Renewing the Cold War Narrative of 'Special' Anglo-American Relations: Commemoration, Performance and the American Bicentennial

This article develops the importance of culture and commemoration to explaining UK-U.S. solidarity and behaviour in managing the Cold War—and beyond. In 1966 members of the U.S. Embassy in London concluded that the Anglo-American alignment had proven to be "the most important single fact of international life in the post-war world."[1] The abundance of scholarship focused on Anglo-American relations during the Cold War demonstrates widespread concurrence with this judgment.[2] Unparalleled cooperation between the two great Anglo-Saxon powers during World War II bequeathed key institutions for the promotion of liberal democratic capitalism and for much of the Cold War their defense and evolution rested foremost on British and, especially, American power. The consequent range and intimacy of Anglo-American functional cooperation has also traditionally dominated debate about the justification or otherwise of applying the nomenclature special relationship to UK-U.S. relations.[3]

However, the inherent desire to explain Anglo-American relations by measuring, quantifying, relativizing, and predicting U.S.-UK behavior has encountered problems. Not least of these is why the special relationship refused to die as British power relative to the

[1] U.S. Embassy London to State Department, Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library, NSF Country File, Box 208-9, Folder: UK Memos, Vol. xiii, 1/6 – 7/66.
[2] See, for instance, B. J. C. McKercher, *Britain, America, and the Special Relationship since 1941* (London: Routledge, 2017); John Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship: Anglo–American Relations in the Cold War and After* (London: Palgrave, 2000); John Baylis, *Anglo-American Defence Relations 1939-1984*: *The Special Relationship* (London: Macmillan, 1984); Richard Gardener, *Sterling Dollar Diplomacy in Current Perspective,* 3rd edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980); Dobson, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 1995); and Ritchie Ovendale, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century* (London: Macmillan, 1998).
[3] For a useful overview of these debates see Alan Dobson and Steve Marsh, "Introduction," in Alan Dobson and Steve Marsh, eds., *Anglo-American Relations: Contemporary Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2013). See also John Baylis, "The Anglo-American Relationship and Alliance Theory," *International Relations*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (1985), pp. 368-379; Danchev, *On Specialness: Essays in Anglo-American Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1998); and John Dumbrell and Alex, Schafer, eds., *America's 'Special Relationships': Foreign and Domestic Aspects of the Politics of Alliance* (London: Routledge, 2009).

United States and to other leading international actors waned, and as the end of the Cold War removed the strategic imperatives thought to hold their alliance together.[4] Winston Churchill may well have been amused by these debates, underpinned as they are by a collective aversion to addressing the intangible sources of influence and connection that he had made so central to his invocation of the special relationship in his March 1946 "Iron Curtain" speech in Fulton, Missouri. To check the international spread of communism, Churchill declared that British and American power would be based on a fraternal association amongst the English-speaking peoples of the world, and because this association was rooted in shared Anglo-American history, language, culture and values, it would be strong enough to "ensure no quivering, precarious balance of power to offer its temptation to ambition or adventure."[5]

This article contributes to a small but growing literature seeking to embrace these intangible influences in explaining Anglo-American relations and their Cold War alliance. Some of this work examines the myriad of Anglo-American connections operating beyond the state, ranging from public diplomacy activities of the Pilgrims Society, through the impact of transatlantic marriages and on to numerous commercial activities bearing upon UK-U.S. societies—including the media, music and film industries. Of particular relevance to this article is work on culture and its manipulation, which has brought into play new ideas,

[4] For predictions of its demise see John Dickie, *Special No More: Anglo-American Relations: Rhetoric and Reality* (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 1994); W. Wallace, "The Collapse of British Foreign Policy," *International Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 1 (2005), pp. 53-68; and A. Danchev, "Anglo-Saxon Susceptibilities: The Special Relationship and the World," *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol. 25, No. 6 (2010), pp. 843-855. For considerations of why the special relationship has persisted see: John Baylis, "The Anglo-American Relationship and Alliance Theory"; Steve Marsh and John Baylis, "'The Anglo-American "Special Relationship': The Lazarus of International Relations," *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (2006), pp. 173-211; JB Élie, "Many times doomed but still alive: an attempt to understand the continuity of the special relationship," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, Vol. 3, No. S1 (2005), pp. 63-83; Alan Dobson and Steve Marsh, "Anglo-American Relations: End of a Special Relationship?," *International History Review*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (2014), pp. 673-697; and Wyn Rees and Lance Davies, "The Anglo-American military relationship: Institutional rules, practices, and narratives," *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (2019), pp. 312-334.

[5] Winston S. Churchill, "The Sinews of Peace," 5 March 1946, NATO Online Library, http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1946/s460305a_e.htm.

disciplines and methodologies.[6] Churchill, who regarded his Fulton speech as the most important of his career,[7] had immediate strategic goals. But the speech also serves as a historical marker for the subsequent discursive (re-)construction of an Anglo-American special relationship rooted in shared culture and which, through ritualized performance at diplomatic summits, joint press conferences and so forth, progressively became embedded in that cultural fabric.[8] Memory studies research demonstrates a strong connection between group cohesion and collective memories,[9] the latter constituting less the preservation of facts than a "a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that help a public or society understand both its past, present, and by implication, its future."[10] These ideas bear strongly upon the special relationship. David Ryan, for instance, has exposed how British and American leaders utilized collective memory to rationalize military actions in both Kosovo and Iraq.[11] Sam

[6] See Robert Hendershot and Steve Marsh, *Culture Matters: Anglo-American Relations and the Intangibles of 'Specialness'* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2020); David Haglund, *The U.S. "Culture Wars" and the Anglo-American Special Relationship* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Stephen Bowman, *The Pilgrims Society and Public Diplomacy, 1895-1945* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019); Dana Cooper, *Informal Ambassadors: American Women, Transatlantic Marriages, and Anglo-American Relations, 1865-1945* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2014); Srdjan Vucetic, *The Anglosphere: A Genealogy of a Racialized Identity in International Relations* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011); Stuart Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement: Anglo-Saxonism and Anglo-American Relations* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1981); Mark Glancy, *Hollywood and the Americanization of Britain* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013); Kevin Phillips, *The Cousins' Wars: Religion, Politics, and the Triumph of Anglo-America* (New York: Basic Books, 1999); Joel Wiener and Mark Hampton, eds., *Anglo-American Media Interactions, 1850-2000* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); and Sam Edwards, Faye Sayer, Michael Dolski, eds., *Histories on Screen: The Past and Present in Anglo-American Cinema and Television* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017).

[7] Diary of Charles Ross, entry date March 7, 1946, cited in Philip White, *Our Supreme Task: How Winston Churchill's Iron Curtain Speech Defined the Cold War Alliance* (New York: Perseus Books Group, 2012), p. 205.

[8] Anna Marchi, Nuria Lorenzo-Dus, and Steve Marsh, "Churchill's inter-subjective special relationship: a corpus-assisted discourse approach," in Alan Dobson and Steve Marsh, eds., *Churchill and the Anglo-American Special Relationship* (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 171-201; and Steve Marsh, "Pageantry, legitimation and special Anglo-American relations," in Hendershot and Marsh, eds., *Culture Matters*.

[9] Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

[10] John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 15.

[11] Stephen Bowman, *The Pilgrims Society and Public Diplomacy, 1895-1945* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018); David Ryan, "Culture and re-membering the alliance in Kosovo and Iraq: Anglo-American ironies under Clinton, Blair and Bush" in Hendershot and Marsh, eds., *Culture Matters;* also see Brian Etheridge, *Enemies to Allies: Cold War Germany and American Memory* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2016); Sam Edwards, "Warton, George Washington and the Lancashire Roots of the Anglo-American 'Special Relationship' *C.* 1880–1976," *Northern History*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (2018), pp. 206-234; and Srdjan Vucetic, *The Anglosphere: A Genealogy of a Racialized Identity in International Relations* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011).

Edwards has also investigated how commemoration of World War II entrenched narratives of harmonious Anglo-American friendship, shared sacrifice, and the mutual defense of freedom as well as excluded inconvenient truths, such as tensions between U.S. personnel stationed in the UK and local communities, and British frustrations with the American military's racial segregation policies.[12]

We expand this focus on culture as an explanatory factor in U.S.-UK relations through an analysis of the 1976 U.S. bicentennial, revealing the political importance attached to these celebrations by the UK and U.S. governments and how they used discourse, artifacts, performance, exchanges, visits and so forth to reinforce to all levels of society a carefully constructed narrative of Anglo-American enduring friendship and solidarity in the defense of a shared way of life. The bicentennial is used for four reasons. First, it is an under-investigated international cultural event in American Cold War history, featuring celebrations in, and contributions made by, many countries.[13] Second, the 1970s are increasingly reinterpreted as years of transition and it is instructive to view the bicentennial celebrations within the developing awareness of soft power.[14] Third, at this time factors including détente,

[12] Sam Edwards, *Allies in Memory: World War II and the Politics of Transatlantic Commemoration* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 8, 254–255.

[13] Academic treatments of the U.S. bicentennial are rare —Tammy Gordon's *The Spirit of 1976* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013) is one exception, though this work uses the bicentennial to explore trends in community identity and commercialization. Another is M. Todd Bennett's article, "The Spirits of '76: Diplomacy Commemorating the U.S. Bicentennial in 1976," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (2016), which, though saying little about Anglo-American relations, surveys American attempts to use the bicentennial to advance diplomatic goals and reassert moral authority in the wake of the Vietnam War.

