee had been renamed the PUS' Planning Committee, whilst the Planning Committee was renamed the Planning Working Party, with the Planning Staff acting as secretariat for both. Although their roles remained largely the same the PUS Planning Committee had now taken control of prioritising and supervising planning work. The circular ended by emphasising the need for departments and Missions to keep planners fully informed of developments, including sending copies of all important documents and giving the planners the opportunity to comment on drafts for any policy submissions, hence providing further scope for policy influence.[27]

Building on the department-planner relationship, on 19 November 1973 the PUS, Thomas Brimelow, produced a new circular. It stated that in the future planners were to have a more proactive relationship with departments and declared a decision to increase the mandate of the PPS to include responsibility for supporting the promotion and scrutiny of forward policy planning of departments.[28] This created a new internal dynamic whereby departments not only incorporated planning where required, but also allowed planners to request work to be done on certain topics or ask to be included in specific meetings. For example, in January 1974, the Head of the Planning Staff, James Cable, wrote to Alan Goodison, Head of the Southern European Department, requesting that the planners be involved in discussions on three subjects; the value of defence facilities in Cyprus, British policy towards Portuguese Africa and an assessment of the value of the southern flank of NATO and how it should fit within an new European defence identity.[29] A year later, Brimelow wrote to all Heads of Mission to advise that he saw the function of the Planning Staff as being to ask and answer five key questions: What is Britain trying to do and what is it achieving? What is Britain doing that it ought not to be? What is it not doing that it ought to? What factors are responsible for these? What changes would it recommend?[30]

The situation changed again in 1976 when it was announced that the Planning Staff were to be governed by a new structure and terms of reference. On 31 March 1976 Michael Palliser, now PUS, sent a circular to confirm the changes which advised that the Planning Committee would henceforth be responsible for monitoring proposals for new expenditure, and that the staff would be increased to four First Secretaries, with the fourth having as their primary task the writing of speeches for the Secretary of State; a role that had been taken away when the planners first became independent.[31] He also provided further clarity on the role of planning

stating that operational planning, typically concerning immediately apparent problems and with a time scale of six months to a year, were the responsibility of operational departments. Indicative planning, concerned with potential rather than imminent problems with a two to five-year timescale, was the responsibility of the Planning Staff.[32] The Planning Staff, Palliser declared, now had seven functions; commenting on any departmental proposals that had policy implications; keeping up-to-date with the operational planning of departments and keeping the Planning Committee informed accordingly; producing indicative planning papers; producing proposals on priorities and resource allocation for the Planning Committee; monitoring the implementation of decisions made by the Steering Committee; liaising with other planners at home and abroad as well as the Assessment Staff and unofficial opinion; and speech writing.[33]

The role of the planners changed again in the 1980s in response to a series of crises. When the Russians invaded Afghanistan in December 1979 the South Asia department were not equipped to deal with the scale of events. Earlier on in the year, the revolution in Iran had overthrown the Shah and by December Ayatollah Khomeini had become the supreme leader of the country causing another crisis. In response, in April 1980, Robert Burns, on behalf of the PUS, wrote to the Senior Deputy Under Secretary, Sir Donald Maitland, to advise that at the next meeting of Deputy Under Secretaries they were to discuss internal organisation to manage the two crises. He advised that geographical departments were under strain, especially with the "growing multiplicity of international forums for consultation" and too much operational and technical character was falling upon the Deputy PUS (who was running the Afghanistan taskforce) and the Political Director – neither of which had enough support staff.[34] The planners had already been increasingly involved in staff work for secret political and economic discussions around these crises as well as preparing instructions or advice on

crisis issues which did not naturally fall into a particular department. The Chief Inspector, R. Mark Russell, also recommended that coordination for crisis management should be handled by the Planning Staff, and that subsequently they should be reorganised into two sections; a coordination secretariat consisting of three personnel to become involved in operational thinking and act as executive arm of the Deputy Secretaries[35], and a Planning Section also consisting of three personnel as well as one outside secondment, with the Head of Planning overseeing both sections with a responsibility to report directly into the PUS on Planning, the Political Director on coordination and the Deputy Under Secretary overseeing a particular crisis. Consequently, the Planning Staff was to be renamed the Planning and Coordination Staff.[36] These recommendations were accepted and formalised in a circular by the PUS, Michael Palliser, on 23 June 1980,[37] and this system quickly became the modus operandi during crises. It was repeated during the 1982 Falklands crisis[38] and by the time Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990 planners were involved in the Emergency Unit established to manage the subsequent Gulf War.[39]

More recent changes has seen the staff completely disbanded in the early 2000s, only to be reinstalled a few years later under the Foreign Secretary David Miliband. In 2008 the FCO established a Strategy Unit which brought planners and research analysts together into a single Directorate for Strategy, Policy Planning and Analysis. The rationale for this move was to pool "enough intellectual capacity at the centre of the organisation to be sure that we were covering all the major issues" and the change was approved by the Cabinet Capability review.[40] The PPS was thus succeeded by the Strategy Unit, which was rebranded again in 2011 under Foreign Secretary William Hague as the Policy Unit, which still currently exists, although it has to regularly adapt to changing Whitehall environments.[41]