[14] Niall Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela, and Daniel J. Sargent, eds., *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010); Thomas Borstelmann, *The 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012); Barbara J. Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue: The Human Rights Revolution of the 1970s* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014); Daniel J. Sargent, *A Superpower Transformed: The Remaking of American Foreign Relations in the 1970s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); and Poul Villaume, Rasmus Mariager, Helle Porsdam, eds., *The "Long 1970s": Human Rights, East-West Détente and Transnational Relations* (London: Routledge, 2016). A discussion of soft power is beyond the scope of this article, but useful starting points include: Joseph S. Nye Jr, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2005); Inderjeet Parmer and Michael Cox, eds., *Soft Power and US Foreign Policy: Theoretical, Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2010); and Naren Chitty et al., eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Soft Power* (London: Routledge, 2017).

shifts in economic power and the rise of the EC reduced the explanatory power of strategic imperative for transatlantic relations to one of its lowest ebbs in the Cold War. Indeed, Director of the State Department Policy Planning Staff, Winston Lord, noted in January 1975 that Britain had "more freedom of action" than in the past, its interests "coincide less automatically with our own" and it faced "powerful pressures" pushing it "toward a grasping little Englandism and a not so splendid isolationism."[15] Finally, there is currently very little detailed analysis of Anglo-American relations during the Ford administration.[16] While revisionist scholarship suggests that Anglo-American relations were not as poor as previously suggested,[17] the Wilson government and the Ford administration nevertheless determined to nurture them. Britain's relationship with the United States was, with the possible exception of the preceding Heath government, the cornerstone of post-World War II British foreign policy and Wilson badly needed American understanding and support in managing British retrenchment and economic crisis.[18] Ford was beset at home by recession and fallout from Vietnam and Watergate and confronted abroad by a host of challenges spanning multilateral negotiations with the USSR, NATO's crumbling southern flank, fragile peace in the Middle East, fears of falling dominoes in Asia, demands for a New International Order, and a

[15] Memorandum from the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Lord) to Secretary of State Kissinger, Notes on the British: The Wilson Visit, 29 January 1975, p. 754, in U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (Hereinafter referred to as *FRUS*)*, 1969–1976,* Volume E–15, Part 2, Documents on Western Europe, 1973–1976.

[16] Thomas Robb's *A Strained Partnership?* is currently the only monograph detailing UK-U.S. relations during the Ford administration, and even this is within a wider consideration of the détente era. Thomas Robb, *A Strained Partnership? US–UK Relations in the Era of Détente, 1969–77* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press 2013).

[17] Traditional views include Reynolds' argument that by the early 1970s Britain had "lost much of its special importance" for the United States; Dimbleby and Reynolds argue likewise that "Britain no longer mattered . . . as a world power or as a political example." David Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War: Churchill, Roosevelt, and the International History of the 1940s* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 325; and David Dimbleby and David Reynolds, *An Ocean Apart: The Relations between Britain and America in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Random House, 1988)*,* p. 319. For the revisionist literature see, for instance, Niklas Rossbach, *Heath, Nixon and the Rebirth of the Special Relationship* (London: Palgrave, 2009); Luke Nichter, *Richard Nixon and Europe: The Reshaping of the Postwar Atlantic World* (New York: Cambridge University press, 2015); and Alex Spelling, "Edward Heath and Anglo–American Relations 1970–1974: A Reappraisal," *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (2009), pp. 638-658.

[18] David Gowland, for instance, argues that Heath was a "possible exception" to the standard British line of not separating Europe from the global dimensions of foreign policy. David Gowland, *Britain and the European Union* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 279.

mutinous post-colonial UN General Assembly.[19] As his administration worked to, in Donald Rumsfeld's words, "calm our allies and to caution our adversaries,"[20] reliable allies were at a premium; Britain stood head of a very short queue.

We do not seek to minimize the importance of functional cooperation to explaining Anglo-American relations or to suggest that cultural ties proved a panacea for consequences of strategic dissonance and Britain's relative decline. Neither do we seek to measure cultural impact. Rather, by examining the bicentennial celebrations we aim first to add to extant understanding of the West's most important Cold War bilateral relationship during a period of international transition. Second, we argue that U.S. and UK efforts to transform the two hundredth anniversary of a violent Anglo-American divergence into a joint celebration of shared heritage and the modern special relationship demonstrate growing elite appreciation of soft power and of the significance of cultural ties to U.S.-UK solidarity. Finally, we hope to stimulate further research into how commemorative events such as the bicentennial become contributory to and constitutive of a continually renewing public narrative of special Anglo-American relations that interweaves times past, present, and future.

[19] See, for instance, Sotiris Rizas, *The Rise of the Left in Southern Europe: Anglo-American Responses* (London: Routledge, 2016); Geoffrey Pridham, ed., *Encouraging Democracy: The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe* (Leicester: Palgrave-Macmillan, 1991); Geoffrey Pridham, *Securing Democracy: Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe* (London: Routledge, 1990); Saleh A. Al-Mani, *The Euro-Arab Dialogue: A Study in Associative Diplomacy* (London, Palgrave, 1983); Muhamad Hasrul Zakariah, "The Euro-Arab Dialogue 1973–1978: Britain Reinsurance Policy In The Middle East Conflict," *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (2013), pp. 95-115; Rory Miller, "The Euro-Arab Dialogue and the Limits of European External Intervention in the Middle East, 1974–77," *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 50, No. 6 (2014), pp. 936-959; Luciano Tosi, "Europe, the United Nations and Dialogue with the Third World," in Antonio Varsori and Guia Migani, eds., *Europe in the International Arena during the 1970s* (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2006), pp. 161-191; Glenda Sluga, "The Transformation of International Institutions," in Ferguson et al., eds., *Shock of the Global, pp.* 223-236; and Stephan Kieninger, *Dynamic Détente: the United States and Europe, 1964-1975* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).
[20] Rumsfeld, *When the Center Held: Gerald Ford and the Rescue of the American Presidency* (New York: Free Press, 2018), p. 168.

Anglo-American Relations Pre-bicentennial

The bicentennial celebrations need to be seen within the context of their development to appreciate their symbolic significance and to understand the contemporary influences upon policymakers and their objectives within these events for Anglo-American relations. This means establishing the tenor of Anglo-Americans not in 1975-76 but from the late 1960s because thinking about and planning for the bicentennial was a lengthy process. British Foreign Secretary Alec Douglas-Home established the formal British Bicentennial Liaison Committee (BBLC) in 1972 to coordinate British contributions to the celebrations. American planning was still lengthier. Congress initiated the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission in July 1966, which was eventually superseded in December 1973 by the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration (ARBA). Across this period, primary political considerations in respect of the bicentennial changed in tune with unexpected developments, including rising discontent within America, failure in Vietnam, and the Watergate scandal. Self-evidently it could not have been foreseen in 1966 that President Ford would need ultimately to orchestrate his administration's presentation of the celebrations around a theme of *"*renewal and rebirth based on a restoration of traditional values and a nostalgic and exclusive reading of the American past."[21]

A detailed analysis of Anglo-American relations 1966–76 is beyond the scope of this article but broad contours can be established of developments within both countries and the special relationship. Successive British governments proved ever less able to disguise the consequences of long-term overstretch and relative economic underperformance. A series of sterling crises, balance of payments pressure and the failure of corrective measures to limit

[21] David Ryan, "Re-enacting Independence through Nostalgia – The 1976 U.S. Bicentennial after the Vietnam War," *FIAR: Forum for Inter-American Research*, International Association of Inter-American Studies, Vol. 5, No. 3 (2012), pp. 26-48.

import spending and boost exports forced the Wilson government to devalue the pound in 1967 and heap more pressure on the Bretton Woods system.[22] Britain's overseas retrenchment accelerated in tandem with economic weakness. British decolonization accelerated rapidly after Harold Macmillan indicated in his famous "Wind of Change" speech in February 1960 that his government would not oppose independence for many of Britain's colonies in Africa.[23]

In 1967 the Wilson government also announced that Britain would withdraw from its defense role East of Suez. By 1973, British overseas dependent territories had shrunk from 6.4 million square miles and five hundred million people—excluding Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa—in 1945 to just c. seven hundred thousand square miles and some five million people (excepting southern Rhodesia).[24] In addition, shifting trade patterns and the failure of the European Free Trade Association to offer a viable alternative forced a British U-turn on seeking membership of the EC, only to be rebuffed twice in 1963 and 1967 by French President De Gaulle.

Conservative Prime Minister Heath assumed office in June 1970 determined to steer Britain into the EC, an ambition realized in January 1973. However, while Foreign Secretary Douglas-Home called British entry to the EC "the final break with our imperial past,"[25] it did not mark the end of Britain's economic weakness. The Heath government's adoption of an expansionary fiscal and monetary policy, coupled with a sliding pound sterling, encouraged

[22] Michael D. Bordo, Ronald MacDonald and Michael J. Oliver, "Sterling in crisis, 1964–1967," *European Review Economic History*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (2009), pp. 437-459.
[23] Accounts of relative British decline include David Reynolds, *Britannia Overruled: British Policy and World Power in the Twentieth Century* (London: Longman, 2000); John Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation: The Retreat from Empire in the Post-War World* (London: Palgrave, 1988); Andrew Gamble, *Britain in Decline* (London: Macmillan, 1994); and Antony Best, ed., *Britain's Retreat from Empire in East Asia, 1905-1980* (London: Routledge, 2017).
[24] Report of the FCO, "Programme Analysis and Review 1973. The Future of the Dependent Territories," p. 1, Bodleian Library, Callaghan, 350.
[25] Douglas-Home to Washington, DC Embassy, November 5, 1971, United Kingdom National Archives (hereinafter referred to as UKNA), PREM 15/712, 10763422.

sharply rising public expenditure and fiscal deficits. The public sector deficit attained record peacetime levels, inflation ran at c.10 percent, labor relations were fraught, and the economy was ill-prepared for the influx of imports that flowed from Britain's entry into the Common Market.[26] When the Wilson government returned to power in 1974, Chancellor of the Exchequer Denis Healey described his inheritance as "an economy on the brink of catastrophe."[27] Inevitably in the face of such straitened economic circumstances, Britain's overseas contraction continued too and, following Defence Secretary Roy Mason's Defence Review in 1975, the defense budget was cut repeatedly—much to American concern.[28] In 1976, the same year that American bicentennial celebrations were in full flow, the Labour government, now led by James Callaghan, was forced to accept a huge bailout from the International Monetary Fund of some $3.9 billion.[29]

As Britain slumped into second order power status, U.S. fortunes also changed significantly amid the end of the "age of plenty" and a collapse in confidence in American leadership and power. In 1968 inflation ran at four percent and the Federal Reserve increased U.S. interest rates to a post-1929 high of 5.5 percent. In 1971 the United States ran a trade deficit for the first time in the twentieth century and by 1973 it was "no longer in charge of its own economic destiny."[30] On August 15, 1971 the Nixon administration introduced a raft of

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[26] Jim Tomlinson, "Economic Policy" in A. Seldon and K. Hickson, eds., *New Labour, Old Labour: The Wilson and Callaghan Governments, 1974-79* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 55-6.
[27] Denis Healey, *The Time of My Life* (London: Penguin, 1990), p. 392.
[28] Brimelow to Ramsbotham, attached record of James Cable talk with Winston Lord of 4 June 1974, 6 June 1974, UKNA, FCO 82/433; Kissinger to Ford, 'Meeting with Harold Wilson', 29 January 1975, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library, Ann Arbor (hereinafter referred to as GFL), National Security Adviser, Presidential Briefing Material for VIP visits, 1974-76, Box 5, United Kingdom – Prime Minister Wilson (4); Defence Department Brief, 9 July 1975, UKNA, FCO 82/579; AmEmbassy London to Sec Defense, 4 December 1974, https://aad.archives.gov/aad/createpdf?rid=274657&dt=2474&dl=1345; and U.S. Embassy London (Richardson) to Sec State, 'Further British Defense Cuts', 9 July 1975, https://aad.archives.gov/aad/createpdf?rid=147074&dt=2476&dl=1345.
[29] Kathleen Burk and Alec Cairncross, *Good-bye, Great Britain: The 1976 IMF Crisis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); and Mark Harmon, *The British Labour Government and the 1976 IMF Crisis* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997).
[30] Alan P. Dobson and Steve Marsh, *US Foreign Policy Since 1945*, 2nd Edition (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 49.

economic measures to help protect the American economy, including the imposition of a ten percent import surcharge, devaluation of the dollar and, most significantly, unilateral cancellation of the direct international convertibility of the dollar into gold. Nevertheless, the American economy remained stubbornly in recession from November 1973 to March 1975, wage-price controls encouraged stagflation with five successive quarters of negative GDP growth, and in May 1975 unemployment peaked at nine percent.

Meantime the Vietnam War, civil rights protests, and a thawing Cold War combined to help break the post-World War II bipartisan political consensus. The heavily televised Tet offensive in January 1968 inflamed American public opinion and helped convince the Johnson administration that the Vietnam War was unwinnable within acceptable costs; on January 23, 1973 President Nixon presented American withdrawal from Vietnam as constituting "peace with honor."[31] Concomitantly, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in April 1968 combined with anti-Vietnam and counter-culture movements to generate civil unrest and a youth generation especially that rejected established social norms and was alienated from mainstream politics. Once Watergate began to unravel, wider public opinion also joined in the gathering sense of distrust of American leaders. In 1975 one poll indicated that 69 percent of respondents felt that their leaders had "consistently lied" to them over the past ten years.[32]

As American leadership came under challenge at home and abroad. Congress sought to reign-in what it saw as President Nixon's abuse of executive power, initiating a series of investigations, passing legal restraints such as the War Powers Act, and using its budgetary powers to exert greater influence in U.S. external relations. In this context, waging Cold War

[31] Richard Nixon, "Address to the Nation Announcing Conclusion of an Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam," 23 January 1973, online by Gerhard Peters and John Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3808.
[32] Ramsbotham to Callaghan, 29 May 1975, UKNA, FOC 82/554.

abroad had rarely been more domestically challenging. Meanwhile, U.S. ability to lead the western alliance diminished as the presidency lost moral authority, American relative power declined, détente weakened NATO cohesion, and new actors—such as the EC and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Counties (OPEC)—began to exert significant influence. The particularly severe transatlantic tensions of 1973 reflected this complex array of changes. The EC developed European Political Cooperation and, in sponsoring a Euro-Arab dialogue, clashed with the Nixon administration over the Yom Kippur War and the consequent energy crisis.[33] U.S. support for European integration became increasingly ambiguous; Secretary of State Henry Kissinger sensed the hidden hand of France in building the Community upon anti-American foundations.[34] Furthermore, Kissinger's unilateral announcement of the "Year of Europe," designed to reinvigorate U.S. leadership in transatlantic relations after years of prioritizing Asia, provoked European anger and serious mutual recrimination.[35]

As Britain and the United States charted a course through their different national problems and sought to make sense of a rapidly changing international arena, their bilateral relations inevitably ebbed and flowed in response to objective and subjective factors. Some of

[33] Henderson to FCO, 8 March 1974, UKNA, PREM 16 / 419; Ramsbotham to FCO, 7 March 1974, PREM 16 / 419; Muhamad Hasrul Zakariah, "The Euro-Arab Dialogue 1973–1978: Britain Reinsurance Policy In The Middle East Conflict," *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (2013), pp. 95-115; Rory Miller, "The Euro-Arab Dialogue and the Limits of European External Intervention in the Middle East, 1974–77," *Middle Eastern Studies,* Vol. 50, No. 6 (2014), pp. 936-59; and E.G.H. Pedaliu "'We Were Always Realistic': The Heath Government, the European Community and the Cold War in the Mediterranean, June 1970–February 1974," in J.W. Young, E.G.H. Pedaliu, M.D. Kandiah, eds., *Britain in Global Politics Volume 2. Security, Conflict and Cooperation in the Contemporary World* (London: Palgrave, 2013), pp. 159-178.

[34] Henderson to FCO, 8 March 1974, UKNA, PREM 16 / 419; Ibid., Memo by HTA Overton with Steering Brief attachment, 14 March 1974.

[35] "Text of Kissinger's Speech at A.P. Meeting Here on U.S. Relations With Europe," *New York Times*, 24 April 1973, http://www.nytimes.com/1973/04/24/archives/text-of-kissingers-speech-at-ap-meeting-here-on-u-s-relations-with.html; Andrew Scott, *Allies Apart: Heath, Nixon and the Anglo-American Relationship* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 140-65; Keith Hamilton, "Britain, France, and America's Year of Europe, 1973," *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (2006), pp. 871-895; Thomas Robb, *A strained partnership?*; Luke Nichter, *Richard Nixon and Europe: The Reshaping of the Postwar Atlantic World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); and Catherine Hynes, *The Year That Never Was: Heath, the Nixon Administration and the Year of Europe* (Dublin: University College Press, 2009).

these were issue specific, such as British refusal to send at least token forces to Vietnam,[36] a generational change of leadership that removed from influence friendships and experiences forged during World War II, and differences over the Yom Kippur War that prompted the United States to interrupt intelligence sharing with Britain and the State Department to prepare a list of further potential punitive measures against the UK.[37] Other factors were more generic, of which two examples suffice here. The first is the Nixon-Kissinger secretive policymaking style and their centralization of foreign policy within the White House.[38] The British were convinced that this weakened the quality of American foreign policy. For instance, on November 12, 1971 the British Ambassador in Washington, DC, Lord Cromer, warned the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) that "No disinterested observer could possibly maintain that it [American foreign policy] is being well made and many of the Washington professionals, inside and outside the Government, think it is a mess."[39] Prime Minister Heath was similarly disturbed, noting privately in November 1971 that "the present method of conducting foreign relations, political, military and economic, has completely undermined confidence in the United States and is threatening in all three spheres to damage the whole western world."[40]

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[36] See, for instance, J. Young, "Britain and 'LBJ's War', 1964-68," *Cold War History*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (2002), pp. 63-92; Sylvia Ellis, *Britain, America, and the Vietnam War* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004); and N. Wolf, "'This Secret Town': British Intelligence, the Special Relationship, and the Vietnam War," *The International History Review*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (2017), pp. 338-367.

[37] Briefing Memorandum from the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs (Springsteen) to Secretary of State Kissinger, "Possible Pressure Points on the U.K.," 30 October 1973, *FRUS, 1969-1976,* Volume E-15, Part 2, Documents on Western Europe, 1973-76, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve15p2/d226; and Richard Aldrich, *GCHQ* (London: Harper Press, 2010), pp. 288-92. For UK-U.S. differences over the Arab-Israeli War see Matthew Ferraro, *Tough Going: Anglo-American Relations and the Yom Kippur War of 1973* (London: iUniverse, 2007).

[38] Niklas Rossbach, *Heath, Nixon and the Rebirth of the Special Relationship: Britain, the US and the EC, 1969-74* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); William Bundy, *A Tangled Web: the Making of Foreign Policy in the Nixon Presidency* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998); Robert Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger: Partners in Power* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007); and Asaf Siniver, *Nixon, Kissinger, and U.S. Foreign Policy Making: The Machinery of Crisis* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[39] Memo, Cromer to Greenhill, "The Making of American Foreign Policy," 12 November 1971, UKNA, FCO 82/66, 10763732.

[40] Draft memo by Heath for the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary (not sent), 6 November 1971, UKNA, PREM 15/712, 10763422.

Just as importantly, the Nixon-Kissinger system struck at one of the key facilitators of the special relationship, namely the reciprocal flow of information at all levels of the Anglo-American bureaucratic "coral reef."[41] A number of traditional sources of information were either cut off from British officials or kept so far out of the loop by the White House that information they did share was either partial or inaccurate. For example, in December 1973 one British official described the U.S. Embassy in London as "a busted flush"[42] and Kissinger confided to Ambassador Cromer that on China policy, "[t]he State Department had been in ignorance throughout" and had actually "been working on an entirely opposite policy."[43] In September 1974 John Killick, deputy to the FCO Permanent Under Secretary, gave vent to British frustration:

> "One of the biggest difficulties in dealing with him [Kissinger] is that he is not always willing, or conscious of the need, to give an explanation of his requirements. His methods of operation, and particularly his emphasis on personal diplomacy and secrecy, inevitably lead to justifiable complaints about his lack of consultation, and to exaggerated suspicions of his motives. . . . The extent of the sheer muddle caused by his working methods should not, I think, be underestimated. Moreover, the bureaucratic machine beneath him, often unused and ignorant of his thinking, frequently proves unable to help straighten things out."[44]

A second consistent issue across this period was Britain's relative decline and associated fears that British utility to the United States would become so reduced that realist grounds for maintaining a special relationship would cease. Such pondering was regularly stimulated by notification or implementation of major British cuts to defense and overseas commitments. For instance, when Wilson prepared British withdrawal from East of Suez, President Johnson warned of grave consequences were the United States left to "man the

[41] John Dumbrell, "Personal Diplomacy. Relations between Prime Ministers and Presidents," in Alan P. Dobson and Steve Marsh, eds., *Anglo-American Relations* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 82.
[42] Handwritten note, 28 December 1973, UKNA, FCO 82/435.
[43] Cromer to FCO, c. 13 November 1971, UKNA, PREM 15/712, 10763422.
[44] Killick to Ramsbotham, 4 September 1974, UKNA, FCO 82/422.