Today the Head of the Policy Unit is also the Deputy Director of Strategy and the role of planning includes; setting direction for the FCO through the policy planning process; producing papers to form world views; and looking at more classic strategy in terms of impact, performance and risk including monitoring progress against these criteria. They also continue to have an input into resource allocation to ensure capabilities, which includes feeding planning views into spending reviews as well as a new role for overseeing the FCO's policy capability, including managing the Diplomatic Academy. Planners are not, however, as heavily involved in crisis management as before as, following the lessons from the 2010 Arab Spring, a specialised crisis structure was developed, with both an operational consular side and a political taskforce side. Instead, the main role for planners in crises today is restricted to tracking the key choices and decisions being made by those trying to deliver the crisis at pace. In this sense, they act as the removed conscious – as well as the Chilcot champion[42] – to ensure that the crisis teams are challenged to make the right decisions and have worked scenarios through to the long-term.[43]

Consequently, although influence and impact can be difficult to quantify, this was the raison d'être for the establishment of a planning department, and, like all departments, it has had to evolve and continue to prove its value to remain in existence. In particular, despite its development over time the PPS has always served to give space in the FCO for three key roles which have allowed for significant impact into policy debate. Firstly, the planners have been focused upon long-term thinking and planning, including producing papers on forward policy and subsequent follow-up on implementation. These papers have been intended to examine planning at the highest foreign policy level, looking at macro level challenges and trying to influence the FCO's overall and long-term point of view to ensure that the whole organisation thinks about some of the big trends that are shaping the world

currently and in the future. They have been commissioned by the PUS, Cabinet Committees, various Planning and Steering Committee formulations, at the request of departments and on the initiative of the Planning Staff themselves. As a result of this role those outside of the staff described it as "very much the backroom boys" where diplomats were granted the luxury of time to think.[44] Simon Fraser, a member of the PPS in 1991-2, explained:

> I was right at the heart of the machine with basically a blank piece of paper to work on and it was intellectually hugely challenging. It was really the moment in my career when I began to think deeply about foreign policy and step back a bit from just being part of the machine, doing the briefing, taking forward the policy of the day.[45]

As Robert Wade-Gery put it, "The Planning Staff was paid to try to make people think in five years rather than three days."[46] Today, the planners aim to use their papers to look 12-36 months into the future (for example, considering the likely impact of COVID-19 on the world in 18 months time) and initiate planning accordingly, but they also consider ideas for 10-15 years ahead in order to drive the FCO and the rest of Whitehall to think in these time frames and prepare for what may be coming in the future.[47] This includes continuously testing these ideas and adjusting policy recommendations as required.

The impact of these papers does vary. Between 1964 and 1971 there were 138 meetings of the Planning Committee and 84 meetings of the Planning Working Party in which 111 papers were considered, 76 of which had been initially prepared by the Planning Staff.[48] In 1972 a review of 20 planning papers from 1967-1971 was completed to assess their validity and usefulness. Each one was examined for assessment and prediction as well as policy

recommendations, asking; were the recommendations clear?, were they novel?, were they implemented? and were they right? The task revealed a mixed success rate but did highlight how the papers had been significantly influential in a few ways. For example, on assessment and prediction it was flagged that the planners had been fundamental in developing an understanding within the FCO of the importance of the growing bi-lateral relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union and its implications for Western Europe, the global implications of Japan's growth, how the enlargement of the European Community would create friction with the United States and the likelihood of the long term continuation of the Arab-Israel conflict as something that would have to be managed rather than could be cured.[49] Similarly, whilst the review concluded that implementation of approved policy recommendations needed improvement, it also demonstrated that some planning papers had a significant impact on policy; a paper on Anglo-French relations had formed the tactical basis on relations with France of the previous 18 months; a paper on the United Nations (UN) recommending a selective approach to participation and reduced profile was issued as an instruction to the Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, Sir Colin Crowe; and a 1970 paper on relations with Japan had formed the basis for fresh objectives given to the Embassy in Tokyo.[50]

However, in many cases, the process of writing these drafts was as valuable as the end product of the policy paper. By producing the first draft, and working with other departments on their first drafts, the planners had the opportunity to ask the right questions, challenge and – therefore – shape important policy discussion from the outset as well as generate early buy-in on planner ideas to ensure implementation of the agreed recommendations. Richard Wilkinson, who would go on to become the Head of the PPS, wrote in 1981 that the process of consultation and discussion was so important because it often meant that by the time the

paper was finalised much of its analysis has been treated as received wisdom by those involved in the topic and many of its recommendations, therefore, already incorporated into policy and ways of working. He concluded "In planning, therefore, the process is often as important as the product."[51] This remains the case today as papers often have to arrive at the right time, in the right way on the right persons desk and stand out from the information overload of other communications in order to have a significant impact as a stand-alone piece of work.

The second role for planners has been to challenge key assumptions made by departments, acting as a check to see whether they are sufficiently thinking about externalities and forcing them to justify their policies, especially those which may have been embedded for a long time. Since 1964 the planners have sat in and contributed to Heads of Mission Conferences, with many of them having, as a main document for discussion, a planning paper on their particular area. In 1968 Paul Gore-Booth advised "the Planners have to risk indifference or momentary unpopularity by trying out their own foresight on Under Secretaries or Departments."[52] In addition, in 1972 James Cable declared that the PUS had agreed that "if the Planning Staff had views of their own they were always at liberty to put these forward whether informal papers for the Planning Committee or to the PUS personally" and that they "need never regard themselves as being under an obligation to produce papers commanding general agreement." Indeed, at that time the PUS "particularly welcomed the idea of receiving heretical views on British Cultural Policy".[53] For Nigel Sheinwald, Head of the PPS 1987-9, this meant that the job "was to open things up and to say, What if? Or to say, Is that really right, and offer alternatives".[54] David Gore-Booth, Head of the PPS in 1987, described it as trying to "jerk policies in different directions in the Foreign Office if one thought that the policy was either atrophied of going in the wrong