ramparts all alone"[45] and the U.S. Ambassador to the Court of Saint James, David Bruce, concluded that "The so-called Anglo-American special relationship is now little more than sentimental terminology."[46] The Mason Defence Review combined with Britain's parlous economic condition to provoke similar American warnings. In October 1974 Kissinger recommended that the United States "operate on the assumption that Britain is through"[47] and in July 1975 Defense Secretary Schlesinger warned that were the British government "to make further defence cuts the U.S. Government would have to reconsider certain of their bilateral arrangements."[48]

For the most part the special relationship weathered the late 1960s and early 1970s with surprising resilience but in 1973, as planning for the bicentennial began to gather momentum, Anglo-American tensions became acute. The reasons for this were multiple. Traditional scholarship, led significantly by Kissinger's own writings, has tended to emphasize the failure of Nixon and Heath to develop warm personal relations, Heath's preferencing of Britain's entry to the EC over what he termed the "natural relationship" with the United States, and his alleged anti-Americanism. Later, archive-informed scholarship has emphasized instead problems created by the Nixon-Kissinger policy style, Kissinger's own reading of events at this time and a rebalancing of power such that Anglo-American relations became wrapped-up in the wider transatlantic troubles of 1973/74. The latter, fanned by the Yom Kippur War, the energy crisis, Kissinger's Year of Europe initiative and burden-sharing issues, became severe. The combination of these events triggered rising fears for the future of

[45] Message From President Johnson to Prime Minister Wilson, 1 January 1968, *FRUS, 1964–1968*, Vol. xxii, Western Europe, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v12/d289.
[46] Bruce to Rusk, Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library, NSF Country File, Box 210-12, Folder: UK memos. Vol. xi, 4/67 – 6/67.
[47] Memcon between Ford, Kissinger, and Scowcroft, 18 October 1974, GFL, National Security Adviser's Memoranda of Conversation Collection, Box 6, http://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/document/0314/1552829.pdf.
[48] Defence Department Brief, 9 July 1975, UKNA, FCO 82/579.

both Anglo-American relations and the broader transatlantic alliance. For example, in January 1974, NATO Secretary General Joseph Luns warned publicly that the special relationship had not shown its old vitality over the past year and that it might "disappear" if lessened interest were not reversed.[49] In March, President Nixon forthrightly expressed a need for "organic cooperation" if American commitments in Europe were to be maintained.[50]

When Harold Wilson returned as Prime Minister in 1974, he and Foreign Secretary Callaghan set about restoring Anglo-American relations to "the level of trust and intimacy which shared values, perceptions and traditions make possible."[51] This was deemed essential, particularly as the British desire to maintain global influence could no longer be achieved independently. For example, Wilson traveled to Moscow for bilateral talks with Leonid Brezhnev in early 1975, but neither the British FCO nor the Soviet government had high expectations for major agreements resulting from his visit.[52] The era when Britain could negotiate directly with the Soviets and expect concessions, as Winston Churchill had done with Joseph Stalin decades before, had clearly passed. In this context, anything the UK could do to tie itself more intimately to the United States would enhance its international clout. Fortunately for Wilson, the Nixon and Ford administrations reciprocated British desires to reestablish close Anglo-American relations, not least because almost alone amongst the European powers Britain remained committed to a global foreign policy.[53] In March 1974

[49] Annenberg to Secretary of State, 29 January 1974, https://aad.archives.gov/aad/createpdf?rid=3045&dt=2474&dl=1345.
[50] Memo by Antony Acland, 25 March 1974, UKNA, PREM 16/419; and Richard Sykes to Brimelow, 2 April 1974, UKNA, PREM 16/419.
[51] Thomas to Rycroft, 19 September 1975, UKNA, FCO 82/576.
[52] American Embassy in London to Secretary of State, Washington, DC, February 1975, p. 1, GFL, NSA, Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada, Box 16, Folder "United Kingdom – State Department Telegrams – To SECSTATE – EXDIS (2)"; and Secretary of State, Washington, DC to American Embassy in London, February 5, 1975, p. 1, GFL, NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada, Box 15, Folder "United Kingdom – State Department Telegrams From SECSTATE – EXDIS."
[53] Jan Lodal / Scowcroft to Kissinger "UK Defence Review," plus attached papers, 9 November 1974, GFL, NSA, Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada, Country File: United Kingdom (1), Box 15, United Kingdom (3).

Kissinger promised the British to proceed "with the view that what used to be called 'the special relationship' is in full force."[54] In September that year Kissinger also urged Ford in a forthcoming meeting with Callaghan to continue fostering the warm relations that have been "particularly marked since Wilson returned to power in March."[55] Furthermore, both sides were pleased with how the first bilateral meeting between Ford and Wilson—and the first such meeting between a U.S. President and British Prime Mister for two years—went in January 1975. For example, Wilson told the British Cabinet that he and Callaghan had "quickly established an excellent rapport with President Ford," and the British Ambassador to the United States, Peter Ramsbotham, concluded that the summit "underlined the depth of good feeling towards Britain in the U.S., and the value they still attach to our close cooperation, despite our current economic difficulties." [56]

The British, as much the weaker partner, also watched the Ford administration carefully for its public handling of Anglo-American relations and were generally pleased in this regard. At the January 1975 summit meeting with Wilson, Ford spoke warmly of the unique connection between Britain and the United States, reminding domestic and international audiences that Britain's importance to the United States did not lie only in its being "one of America's truest allies and oldest friends" but also that Britain was imbued in the fabric of American life itself. Tapping into bicentennial thinking, Ford declared that "Any student of American history and American culture knows how significant is our common heritage. . . . Americans can never forget how the very roots of our democratic political

[54] Toasts at Luncheon in London, 28 March 1974, GFL, NSA, Kissinger – Scowcroft West Wing Files 1969-76, Box 26, United Kingdom (15) 3/4/74 – 4/20/74.
[55] Kissinger to Ford re Meeting with James Callaghan on September 24, 1974, 22 September 1974, GFL, NSA, Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada, Country File: United Kingdom (1), Box 15, United Kingdom (2).
[56] Cabinet Conclusions CC (75) 7th, 6 February 1975, UKNA, T 354/407; and Ramsbotham to FCO, 26 February 1975, UKNA, T 354/407.

system and of our concepts of liberty and government are to be found in Britain."[57] He also supported his interest in firm Anglo-American relations with some telling gestures. For instance, he personally, with Chief Justice Berger, swore in Anne Armstrong as the new U.S. Ambassador to the UK in February 1976 and proclaimed at the time that "We have had, of course, a long, long relationship with Great Britain. The relations today, I think, are as good as they ever have been. I have had some exceptionally fine experiences with the prime minister. Our former Ambassador knows with his service there that our relations country-to-country are excellent."[58] Armstrong later recalled what a strong signal of support this had been,[59] and Wilson picked up on it in a personal letter to Ford upon the prime minister's resignation in March 1976.[60] In fact, Armstrong's arrival statement as Ambassador underscored the significance of Ford's actions: "I think that the importance the President of the United States attaches to my appointment was underscored by the fact he broke a precedent and officiated at my swearing-in himself recently—something we couldn't find had happened before in history."[61]

As the American bicentennial approached, the special relationship had evidently regained much of its customary warmth, especially in private exchanges. At the same time, however, British retrenchment continued to draw U.S. concern and American confidence in Britain, and British ability to pull their asymmetric weight within the special relationship, remained vulnerable to Britain's economic weakness especially. As the Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors told Ford on 23 April, 1975, the British economy was in "a

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[57] Gerald Ford: "Remarks of Welcome to Prime Minister Harold Wilson of the United Kingdom," 30 January 1975, Online by Gerhard Peters and John Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=5260.
[58] Press Release "Exchange of remarks between the President and Anne Armstrong upon being sworn-in as Ambassador to Great Britain," 19 February 1976, GFL, Office of Editorial Staff, Robert Orben, Special Assistant to the President Files, 1973-77, Box 38, 2/19/76.
[59] Anne Armstrong, 16, GFL, Oral History Projects, Transcripts and Audiotapes 1996-, Box 1.
[60] Wilson to Ford, 16 March 1976, GFL, White House Central Files (WHCF), Subject File, Box 57, CO 160, 3/1/76 – 3/31/76.
[61] Anne Armstrong Arrival Statement, 4 March 1976, UKNA, FCO 82/682.

very dangerous situation."[62] For both sides the bicentennial therefore offered opportunities to encourage Anglo-American public affinity, showcase the particularly close relationship between the world's two leading English-speaking powers and send public messages about the renewed intimacy of the special relationship. It also provided a vehicle to help inspire international confidence, important to the United States in reasserting American leadership credentials and to Britain in helping to counter negative media coverage and speculation about its economic policies and prospects.

A "cultural turn" in British Policy

The British were acutely conscious during the late 1960s and 1970s not only of their economic weakness but also of their consequent vulnerability to market confidence, especially once Bretton Woods collapsed and sterling floated. This vulnerability was demonstrated dramatically when, one month before American Independence Day in 1976, a huge $5.3 billion swap arrangement was needed to calm the exchange market when the bottom unexpectedly fell out of the pound.[63] The British also recognized that if the special relationship was to remain more than warm sentiment, they needed to somehow supplement their claims to influence in Washington, DC such that they retained both privileged functional cooperation and access to U.S. policymakers.

Herein it is important to appreciate that during the years of planning for the bicentennial, the British began to look to their soft power to help compensate for the relative

[62] Alan Greenspan to the President, 23 April 1975, GFL, WHCF, Subject File, Box 56, CO 160, 2/1/75 – 4/30/75.
[63] Checklist for Secretary, 25 June 1976, undated attachment: "Bilateral Briefing Paper," the United States National Archives (hereafter referred to as USNA), RG59 Records of Henry Kissinger, Box 13, Misc Docs, tells etc, 1975: Folder 4.

decline in Britain's hard power and for the retirement of personal networks forged in the furnace of World War II. Instructive in this regard is a report prepared in 1969 by the Foreign Office Planning Staff and the British Embassy in Washington, DC on the "Underlying Elements in Anglo-U.S. Relations." This recognized that Britain's military and economic strength still afforded influence with the Americans but also attached significant value to cultural considerations, two of which were particularly important. First, it was considered that the "American mind" was "particularly sensitive to movements in British public opinion as expressed in Parliament and the press to a degree which does not apply to any other English speaking, or indeed any other country." The reason for this lay, the report argued, in the ease of communication with a common language and the fact that "Britain is a source of much of America's cultural ancestry to which a comparatively rootless people attach a great deal of importance."[64] Second, it was felt that culture was likely to be the most durable aspect of British influence vis-à-vis the United States for it was a resource deeply rooted in Anglo-American society and removed from the immediate consequences of Britain's relative decline. This meant, in turn, that "Our value as a 'Fidus Achates' is likely to survive our relative decline in power."[65]

It may be tempting to dismiss a report composed in 1969 as having bearing upon British ambitions for the bicentennial but it would be wrong to do so as it helped foreground soft power in the minds of British officials and the utility therein of cultural connections. In some cases, these cultural connections were formalized within organizational structures, notably the Commonwealth, which in May 1975 Foreign Secretary Callaghan told U.S. Ambassador to Britain, Elliot Richardson, "had vitality" and "was still useful to influence

[64] Report prepared by the British Embassy in Washington, DC and by the Foreign Office Planning Staff, "Underlying Elements in Anglo-U.S. Relations," 17 January 1969, UKNA FO32/376.
[65] Ibid., 10.

others."[66] In the case of Anglo-American relations, though, the interwoven cultural fabric of the two nations was appreciated increasingly as a source of affiliative bonding and shared endeavor. In February 1976 Ambassador Armstrong described the relationship as being "like a tapestry - - a thick one, a fine one - - whether in our Governments, which is, of course, the one that first comes to mind, but in the world of ideas, of culture, of art, of business."[67] The bicentennial therefore provided propitious opportunities to remind America's "comparatively rootless people" of their "motherland," past, present and future.[68]

One particular source of soft power that the Heath, Wilson and Callaghan governments all sought to leverage was Britain's structural power, especially as complex interdependence developed and economic issues shifted emphasis away from the primarily ideological and military problems of the Cold War. This was a key reason why the Heath government steered Britain into the EC in 1973.[69] More generally, though, Britain's structural power flowed from its privileged roles in institutions that Britain and the United States fashioned after World War II and which reflected their shared values. This meant that the United States and UK were natural partners in reforming these institutions before the challenges of the 1970s. Even more importantly, British officials still saw shared language, historical experience and entwined cultures as being key to maintaining their role as "Fidus Achates." As Prime Minister Callaghan told *The Times* in May 1976, "to me, the special relationship is that I sit down with an American and can discuss matters from a common viewpoint. I think that is one of the reasons Henry (Kissinger) and I got on so well. He used

[66] Minutes of meeting: Callaghan and Elliot Richardson, 19 May 1975, UKNA, FC0 82/627.
[67] Press Release, Exchange of remarks between the President and Anne Armstrong upon being sworn-in as Ambassador to Great Britain, 19 February 1976, GFL, Office of Editorial Staff, Robert Orben, Special Assistant to the President Files, 1973-77, Box 38, 2/19/76.
[68] Report prepared by the British Embassy in Washington, DC and by the Foreign Office Planning Staff, "Underlying Elements in Anglo-U.S. Relations," 17 January 1969, UKNA, FO32/376.
[69] FCO paper entitled "Relations with the United States" prepared for Alec Douglas-Home in preparation for a meeting with the Prime Minister, 9 November 1971, UKNA, FCO 82/64; David Gowland, *Britain and the European Union* (London: Routledge, 2017); and Hugo Young, *This Blessed Plot: Britain and Europe from Churchill to Blair* (London: Macmillan, 1999).

to say to me that when he came to London he got a sort of world outlook as he did in Washington. That is bound to create a special relationship between us."[70]

How did all of this play out in British approaches toward the bicentennial? In some ways these were true to past precedent whereby acts of commemoration become part of the living narrative of special Anglo-American relations. In the early twentieth century, for instance, various commemorations of Abraham Lincoln in the UK were used to emphasize the former U.S. president's descent from British ancestors and the shared values of both countries. Lincoln's statue in Parliament Square, erected in 1920, was the first monument placed there for a leader with no direct connection to Britain.[71] Yet its location in the heart of the British capital, adjacent to Westminster Abbey and facing Parliament, perpetuated a story of American history and values enmeshed with British history and culture. Similarly, Franklin Roosevelt's statue, installed in 1948 outside the U.S. Embassy in London's Grosvenor Square, played a similar role as the Cold War began.[72] Even more famously, Churchill's funeral in 1965 was watched by the largest American television audience up to that point in history and the organizers ensured plentiful opportunities for public expressions of Anglo-American kinship: Churchill's wartime friend Dwight D. Eisenhower served as an official American representative, proceedings included a British Army band rendition of the Star-Spangled Banner and St Paul's Cathedral, where the ceremony was held, doubled as the "Parish Church of the British Commonwealth" and home to the American Memorial

[70] McCaffrey to Barrington enclosing transcript of Callaghan interview with the Times, 14 May 1976, UKNA, FCO 82/660.
[71] Sam Edwards, "The Architecture of a Myth: Constructing and Commemorating Churchill's Special Relationship, c. 1919-1969," in Dobson and Marsh, eds., *Churchill and the Anglo-American Special Relationship*, pp. 202-222; and Adam I.P. Smith, "The 'Cult' of Abraham Lincoln and the Strange Survival of Liberal England in the Era of the World Wars," *Twentieth Century British History*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (2010), pp. 486-509.
[72] "Britain Honors a Lost Friend," Pathe Newsreels, 15 July 1948, www.britishpathe.com/video/britain-honours-a-lost-friend-aka-roosevelt-memori/query/unveiled+london; Edwin Lerner, "Statues of 6 American Presidents in London," *Guide London*, 17 June 2016, www.guidelondon.org.uk/blog/around-london/statues-6-american-presidents-london/.

Chapel.[73] The following year, the Smithsonian began displaying its Churchill statue in Washington, DC while a separate Churchill bronze was erected nearby on the grounds of the British Embassy.[74]

The bicentennial would duly form part of the archive of such commemorations and showcase the uniqueness of Anglo-American historical connections, offering a multi-media referent to be invoked and used in the future to assist the continual animation of the special relationship mythology. However, the bicentennial also offered public and private opportunities to tailor and rehearse the special relationship to Britain's particular concerns of the time. It was especially important to emphasize Britain's uniquely close relationship with the United States, to thereby encourage third party expectation of American support for British interests, and to sell Britain as a healthy and essential U.S. ally. Indeed, the closer the time came to the celebrations, the more it was recognized that Britain's parlous economic situation increased its dependence upon the United States and that cultivating international confidence was critical to British objectives. As the FCO warned in 1975, the United States "will increasingly be more influenced by the views of other nations unless we can dispel the gloomy views and forecasts of Britain which are currently widespread in the United States, and cause us to be bracketed with Italy as likely casualties to weak economic performance."[75]

The Lonely Superpower

In the early 1970s the United States remained the undisputed hegemon of the West but was chastened by the loss of confidence in its leadership, shocked at evidence of its own overstretch and seeking to adjust to new constraints upon its freedom of action at home and

[73] Edwards, "*The Architecture of a Myth*," pp. 202-2, 22; and J. Rose*, The Literary Churchill: Author, Reader, Actor* (London: Yale Books, 2015), p. 448.
[74] "Ambassador's residence: the Churchill statue," British Embassy, Washington, DC, http://ukinusa.fco.gov.uk/en/about-us/our-embassy/location-access/residence/residencechurchillstatue.
[75] FCO Steering Brief for Prime Minister's visit to Washington, DC, 29-31 January 1975, UKNA, T 354/407.

abroad. When Ford became president, priorities and challenges were significantly different to the Nixon-Kissinger years. Ford's character and national need encouraged him to develop a more open and consultative White House, something reflected in his appointment of Donald Rumsfeld as White House Coordinator[76] and his attempt to transfer to the White House his congressional "spokes of the wheel" model of organization.[77] The multilateralization of international relations and the primacy of economic problems also encouraged expanded U.S. engagement of allies abroad and a weakening of the bilateralism practiced heavily during the Nixon-Kissinger years. While Kissinger remained the key figure in U.S. foreign policy, Ford limited his dominance by weakening his ability to control access to the president in all matters of foreign policy and, ultimately, removing Kissinger from his role as National Security Advisor. In addition, key international issues of the day—such as re-engaging the Atlantic Alliance, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and dealing with demands for a New International Economic Order—were less conducive to Kissinger's preferred approach of power politics and bilateralism. According to British officials, Kissinger's "classical 19th century view of foreign policy as being concerned with security and the balance of power" meant that he had "proved more adept at dealing with the enemies of the United States than with her friends."[78] Furthermore, they felt that the "post-war development of multilateral diplomacy and the broader purposes which have developed out of that are too soft-focused for him—partly because he never sits through these kinds of meetings."[79]

[76] For example, Ambassador Ramsbotham noted that "it is widely assumed that his mandate will be to run a more open White House than either of his immediate predecessors who were designated "Chief of Staff." Whether or not he is entirely successful in this, his previous political experience should be of considerable value to the President." Ramsbotham to FCO, 24 December 1974, UKNA, FCO 82/418.
[77] Dick Cheney, *In My Time: A Personal and Political Memoir* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011), pp. 72–94.
[78] JL Bullard (Eastern European and Soviet Department) to Lord N Gordon Lennox, 31 July 1974, UKNA, FCO 82/422.
[79] Washington, DC to Wellington, "ANZUS Council Meeting," 25 April 1975, UKNA, FCO 82/541; Ramsbotham to Crosland, 3 January 1977, UKNA, FCO 82/725.