direction."[55] Roger Tomkys, part of the PPS in 1969, described this role as "to put grit in the machine and to contest the accepted wisdom".[56] When Rodric Braithwaite was Head of the Staff this worked to the advantage of the then Foreign Secretary, David Owen, who had a difficult relationship with the FCO and wanted to encourage the planners to act as "a sort of subversive force".[57] This form of challenge – asking the difficult questions – remain a core function of the planners today in the hope of generating innovative and creative options, even if the outcome is to resolve that existing assumptions are valid.

In order to be able to offer a dissenting voice, planners have had to continually challenge themselves to avoid group-think. This has meant engaging beyond FCO departments to other government departments, wplanners in governments across the world and the wider foreign affairs community of think-tanks, NGOs, academia and other forms of outside expertise. In the 1960s Departments across Whitehall soon began to follow the FO and develop their own planning capability. Initially, the Planning Staff worked primarily with their counterparts in the CRO and Ministry of Defence relations further afield were quickly developed through a number of ad hoc groups run through the Cabinet Office, such as the Future Policy Working Group (1963-4), the Long Term Study Group (1964-5) and the Defence Review Working Party (1965).[58] Today the Policy Unit continues in this role by working with peers across Whitehall, contributing papers for the cross-departmental meetings of the NSC and acting as its secretariat, as well as working within wider Cabinet Office led processes and initiatives, for example, working closely with the Joint Intelligence Organisation on issues of risk and national interest or the current programme of work based on an integrated review of security, defence, development and foreign policy.[59]

Intergovernmentally, liaison with planners in ally nations has always been important as a method of exploring ideas outside of the tramlines of policy or the risk of breaking relationships. It has helped to understand different points of view but has also been used as a means to influence. Initially, this was conveniently conducted through the Atlantic Policy Advisory Group which brought together senior planners from NATO countries (all except Luxemburg and Iceland) for a three-day meeting twice a year. Bilaterally, the planners worked closely with the Policy Planning Council in the United States' State Department from the outset, but by 1967 they were also holding regular German-US-British talks. In the meantime a number of smaller NATO countries had declared an interest in the FCO planning machinery and had sent representatives to observe its set-up and establish relations. It was not long until planners were regularly meeting with peers from nations across the globe with similar ambitions; notes from 1972-1973 reveal meetings and information on planning passed to the Australians, French, Nigerians, Japanese, Iranians and Pakistanis amongst others.[60]

These intergovernmental planning relationships have become even more significant in recent years. Post-Brexit they have provided the opportunity to have genuinely strategic conversations and build collaborations to deliver concrete outputs in terms of joint work or shared scenario development with emerging powers or multiple partners. In addition, they have allowed the planners to act as a conduit to ensure that what others are thinking marries up with what is being done internally within the FCO, whilst also facilitating some track II and track 1.5 diplomacy to take place. Essentially, these talks have the added benefit of strengthening key relations by having strategic discussions outside of the official level.[61]

The third way of avoiding group-think has been by keeping in touch with outside expertise in the broader foreign affairs community. For Robert Wade-Gery this was a novelty because the traditional FO had not been very open-minded:

> [We] thought that Chatham House was a nest of communists, and journalists were people you should never speak to, soldiers were too stupid to bother with and academics were wholly irrelevant… You were government and you didn't want to waste your time talking to people who were outside your charmed circle.[62]

However, under the leadership of Michael Palliser and supported by the PUS, Harold Caccia, this policy was reversed as a process of "letting light into Whitehall".[63] Although there were some early complaints about the time consuming nature of this work – Head of Planning in 1968, John Thomson, wrote "often the burden is merely an incubus since we derive no direct benefit from many hours of jejune or tedious discussion…If only we had a piece of litmus paper to test the value of the occasion in advance!" – Thomson also conceded that "the task is essential not only in helping to form the opinions of outsiders but also as an important way of acquiring fresh slants on the problems before us and sometimes even new ideas, rare though they are."[64] The planners role here was not only to attend such events but also to maintain the FCO corporate membership of relevant bodies and notify relevant departments of any activities which may be of interest, as well as arranging for their attendance.[65] In addition, they were given the responsibility of coordinating and organising FCO seminars with universities; between May 1964 and October 1966 the planners organised thirteen of such events.[66] Similar activities continue today and include engaging with NGOs, other governments, past diplomats and military personnel and think-tanks such as the Institute of Strategic Studies, Chatham House and the Royal United Services Institute.[67] In addition,

effective challenge is achieved through variety of tools including red teaming, reading widely, and following the work of individuals who are driving provocative thought, whether they be in the media, academia, think-tanks, technology experts or science fiction writers.