To the established bug-bear of burden-sharing within U.S. foreign policy had been added considerations of legitimacy, popular support and international uncertainty about U.S. ability to follow-through on promises and threats in the face of Congressional reassertion and the onset of what became known as the Vietnam syndrome.[80] Ford used his 1975 State of the Union address to stress internationalism, his desire to work effectively with Congress, and the need to regain the public support necessary to legitimize American policies and to guard against isolationist sentiment. He pledged to Congress "a policy of communication, conciliation, compromise, and cooperation" but also warned the legislature that "if our foreign policy is to be successful, we cannot rigidly restrict in legislation the ability of the President to act." He attacked isolationism and underscored the interdependence of the modern world: "At no time in our peacetime history has the state of the Nation depended more heavily on the state of the world . . . let there be no mistake about it: International cooperation is a vital factor of our lives today." And he addressed head-on popular discontent and the need to re-connect political leadership with the electorate. "Some people question their Government's ability to make hard decisions and stick with them; they expect Washington politics as usual. . . . The moment has come to move in a new direction. We can do this by fashioning a new partnership between the Congress on the one hand, the White House on the other, and the people we both represent."[81]

Ford presented his foreign policy loosely around interdependence and the responsibility of the United States to exercise leadership, which meant working with allies.[82] Furthermore, post-Watergate politics and changes in the international system impacted how

[80] Winston Lord to Secretary of State, "Strategy for Southern Africa," 12 April 1976, USNA, RG59 Records of Henry Kissinger, Box 13, Briefing memos 1975, folder 6; and Geoff Simons, *The Vietnam Syndrome: Impact on US Foreign Policy* (London: Palgrave, 1998).
[81] Gerald Ford, "Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress Reporting on the State of the Union," 15 January 1975, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=4938.
[82] FCO Steering Brief for Prime Minister's visit to Washington, DC, 29-31 January 1975, UKNA, T 354/407.

the United States calculated the relative value of its Cold War allies. In the 1950s and 1960s issues of war, peace, and national survival rested primarily upon military force and technological innovation, supported by tools of economic coercion such as strategic embargo and foreign aid.[83] However, the Cuban Missile Crisis and advent of Mutually Assured Destruction steadily moved the geographic focus of the Cold War towards the periphery and the emphasis within East-West relations towards arms control—something reflected in the 1968 Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and the onset of détente.[84] Hard power remained important but in relative terms its utility diminished beyond maintaining an East-West balance, as did the political likelihood of another major American military action overseas in the aftermath of Vietnam. In this way, Cold War conditions shifted the balance within U.S. needs of allies from quantitative to qualitatively important contributions. This partially offset the relative decline of British capabilities and offered opportunity to foreground remaining high quality and specialist assets that could complement those of the United States. Also, public distrust in U.S. leadership placed a premium upon allies that could make niche contributions that were valuable both in their own right and for their symbolic solidarity. Such considerations encouraged the State Department to conclude in November 1974 that "Without identifying hypothetical situations, it seems

[83] Alan P. Dobson, *US Economic Statecraft for Survival 1933-1991: Of Embargoes, Strategic Embargoes, and Economic Warfare* (London: Routledge, 2002); Alan P. Dobson, "From Instrumental to Expressive: The Changing Goals of the U.S. Cold War Strategic Embargo," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Winter 2009-2010), pp. 98-119; Shu Guang Zhang, *Economic Cold War: America's Embargo against China and the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1949-1963* (Woodrow Wilson Center Press with Stanford University Press, 2001); and Ian Jackson, *The Economic Cold War: America, Britain and East-West Trade 1948–63* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).

[84] See, for instance, Raymond L. Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute, 1985); and Jussin Hanhimaki, *The Rise and Fall of Détente: American Foreign Policy and the Transformation of the Cold War* (Nebraska: Potomac Books, 2012).

prudent to assume that at some time in the next 5-10 years we may want to have a British flag alongside our own for both political and military reasons."[85]

Whilst relations with France and West Germany improved with the elections of President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and Chancellor Helmut Schmidt respectively, the Ford administration found Britain to be especially responsive to U.S. needs.[86] The improved relations of the last months of the Nixon administration were continued. This owed in part to the continuity provided by Kissinger and to Ford's success in developing strong personal relations with Wilson and Callaghan especially. In addition, there was a growing recognition that British opinion was indeed significant for the U.S. public, the United States Information Agency (USIA) and other surveys indicating greater U.S. affiliation with the British people than any other. For instance, in 1973 a Gallup Poll asked Americans to rate their opinion of various nations on a scale between +5 (for "a country you like very much") and –5 (for "a country you dislike very much"). This study revealed that, of their major European allies, Americans held the strongest positive feelings for Great Britain. For example, nearly 40 percent of Americans rated Britain above three while only about 25 percent reported similar feelings for West Germany. Furthermore, feelings of dislike were relatively weak for Great Britain and comparatively stronger for West Germany, France, and Italy.[87]

[85] U.S. Department of State, Briefing Memorandum, "UK Defense Review," 8 November 1974, GFL, National Security Adviser, Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada, Box 15, Country File United Kingdom, Folder (3).
[86] Callaghan credits the change of government in Britain, France and West Germany as doing much to "create a more realistic attitude" in Europe towards integration. James Callaghan, *Time and Chance* (London: Collins, 1987), p. 316.
[87] *Gallup Poll #868*, Survey conducted 3 April 1973, The Gallup Organization, http://brain.gallup.com/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=AIPO0868.

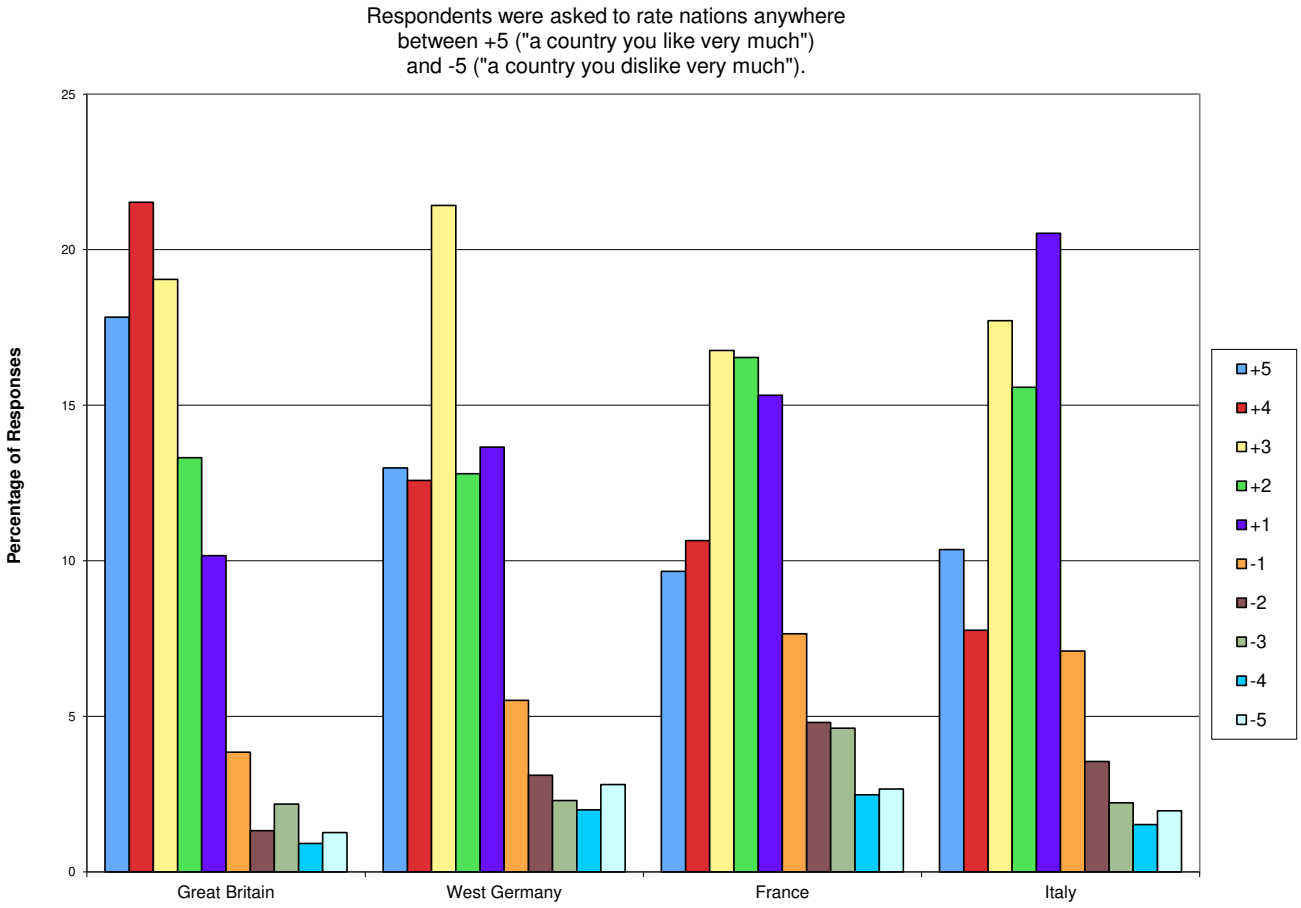

Figure 1. American Affinity for European Allies, 1973

Source: Gallup Poll #868, 3 April 1973, The Gallup Organization, <http://brain.gallup.com/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=AIPO0868>

As Bruce Russett has written, a common feature of democratic societies is that "Mass sentiments are likely to constrain the behavior of leaders and elites," as well as to influence the broad outlines of foreign policy.[88] In this way, public opinion rendered British partnership particularly important to Ford's efforts to rebuild domestic American support for his

[88] Bruce Russett, *Community and Contention: Britain and America in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1963), p. 115.

administration's foreign policy.[89] It also helped emphasize to U.S. administrations the significance of Anglo-American cultural affinities and that therein more than public opinion was in play. In 1968 Thomas Hughes of the State Department noted that cultural familiarity and a shared language made "U.S. and UK officials feel more comfortable and cooperative with each other, more respectful and more trusting of each other."[90] The following year State Department official background notes on the UK emphasized that common language, ideals, and democratic practices "ultimately induced and enhanced Britain's alliance with the United States."[91] Similarly, the likelihood of Anglo-American cooperation during periods of adversity was enhanced by high levels of British popular support for the United States. For example, in a 1972 survey conducted by the USIA, 72 percent of Britons believed that the United States was the nation most likely to assist Britain if its security were threatened. The study also found that the "next most frequently named countries, including Commonwealth members and European allies, received only half as many or fewer mentions." In addition, 89 percent of Britons believed the basic interests of the UK and the United States were in agreement.[92]

[89] Also see "General and Educated Opinion on International Economic Issues in Western Europe and Japan," 12 September 1975, GFL, L. William Seidman Files, Office of Economic Affairs, Office of Research.
[90] To: The Secretary Through: S/S From INR – Thomas L. Hughes, 7 February 1968, "Subject: What Now for Britain? Wilson's Visit and Britain's Future," J. Colman, "Communication: 'What Now for Britain?', The State Department's Intelligence Assessment of the 'Special Relationship, February 7, 1968'," *Diplomacy & Statecraft,* Vol. 19, No. 2 (2008), p. 351.
[91] "Background Notes: United Kingdom," USNA, Nixon Presidential Materials Staff, National Security Council Files, President's Trip Files, President's February-March 1969 Trip to Europe.
[92] "U.S. Standing in Britain Between the President's China and USSR Visits," 5 September 1972, USNA, Office of Research, Records of the U.S. Information Agency (hereinafter referred to as USIA), pp. 2, 8.