Finally, at times, searching for different points of view and external expertise has included recruiting non-civil servants into the department, with Brian Crowe – Head of the PPS 1976-9 – beginning the tradition by hiring an academic from the Civil Service College for a year.[68] This action has since been succeeded by the recruitment of academics, PhD students, journalists and specialists from the private sector on secondment but also running challenge panels with outside expertise invited into the FCO for specific problems and topics.[69]

The third and final enduring role of the PPS has been to pay attention to cross-cutting issues that are not directly addressed elsewhere or are best suited for central management rather than any existing departments. This is part of the planners remit of "zooming out" and as Alison Leslie, who was a planner in 1986-7, described, "[it was] a place where people thought about the things that otherwise would fall between the cracks of the organisation."[70] For example, David Gore-Booth talked about how, before the information technology (IT) revolution, the planners discussed ideas about how the FCO should update itself in IT.[71] The planners have also been responsible for any number of cross-cutting tasks including contributing to the Queen's speech, preparing papers for incoming governments, managing resources and, now, overseeing policy capability.

One additional key, cross-cutting, role has been that of speech writing. When the planners were initially hived off into a separate department Peter Ramsbotham recommended to Michael Palliser that planning be kept separate from speech writing. He advised that this was

because the speech writing would not wait "because it has to be done by Thursday at five o'clock, and the planning always would wait, because it was all about what was going to happen in five years time, and it was silly to pretend you were ever going to get round to it."[72] As a result, Palliser stated that he would only take the job heading up the newly founded department if speech writing remained out of the planning remit. This was agreed and remained the case until 1976 when Prime Minister James Callaghan, inspired by Henry Kissinger's State Department, requested the PUS to re-establish the capability. As a result, a First Secretary was detached from the Eastern European and Soviet Department, transferred to the PPS and given the job.[73]

The role of speech writing has allowed for further policy influence. Over the years, planners have drafted speeches for the Foreign Secretary, the Prime Minister and occasionally other members of the Cabinet, and for many this has been a particularly enjoyable part of the work. As the United States Secretary of State Dean Acheson observed, "speech writing is often where policy is made, regardless of where it is supposed to be made."[74] Michael Palliser, in reinstalling the role in 1976, wrote "Public speeches can make an important contribution to the evolution and projection of British foreign policy" and listed one of the functions of the staff as "contributing to the process of policy formation through speech writing".[75] Rodric Braithwaite reiterated this point in the British context stating "it does mean you get close to the Minister and you can feed a bit of policy into your speech without anybody noticing."[76] For example, on 25 June 1980, Braithwaite listed the speeches currently underway and planned. They included two for the Prime Minister (one on the European Community and one for her tour of Australia), three for the Foreign Secretary (including an address to the UN General Assembly) and one for the PUS (to speak to the National Coal Board).[77] In 1990, for example, when the PPS were thinking about the Gulf Crisis, an idea was developed for a

regional Conference on Security Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) analogue for the Middle East, to reduce regional conflict and improve security. This was worked up into a paper and then written into a speech which was delivered by the Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, at the UN General Assembly, on 26 September 1990.[78] Sherard Cowper-Coles also recalls waking up one morning to hear the BBC announcing that the Foreign Secretary had set a new course for Anglo-German relations only to realise that this was due to a speech that he had drafted. He reflected "It showed how a speech could make policy".[79] More recently, however, the function of speech writing has again been removed from the planners and it is not currently part of the Policy Unit's remit.[80]

In order that each of these three enduring roles has had a tangible impact the planners have always had to have a structure with access to senior figures, balanced staffing numbers and a careful selection of personnel to act as the intellectual horse power of the Department. From its inception as a separate department planning was established to be important, not just to pay lip service to the criticisms of Suez and the Plowden report. To this end Michael Palliser secured two coveted offices and a room for a secretary on the first-floor corridor, next to the Foreign Secretary's office and overlooking Downing Street to ensure that the planners were always easily available to the Secretary of State and for the PUS based immediately on the floor below. For him "it gave us an access which I consider to be indispensable for planning" but the literal proximity to power also sent a strong signal to the rest of the FO about the significance of the new department.[81] In 1968, John Thomson confirmed this situation, writing "our geographical position in the Foreign Office is a great help."[82]

Structurally, unlike thematic or geographic departments, who report to an Assistant Under Secretary, then Deputy Under Secretary and then the PUS, the PPS have often reported

directly to the PUS and Foreign Secretary. This was a deliberate decision, to take the planners out of the traditional structure in order to allow them to consider broader strategy across the Department and to be able to offer challenge at the highest levels.[83] In addition, the PPS's agenda and priorities have frequently been set by the PUS and the FCO Management Board. Although officers would sometimes go to their head of department, to request that the planners look at a particular issue, most papers were commissioned and then sent directly to the PUS and Board, after comments from Directorates.[84] Consequently, the Planning Staff have always had a direct and immediate link to the top of the hierarchy, with their papers receiving reading and endorsement from the most senior officials. Even today the Head of Planning works into the Director of Strategy who then reports directly into the PUS and Foreign Secretary. In 1968, the Head of Planning, John Thomson wrote that the Planning Staff had become so effective "because Ministers and officials have been prepared to bring the Planning Staff into the centre of Foreign Office discussion and decision-making and to listen with consideration to their sometimes unorthodox views."[85] Even in the 1990s, many of the fourteen papers written during the Gulf War by the PPS, for example, were requested directly from the PUS and Secretary of State. From those that do not remain redacted it is possible to see that these papers were sent directly to the Foreign Secretary, the Prime Minister's Office and the Overseas Policy and Defence (Gulf) Cabinet Committee which was chaired by the Prime Minister.[86] Jeremy Greenstock, who joined the staff in 1978, recalled one occasion when he received a call, last minute, to produce a steering brief for an Anglo-American summit so he scribbled down some thoughts "and apparently it was just quickly typed out and sent straight off to Number 10, literally cleared with nobody."[87]

Additional structural influence has been gained by acting as secretariat for important meetings on Foreign Policy, thus providing further access to the top level of government.

Throughout the Cold War the planners worked as the secretariat for a private system of communication between Britain, the United States, France and Germany, known as the Quad,[88] but the planners have also been the secretariat for the PUS's Steering Committee, Ministerial meetings and now the NSC.[89] In these roles the planners have a number of responsibilities but can also drive the culture and ensure that the FCO is providing a strong leadership and convening role cross-Departmentally.

The department has always been staffed by civil servants, with the odd secondment. It has also, traditionally, been small in number. Initially, the staff started with just three planners. Michael Palliser was persuaded that keeping the staff small would make it more effective; "I was quite convinced that [it was] the only way you could get planning ideas, or if you like new ideas, slightly radical ideas, effectively injected into the system."[90] In 1968 John Thomson wrote to the PUS "It is easy to argue that the Planning Staff would do more if it were bigger, but I think it would do less well." His rationale was that it should not be composed of experts on specialist subjects as this would cloud the broader view, whilst being larger would make it less easy to conduct the kind of informal discussions that were had where everyone could contribute on any subject. For him, three was perhaps the ideal number, but as conferences, leave and seminars often reduced numbers to two "as with war ships so with members of the Planning Staff, we need four in order to have three constantly on station."[91] Paul Gore-Booth added "American experience has shown us that the one thing which renders planning ineffective is proliferation either of people or paper" and as a result it remained small in number for the first two decades.[92] By 1990-1, however, the staff had grown in size to 11 members,[93] by 2010 there were 15 people in the Strategy Unit and there are currently around eight planners today within the wider Policy Unit.[94]

From the outset Palliser also set about recruiting highly regarded personnel, considered to be "serious thinkers", "very smart people" and "identified as younger, brighter and slightly unconventional thinkers".[95] This led to the hiring of a succession of particularly able officers, many of whom went onto become Ambassadors or the PUS, which added to the overall authority and influence of the department.[96] Leslie Fielding, who was Deputy Head of the PPS in 1970-3, believed that his boss, Percy Cradock, thought that he was not clever enough to be a planner, "There were two other people who were very clever … and Cradock used to think 'You're so conventional, Leslie. This is not 'blue sky thinking'…What I want is a new vision.'"[97] When the former Ambassador Anthony Layden interviewed Roger Tomkys he also recalled how bright the planners were:

> I remember telling people when I was in Personnel that we tried to recruit people with above average intelligence and people who were good with other people, but we needed a couple of people every year who were very very intelligent, whether they got on with other people or not, because we needed them to be Head of the Planning Staff.[98]

This is because good planners have needed to be able to have the intellectual agility to build up sufficient expertise to engage with research analysts, Heads of Mission and others who are steeped in experience and policy knowledge, whilst also seeing the bigger picture. They have to use core economic skills, numbers and data as evidence, have an inquiring mind to read widely, be self-starting and be critical and creative enough to identify the difficult questions. These skills also have had to be balanced with the emotional intelligence to understand the complications of working into senior officials, who all have their own interests and agendas to advance or protect, the ability to be able to integrate into meetings with very senior

members of staff (including across Whitehall) whilst also being able to translate and cascade information horizontally and vertically. In addition, planners have had to be able maintain a level of resilience to recognise that they are likely to say, write or do things that others do not like, agree or understand. In 1968, when John Thomson was writing of the challenges for planners, he wrote "the overriding consideration in making the Planning Staff work is the quality of the officers appointed to it". He added "no amount of experience or juggling with machinery will compensate for any lack in the intellectual calibre or the personal qualities of the members of the Planning Staff."[99]

As the planners gained their intellectual reputation the post quickly became deemed to be "a feather in the cap" of serious diplomats with the planners viewed with "great esteem".[100] Foreign Secretary William Hague explicitly referred to the planners as "highly regarded" in his speech to the FCO in 2011[101] and the breadth of exposure and access to senior officials has traditionally been appealing to ambitious diplomats who like the idea of working directly with Ministers. When Sherard Cowper-Coles was told in 1983 that he was to join the planners he was "delighted" as his only previous encounter with the department had been when the "unforgivingly cerebral" Christopher Mallaby had gone to Cairo for planning talks and Cowper-Coles had been "impressed by the range and depth of Mallaby's brief, looking beyond and beneath the horizon, in as many possible directions at once." He declared "I knew that the planners were clever, and were supposed to be close to the Foreign Secretary – a sort of intellectual Praetorian Guard."[102]