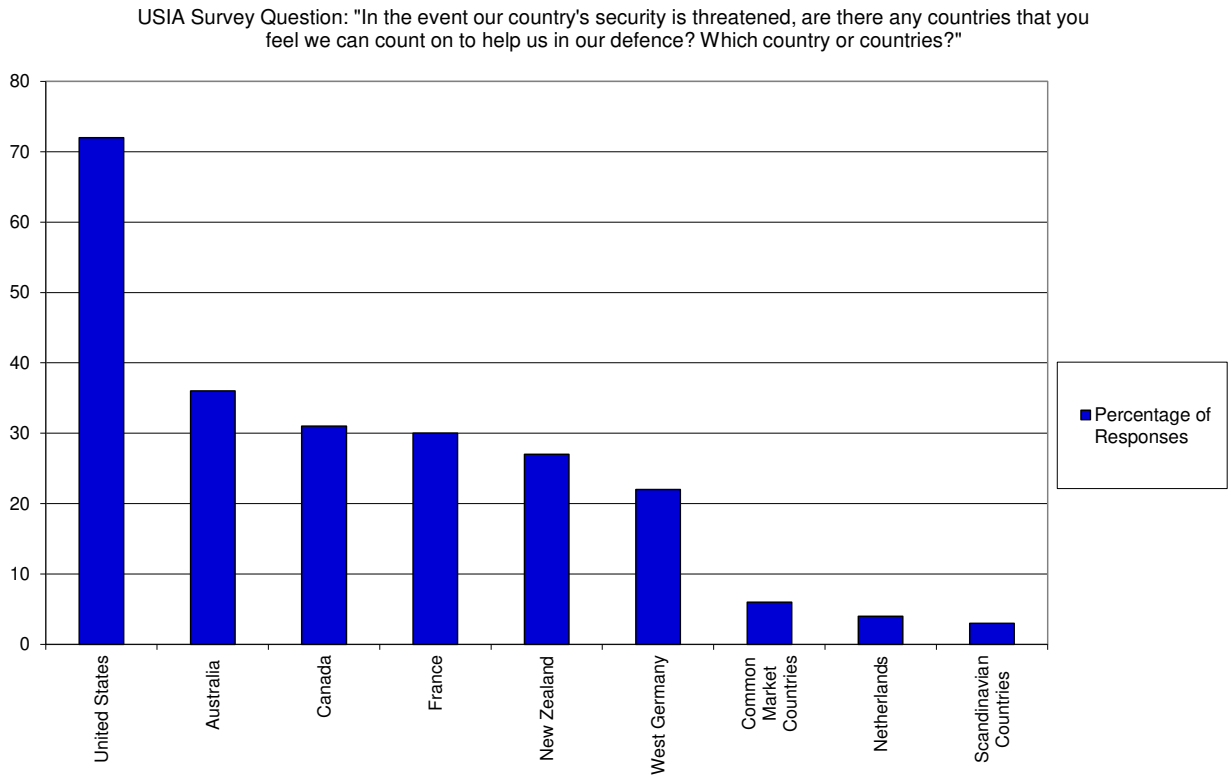

Figure 2. British Trust in Allied Nations, Sept. 1972

Source: "U.S. Standing in Britain Between the President's China and USSR Visits," 5 September 1972, Office of Research, USIA, NARA, 2, 8.

As planning for the bicentennial gathered pace, it is noteworthy that U.S. policymakers publicly and privately acknowledged increasingly the importance of cultural connections to Anglo-American cooperation. President Ford set the tone at his meeting with Wilson and Callaghan in Washington, DC in January 1975, cramming his short dinner toast full of Anglo-American sentimentality. Ford invoked Winston Churchill as an embodiment of the indomitable spirit of the special relationship, capitalizing upon the fact that the dinner coincided with the tenth anniversary of the former prime minister's death. He also spoke to the binding power of the great common Anglo-American heritage, dismissed George Bernard

Shaw's quip that the two nations were separated by the same language and went on to paraphrase Prime Minister Wilson in stressing that "Britons and Americans communicate effectively because we share a common background of understanding." Elaborating, Ford invoked the power of the multitudinous unspoken connections between the United States and the UK: "each of us is aware that behind these few words lie volumes of thought and experience which do not need to be articulated, and of course, this is a priceless asset to both our nations and our enduring friendship."[93]

It is important, also, to recognize that in the United States' search for reliable allies there was a sense of American loneliness and recognition that Britain above all others offered not just capabilities but also understanding and affiliation. In January 1974 President Nixon told Ambassador Cromer that "France has become a parochial power focusing on nickels and dimes. Germany has lousy leadership –especially at the foreign policy level. The British are pragmatists—and I am—and therefore the most pro-British President in a long time."[94] The following year, U.S. Ambassador Elliot Richardson also picked up on the unusual comfort and reassurance that particular Anglo-American ways of thinking brought to Washington, DC. Speaking before the Pilgrims, Richardson emphasized that "these special relationships of ours of language, of culture, of cast of mind become vital, because however power shifts, whatever the complexities of balance between nations and forces, the value of an old and easy partnership away from the conference-table, sharing the same assumptions and aspirations, is inestimable."[95]

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[93] Gerald Ford, "Toasts of the President and Prime Minister Wilson of the United Kingdom," 30 January 1975, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=5305.
[94] Memo of conversation Nixon, Cromer and Scowcroft, 17 January 1974, GFL, NSA, Kissinger – Scowcroft West Wing Files 1969-76, Box 26, United Kingdom (13) 1/2/74 – 1/28/74.
[95] "US-British relations 'were never better,'" *The Times*, 12 March 1975.

Moreover, lest it be suspected that Ford and Richardson were simply trading diplomatic pleasantries, note should be taken that the State Department directly associated close cultural ties with strong Anglo-American partnership. In October 1975 the State Department recommended increasing British "confidence in our ability to deal positively with crisis and change" and simultaneously promoting "respect for and appreciation of American intellectual and cultural achievements." The same report recommended that the bicentennial be used as a "vehicle" to "intensify ties created by our common cultural and intellectual heritage."[96] Such recommendations continued as the celebrations drew closer. In May 1976 the State Department explicitly called for the "expansion of information, cultural and scientific programs aimed at increasing the number of British leaders with a genuine understanding of U.S. society and culture," in order to "increase opportunities for meaningful contacts between elements of both societies."[97]

Especially in the aftermath of Vietnam and Watergate, the bicentennial offered the Ford administration opportunity to relaunch the American project. As Ford said in his 1975 State of the Union address, "As our 200th anniversary approaches, we owe it to ourselves and to posterity to rebuild our political and economic strength. Let us make America once again and for centuries more to come what it has so long been—a stronghold and a beacon-light of liberty for the whole world."[98] It also offered opportunity, through celebrating the special ties of Anglo-American relations, to reassure American domestic constituencies that when the United States led abroad it had partners able and willing to act in support.

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[96] U.S. Secretary of State to U.S. Embassy London, "Policy Objectives for the UK – 1975," October 1975, https://aad.archives.gov/aad/createpdf?rid=290914&dt=2476&dl=1345.
[97] John J Crowley Jr, Memo: "Policy Objectives Towards the UK," 24 May 1976, GFL, NSA, NSC Europe, Canada, and Ocean Affairs Staff: files 1974-77, Box 34, United Kingdom 1976 (5) WH.
[98] Gerald Ford, Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress Reporting on the State of the Union, 15 January 1975, Bodleian Library, Callaghan, Box 221.

The Celebrations

Broadly speaking, it is state-supported cultural and educational institutions and practices, together with cultural industries, that most determine processes of remembering and forgetting and hence what does and does not become part of collective memory.[99] For the British and the American governments, then, the bicentennial was an opportunity to celebrate strengthened Anglo-American relations, to showcase their on-going resilience to the world, and to draw a line under recent turbulence in their international and domestic affairs. It was also a chance to continue the selective re-telling of the historical special relationship such that evolutions in modern Anglo-American relations might be received as natural and legitimate. Performance, discourse, and imagery combined to demonstrate the extensive Anglo-American cultural interpenetration and to connect relations past to those present between the two leading English-speaking countries.

After Nixon announced the creation of a presidential commission to plan the bicentennial in 1972, Foreign Secretary Douglas-Home quickly recognized that the UK, "as a founder nation," would be "expected to contribute and take part in the celebrations."[100] As noted above, the responsibility for planning Britain's role in the bicentennial was given to a special group within the FCO, the British Bicentennial Liaison Committee (BBLC), chaired by Lord Lothian. It is clear from the detailed minutes of the BBLC's meetings, which took place between July 1972 and October 1976, that its members were keenly aware that their

[99] Chris Weedon and Glenn Jordan, "Collective memory: theory and politics," *Journal of Social Semiotics*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (2012), pp. 143-153. There is a growing volume of literature on collective memory. See, for instance, Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," *New German Critique*, Vol. 65 (Spring - Summer, 1995), pp. 125-133; James V. Wertsch, *Voices of Collective Remembering* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Eric Langenbacher and Yossi Shain, eds., *Power and the Past: Collective Memory and International Relations* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2010); Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War Between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); and Chris Weedon and Glenn Jordan, "Collective memory: Theory and Politics," *Social Semiotics*, *Vol.* 22, No. 2 (2012), pp. 143-153.