Despite their strengths, there have also been a number of limitations on the impact that planners have had on the foreign policy process. In particular, the structure has left the department's influence open to fluctuation, often increased or restricted by the personality

and priorities of the Foreign Secretary and PUS; as Zara Steiner concluded, "a great deal of its influence must be exerted informally which can be a hit-and-miss proposition."[103] The first Head of the Staff, Michael Palliser, was considered by his colleagues to be extremely influential with the Foreign Secretary and the wider government, going on go be Harold Wilson's Private Secretary at number 10.[104] On the other hand, Brian Crowe, as Head of the PPS in 1976, secured Paul Lever from the Defence Department in order to maintain his level of influence. The Foreign Secretary, David Owen, liked Lever's work and had taken to going to him directly, so the solution was to pull him into the PPS where the relationship could continue whilst keeping Crowe in the loop.[105] Even worse, when Alison Leslie returned to the planners as the Head of the department in 1996-8 she oversaw the arrival of a new Labour government and a new Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, who was deeply suspicious of a civil service which had been serving under a Conservative Cabinet for almost twenty years. She recalled "it was a time in which as Foreign Secretary he was not much interested in policy planning papers and was suspicious of his most senior staff, so it was quite difficult for the Policy Planning Staff to find a rationale."[106] As John Thomson noted in 1968 "the Planning Staff is of no use unless it gets and retains the confidence of the Secretary of State, the Permanent Under Secretary and other leading officials in the Foreign Office."[107] Even when officials and politicians have valued the work of the planners it has not always resulted in influence as senior personnel have to have the time to review, and the inclination to pursue, policy recommendations for them to succeed. In 1975, Thomas Brimelow, the PUS sent a circular stating "At times the Planning Staff must have had some difficulty in concealing their feeling that they found the deliberations of the Planning Committee disappointing and frustrating."[108]

As well as managing their ministerial relationships, the planners have had to carefully balance being disruptive with being cooperative with colleagues because policy success often relies on buy-in from line departments, who are responsible for implementation and who control resources in London and the network of overseas posts. As John Thomson noted, "This means a good deal of diplomacy has to be exercised within the office."[109] When Rodric Braithwaite joined the planners he was advised:

> That the Planning Staff was rather like an irregular force operating ahead of the main army, out of uniform and doing pretty much what it liked. And that is fine and it can be useful. But if it starts being irritating to the main force the first thing they will do is put regular officers in charge of it. And if that does not work they will take it out into the forest and shoot it.[110]

To balance criticality with collegiality the planners have worked closely with Ambassadors and Directorates to try to maintain a role that is challenging without being antagonistic. Consequently, very few papers have been produced by the planners in isolation but have been the result of interactions between the planners and the relevant political, geographical, functional or administrative departments. As a result, the planners have sometimes faced accusations of failing to offer a truly radical position, but, as Palliser explained, "if you throw a totally radical paper into a bureaucracy even with top level support you're not going to get anywhere with that paper."[111]

Acting in a critical role is particularly difficult for a central department which has to challenge the ideas and approach of others who have significantly more specialist knowledge. As David Gore-Booth suggested "it is quite difficult to challenge the expertise and that is

actually what one is doing all the time. You were challenging people who knew better than you and you didn't always win."[112] In the early years of planning Peter Ramsbotham acknowledged that people "couldn't understand how anyone as amateurish as I was, and my people, as far as Soviet policy was concerned, should be writing papers on our attitude to Soviet policy."[113]

Richard Haas argues that a final limitation for all planners is that of timing. Timing can make a significant difference as "not every moment in history lends itself equally to policy planning".[114] Instead, planning can take on increased significance at key moments in international relations, especially after unprecedented events such as the end of the Cold War or after 9/11 when governments are struggling to develop a new foreign policy approach. Similarly, the arrival of a new government, and a Minister's desire to offer different policies to their predecessor, can often provide a window of opportunity for planners, leading there to be an element of being in the right place at the right time.

Whilst most of these limitations have remained true across time, they have offered restrictions and challenges to overcome but they have not managed to completely undermine the overall strengths and impact that the planners have had for the last four decades in the creation of foreign policy. Instead, many foreign policy strategies and ideas can be traced back to the discussions, papers and influence of the department. From the outset the planners were established to feed into and inform top level foreign policy discussion on global, complex problems and they have continued to fulfil this function. Whilst many of the roles planners have undertaken have changed or developed over time the three enduring ones – the production of papers on forward looking policy, offering challenge and taking on cross-

cutting issues – have ensured that they have always held a central place in the policy-making machine within the FCO, Cabinet and now the NSC.

The impact of these significant roles have been buoyed by the structure of the department, with literal geographic proximity to power within the FCO, a line management which has facilitated access to the top of the foreign policymaking hierarchy, planner inclusion in high-level Directorate meetings including Heads of Mission conferences and the incorporation of planners into senior foreign policymaking taskforces and committees within the FCO and at Cabinet level. The structure has been further supported by staffing levels, which has been carefully balanced to ensure capability whilst being aware that growing too large would risk individuals becoming overly specialised or lead to the department becoming too unwieldly to be effective. However, the real strength of the department has been, and remains, its staffing selection and subsequently its intellectual reputation. Planners have to pull together expertise from many different areas into complex problems and resolve trade-offs and choices. In so doing they attend to all different points of view, liaise with experts on conflicting parts of a macro problem and assemble the different threads into a coherent global view for policymakers whilst also being sensitive to internal politics and personalities. In today's environment of big data, mass, accessible information and an ever-increasing number of experts this role has become increasingly challenging, but it has also become ever more important to be able to sort through the information overload, interrogate data and sources and come to a resolvable, workable policy solution, all of which requires a certain form of intellect, critical thinking and judgement. In addition, as the world has become more complex, with more actors involved, the removal of the bifurcation of ally or adversary and a dynamic environment, it has

become increasing important to ensure ongoing monitoring and evaluation of policy in order to adapt accordingly; this is the role of the planners today.

Consequently, although foreign policymaking is multifaceted the PPS have had, and continue to have, an important part to play in the process. The role of the department has previously been unrecognised, but this article has revealed its increasing impact since the 1960s, which is only continuing to escalate. Ironically, as foreign policy widens across government to numerous other Departments, and the FCO remains relatively small, the planners ability to impact and influence policy is only increasing as more and more complex work is managed at the centre – through Cabinet – with the FCO taking a leading role and the planners feeding directly into the process. As a result, it is important to consider the role of planners in any research on foreign policy creation moving forward, but also to revisit past theories and previous interpretations of policy creation with the input of the staff in mind. For historians and international relations scholars this should prove to be fertile ground as the records of the PPS remain relatively unmined, despite the significance of the department, but more importantly they offer a considerable source of information and insight that is more than worthy of further in-depth study.

Notes

[1] House of Lords Select Committee on International Relations, 'UK Foreign Policy in a Shifting World Order', *https://publications.parliament.uk* (2018), accessed 26 June 2019.

[2] See, for example, Hew Strachan, 'British National Strategy: Who Does it?', *Parameters*, 43, no. 2 (Summer) (2013): 43-52; House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee, *Who Does UK National Strategy?*, HC435, (London, 2010).

[3] See, for example, Timothy Edmunds, Jamie Gaskarth and Robin Porter (eds.), *British Foreign Policy and the National Interest* (Basingstoke, 2014); John Dickie, *The New Mandarins: How British Foreign Policy Works* (London, 2004); Sir John Coles, *Making Foreign Policy: A Certain Idea of Britain* (London, 2000); Robert Boardman and A. J. R. Groom (eds.), *The Management of Britain's External Relations* (London, 1973).

[4] See, for example, R. A. W. Rhodes, *Everyday Life in British Government* (Oxford, 2011).

[5] Even John Dickie's *Inside the Foreign Office* (London, 1992) has very little to say about this department.

[6] Alexander Evans, 'Organizing for British National Strategy', *International Affairs*, 90, no. 3 (2014): 509-524.

[7] N. A., *Policy Planning in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office*, (1971), FCO [Foreign and Commonwealth Office Archives, National Archives, Kew, London, UK] 49/412, 1-3.

[8] N. A., *Overseas Policy Planning*, (1963), FO [Foreign Office Archives, National Archives, Kew, London, UK] 366/003308.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid., appendix to annex A.

[11] Ibid., 2.

[12] Sir Peter Rambotham, (2001), BDOHP [British Diplomatic Oral History Programme, Churchill College, Cambridge, UK], 25-26, 29.

[13] Committee on Representational Services Overseas, *Report of the Committee on Representational Services Overseas*, (1964), OD [Overseas Development Archives, National Archives, Kew, London, UK] 18/44.

[14] Sir Crispin Tickell, (1999), BDOHP, 3.

[15] Harold Caccia, memorandum on planning, 10 January 1964, FO 953/2452, 1.

[16] Committee on Representational Services Overseas, *Report of the Committee*, (1964), 55; paragraph 217; N. A., *Policy Planning in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office*, (1971), FCO 49/412, 3.

[17] Harold Caccia, memorandum on planning, 10 January 1964, FO 953/2452, 3.

[18] Sir Michael Palliser, (1999), BDOHP, 10.

[19] Harold Caccia, 'Memorandum on Planning', 10 January 1964, FO 953/2452.

[20] Minutes of a meeting held by the Committee on Representational Services Overseas, 4 February 1963, FO 366/003308.

[21] N. A., *Policy Planning in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office*, (1971), FCO 49/412, 2-3.

[22] Minutes of a meeting held by the Committee on Representational Services Overseas, 4 February 1963, FO 366/003308, 17-18.

[23] John Nicholls, 'Planning', 9 November 1966, FO 953/2452.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Paul Gore-Booth, 'Planning', 12 November 1968, FCO 49/237.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Goodison to Cable, 'The Role of the Planners', 27 December 1973; Cable to Goodison, 16 January 1974, FCO 49/500.

[29] Cable to Goodison, 16 January 1974, FCO 49/500.

[30] Brimelow to Heads of Mission, 'The role of Planning in the conduct of foreign relations', 3 September 1975, FCO 49/569.

[31] Michael Palliser, 'The Role of Foreign Policy Planning in the FCO', 31 March 1976, FCO 49/908.

[32] Ibid., 2.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Burns to Maitland, 28 April 1980, FCO 49/908.

[35] Sir Rodric Braithwaite, (1998), BDOHP, 22.

[36] R. M. Russell, 'Coordination in the FCO', 8 May 1980, FCO 49/908.

[37] Michael Palliser, 'Planning and Coordination Staff: New Arrangements', 23 June 1980, FCO 49/908.

[38] Baron Jay, (2006), BDOHP, n.p.

[39] Sir Simon Fraser, (2018), BDOHP, 23.

[40] Evidence from Sir Peter Ricketts to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, 9 December 2009, HC 145 (London, 2009), Q111.

[41] William Hague, speech to the FCO 8 September 2011, 'The best diplomatic service in the world: strengthening the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as an Institution', *https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-best-diplomatic-service-in-the-world-strengthening-the-foreign-and-commonwealth-office-as-an-institution,* accessed 27 June 2019.

[42] Chilcot champions have been established in various Whitehall departments to ensure that the lessons from the 2016 Iraq Inquiry are learned.

[43] Private information.

[44] Interview by the author with Sir Alan Munro, 11 August 2017.

[45] Fraser, BDOHP, 23.

[46] Sir Robert Wade-Gery, (2000), BDOHP, 31.

[47] Private information.

[48] N.a., 'Policy Planning in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office', November 1971, FCO 49/412, 7.

[49] Roger Tomkys, 'Planning Papers 1967-1971: Critique', n.d., FCO 49/374.

[50] Ibid., 9.

[51] Wilkinson to Mallaby, 'Distribution of Planning Papers', 9 December 1981, FCO 49/982.

[52] Gore-Booth, 'Planning', FCO 49/237.

[53] Cable to Fielding, 'Planning Papers', 19 April 1972, FCO 49/374.

[54] Sir Nigel Sheinwald, (2016-17), BDOHP, 66.

[55] Sir David Gore-Booth, (1999), BDOHP, 13.

[56] Sir Roger Tomkys, (2015), BDOHP, 16.

[57] Braithwaite, BDOHP, 23.

[58] Nicholls, 'Planning', FO 953/2452.

[59] David Frost, evidence to the Public Administration Select Committee, *Who Does UK National Strategy?*, HC435, (London, 2010), Q72-73; Boris Johnson, 'Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy: Written statement - HCWS126', 26 February 2020.

[60] FCO 49/412.

[61] Private information.

[62] Wade-Gery, BDOHP, 29-30.

[63] Ibid., 30.

[64] Thomson to PUS, 'Foreign Office Planning', 20 March 1968, FCO 49/1, 3.

[65] Gore-Booth, 'Planning', FCO 49/237.

[66] Nicholls, 'Planning', FO 953/2452, annex B.

[67] William Hague, evidence to the House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee, 14 September 2010, Q76.

[68] Evans, 'Organizing for British National Strategy', 514.

[69] This has included employees from Oxfam and BP.

[70] Dame Alison Leslie, (2017), BDOHP, 13.

[71] Gore-Booth, BDOHP, 13.

[72] Wade Gery, BDOHP, 27.

[73] Dickie, *Inside the Foreign Office*, 257; Richard N. Haas, 'Planning for Policy Planning', in Daniel W. Drezner (ed.) *Avoiding Trivia: The Role of Strategic Planning in American Foreign Policy*, (Washington D.C, 2009), 32.

[74] Melbourne L. Spector, 'The Case of the Planning and Coordination Staff', Report submitted to the President and Congress on 27 June 1975, appendix volume VI, 103, cited in Lucian Pugliaresi and Diane T. Berliner, 'Policy Analysis at the Department of State: The Policy Planning Staff', *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 8, no. 3 (Summer), (1989), 387.

[75] Palliser, 'The Role of Foreign Policy Planners in the FCO', FCO 49/908.

[76] Braithwaite, BDOHP, 22.

[77] Braithwaite to PUS, 'Planning and coordination staff: Current Work', 25 June 1980, FCO 49/908.

[78] PPS to [redacted], 'Gulf Crisis', 19 September 1990, received under the Freedom of Information Act; Douglas Hurd, speech to the United Nations General Assembly, 26 September 1990, *https://undocs.org/en/A/45/PV.8*, accessed 2 July 2019, 41.

[79] Cowper-Coles, *Ever the Diplomat*, 75-6.

[80] Private information.

[81] Palliser, BDOHP, 11.

[82] Thomson to PUS, 'Foreign Office Planning', FCO 49/1, 1.

[83] Private information.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Thomson to PUS, 'Foreign Office Planning', FCO 49/1, 1.

[86] All PPS papers received by the author under the Freedom of Information Act.

[87] Sir Jeremy Greenstock, (2004), BDOHP, 11.

[88] Cowper-Coles, Ever the Diplomat, 72.

[89] Tickell, BDOHP, 4; Leslie, BDOHP, 14.

[90] Palliser, BDOHP, 11.

[91] Thomson to PUS, 'Foreign Office Planning', FCO 49/1, 5-6.

[92] Gore-Booth to Lord Chalfont, 9 April 1968, FCO 49/1, 2.

[93] Private information.

[94] Kevin Brennan, evidence to the House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee, 14 September 2010, Q77.

[95] Private information.

[96] Private information.

[97] Sir Leslie Fielding, (2012), BDOHP, 17.

[98] Anthony Layden in Tomkys, *BDOHP*, 16.

[99] Thomson to PUS, 'Foreign Office Planning', FCO 49/1, 9.

[100] Interview by the author with Sir Alan Munro, 11 August 2017.

[101] William Hague, speech to the FCO, 8 September 2011.

[102] Sherard Cowper-Coles, *Ever the Diplomat: Confessions of a Foreign Office Mandarin* (London, 2012), 71.

[103] Zara Steiner, 'The Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Resistance and Adaptation to Changing Times', *Contemporary British History*, 18, no. 3 (2004): 28.

[104] Wade-Gery, BDOHP, 28.

[105] Sir Brian Crowe, (2003), BDOHP, 33.

[106] Leslie, BDOHP, 25.

[107] Thomson to PUS, 'Foreign Office Planning', FCO 49/1, 1.

[108] Brimelow to Heads of Mission, 'The role of Planning in the conduct of foreign relations', 3 September 1975, FCO 49/569, 1.

[109] Thomson to PUS, 'Foreign Office Planning', FCO 49/1, 1.

[110] Braithwaite, BDOHP, 21.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Gore-Booth, BDOHP, 13.

[113] Ramsbotham, BDOHP, 29.

[114] Haas, 'Planning for Policy Planning', 25.