[100] Alec Douglas-Home to Fredrick Warner, 7 April 1972, University of Essex Library (hereafter as UEL), Records of the British Bicentennial Liaison Committee (BBLC), C4.

purpose was to utilize cultural diplomacy to convert the bicentennial of the Revolutionary War into a celebration of shared Anglo-American heritage and the twentieth century special relationship. Commemorations of the war itself were to be used to "show how this evolved into a joint victory for English-speaking people on both sides of the Atlantic."[101] Official gifts were carefully chosen to generate "an unconscious influence on the American public's attitude towards this country [Great Britain]."[102] Cultural exchanges and programs were tailored to "result in great benefit to Anglo-U.S. relations."[103] Obviously, the BBLC took its mission to place Britain at the heart of the bicentennial celebrations seriously. Indeed, this agenda was discernable even in the smallest details. For example, after debating a variety of drafts, the official emblem the committee adopted for its letterhead and publications visually positioned the British flag in the center of the bicentennial icon.[104]

Figure 3. Official BBLC Emblem.

[101] Records of the first meeting of the BBLC, 10 July 1972, UEL, BBLC, C10.
[102] Records of the second meeting of the BBLC, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 21 March 1973, UEL, BBLC, C11.
[103] Meeting minutes, Records of the third meeting of the BBLC, 5 July 1973, UEL, BBLC, C12.
[104] L. Boas, Dir. of the Secretariat, to all members of the BBLC, "BBLC Emblem," 17 October 1973, UEL, BBLC, C5.

Source: L. Boas, Dir. of the Secretariat, BBLC, to all members of the BBLC, "BBLC Emblem," 17 October 1973, University of Essex Library, Records of the British Bicentennial Liaison Committee, C5.

The BBLC was also focused on generating widespread publicity for Britain's contributions, as this was viewed as essential to the achievement of the goals discussed above. During the years of planning and preparation for the bicentennial, BBLC members went on speaking tours throughout the United States and recorded interviews for Radio and Television "which had been used extensively throughout the States."[105] In planning meetings, committee members were routinely reminded that "the major impact" of British activities "should be on U.S. opinion," and "policy was to do all possible to achieve maximum publicity in the U.S. with the UK a secondary target."[106]

However, as the BBLC worked closely with the British Foreign Secretary and the Embassy in Washington, DC, their efforts in the field of cultural diplomacy were complicated by two principal factors. Firstly, the country's on-going financial crises limited the British government's budget for bicentennial contributions to £500,000. The BBLC complained bitterly about the "ludicrous size of the budget" and noted that additional fund raising was "difficult in the present financial climate."[107] But as Ambassador Ramsbotham informed Lothian in late 1974, British goals were unaffected by monetary limitations and they would just have to find creative ways of allocating "the limited funds at the disposal of your committee and so derive the greatest and most lasting benefit to Anglo-American relations

[105] Meeting minutes, Records of the third meeting of the BBLC, 5 July 1973, UEL, BBLC, C12, p. 1; Records of the seventh meeting of the BBLC, 23 July 1975, UEL, BBLC, C16, p. 6; and Records of the eighth meeting of the BBLC, 9 December 1975, UEL, BBLC, C17, p. 2.
[106] Records of eighth meeting of the BBLC, 9 December 1975, pp. 7-8.
[107] Records of the fifth meeting of the BBLC, 29 November 1974, UEL, BBLC, C14, p. 6; and Records of the sixth meeting of the BBLC, 12 February 1975, UEL, BBLC, C15, p. 5.

from this occasion."[108] Secondly, the British government was acutely aware that other allied nations had far larger budgets for their contributions to the bicentennial and feared being overshadowed by such competition.[109] In his letter to Lothian, Ramsbotham stated his belief that, despite their limited funds, the British government should at least "aim to match the efforts of other countries with an imaginative gift." He went on to emphasize, somewhat disingenuously, the scale of Britain's competition:

> Although I would not wish to introduce any spirit of competition (and I know that our American friends want to avoid this) it may be worth noting that the French Government have decided to equip Mount Vernon with *Son et Lumiere*, the Federal German Government to present a planetarium and the Italian Government to mount an exhibition of Palladian architecture which may be permanently housed in the United States.[110]

The BBLC had always intended that Britain's contribution should be "something permanent and conspicuous,"[111] but the danger posed by such competition was clear—should Britain's bicentennial efforts be overshadowed by those of other nations, any "lasting benefit" to the special relationship would be small. The committee discussed the Ambassador's warning about competition at length in its next meeting, and members such as Lady Harlech expressed their belief that "Britain with its particular position vis-à-vis the U.S., ought to make a bigger show than whatever other countries were doing."[112] There was general agreement on this point, but as late as November 1974 no one was quite sure how it could be done.

From its inception the BBLC had devised an array of contributions to the bicentennial. There would be a jointly-funded exchange of artists with the National

[108] Ramsbotham to Lothian, 20 November 1974, UEL, BBLC, C14.
[109] Records of the first meeting of the BBLC, 10 July 1972, p. 10.
[110] Ramsbotham to Lothian, 20 November 1974.
[111] Records of the second meeting of the BBLC, 21 March 1973, UEL, BBLC, C11.
[112] Records of the fifth meeting of the BBLC, 29 November 1974, p. 4.

Endowment for the Arts; a replica of the Liberty Bell would be given to Philadelphia; the Royal Ballet, the London Symphony, the Royal Shakespeare Company, and other cultural institutions would receive grants to perform in America; and the famous Grimethorpe Colliery Band would be sent to tour the United States, performing at least ten concerts around the eastern states. The band's itinerary, of great importance to the FCO, included American mining communities such as Uniontown, Pennsylvania as another way of highlighting additional similarities between the American and British peoples.[113] In January of 1975, Foreign Secretary Callaghan praised all of these plans as "imaginative and well proportioned,"[114] but the British government had still not reached a decision as to what would constitute their "centrepiece gift" to the Americans. The BBLC's hesitancy was understandable given the assorted criteria it had set for their centerpiece. As this would be the most important British contribution, it had to have "popular appeal," the American government would have to be pleased with it, it had to be permanent, and it had to be unmistakably British. It also needed to "achieve the maximum amount of publicity with nationwide coverage in the U.S.," and, most importantly, it had to be affordable.[115] Early ideas had included a carillon of bells for Washington, DC, a historical portrait of George Washington, an Anglo-American museum designed to glorify all the ways "the two nations have jointly helped both each other and possibly mankind," and a life-size bronze replica of the Mayflower. All such notions, however, had been dismissed as either too expensive or impractical.[116] The one affordable idea was a set of historical documents, but neither the BBLC nor the Public Records in Office in Kew had been able to think of anything suitable,[117]

[113] Meeting minutes, Records of the sixth meeting of the BBLC, 12 February 1975, p. 3; and Maria Downs to Theodore Marrs, 12 June 1975, GFL, PLO, Bicentennial Subject File: Publications, Milt Mitler Files, 1973-77; "Grimethorpe Colliery Band – History," http://www.grimethorpeband.com/history.html.
[114] Callaghan to Lothian, 17 January 1975, UEL, BBLC, C7.
[115] Meeting minutes, Records of the third meeting of the BBLC, 5 July 1973, p. 2; and Meeting minutes, Records of the fourth meeting of the BBLC, 27 September 1974, UEL, BBLC, C13, pp. 3, 4.
[116] Records of the third meeting of the BBLC, 5 July 1973, pp. 10, 16.
[117] Records of the fourth meeting of the BBLC, 27 September 1974.

and Ramsbotham began to fear that Britain would be unable to provide a worthy centerpiece gift: "no gesture we make in this context (with the limited budget at our disposal) will be so significant that it will have a universal and lasting impact in this country."[118]

U.S. bicentennial planners, of course, had their own ideas about how the celebrations in general and Britain's centerpiece in particular could be used to advance their government's goals, namely to renew the national commitment to democracy after Watergate and to reassure the American public of their strong connections with allied nations. When John Warner, the director of the ARBA, and his staff arrived in London for a series of meetings with the BBLC in early 1975, he did not hesitate in making a specific request of the British: a one-year loan of the original 1215 Magna Carta. Warner explained that "in principle the ARBA was discouraging tangible gifts of value from foreign countries. But a gift from Britain would be an exception because of the special ties binding our two countries." The Magna Carta would be perfect, he explained, because it related to "the foundation of the United States as a democracy" and "it was the British document best known and most revered by Americans," which would make it "a continuous attraction for a large number of American viewers from all walks of life." Finally, Warner suggested that the loan of the original document could be accompanied by the gift of a special presentation container and a high-quality replica of the Magna Carta for permanent display in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol.[119]

In addition to advancing American objectives, loaning the revered document was also the perfect solution to the British government's "centrepiece" dilemma. Lothian and the BBLC agreed to pursue the idea immediately because it represented all the key elements of

[118] Ramsbotham to Lothian, 20 November 1974, p. 2.
[119] Lothian, "Memorandum by the Chairman," Records of the sixth meeting of the BBLC, 12 February 1975, UEL, BBLC, C15, pp. 1-2.

Anglo-American connection they sought to highlight: the Magna Carta represented freedom, liberty, and rights, all aspects of American identity being celebrated in 1976; it symbolized a deep connection between the allies that predated the divergence of the Revolutionary War; and its presence in the United States for the year seemed appropriate as well as generous, though the actual costs involved—including a specially commissioned display case and a gilded replica of the document—would be well within the British budget.[120] As an added bonus, Magna Carta had the power to offset other nations' claims on the American ally by demonstrating that the British connection was older by some five centuries. Lothian reported to his committee that Warner "had shewn much enthusiasm for the loan of Magna Carta" and the BBLC moved forward quickly.[121] When they realized that the UK actually possessed four original copies of the famous document, it was argued that "HMG could well afford to give a copy rather than loan one," and the committee endorsed this idea.[122] However, while the British Library Board was in favor of a one-year loan, it strongly objected to the notion of a permanent gift, noting that in 1967 a request for a loan of Magna Carta in connection with the Canadian Centennial Celebrations had been rejected and to give a copy to the United States now could cause serious tensions within the Commonwealth.[123] In the end, the loan proceeded exactly as Warner had originally suggested, but the BBLC's initial desire to give the Americans more than they had asked for nevertheless underscores the lengths to which the British were prepared to go to use the bicentennial to cement the special relationship.

The British government labored to maximize all cultural and diplomatic capital to be gained by the loan and promoted their "centrepiece gift" throughout the United States. In a speech typical of the rhetoric embraced by the British government during the bicentennial,

[120] Records of the seventh Meeting of the BBLC, 23 July 1975, pp. 2-3.
[121] Meeting minutes, Records of the sixth meeting of the BBLC, 12 February 1975, pp. 3-5.
[122] Ibid.
[123] British Library Board to Lothian, 6 March 1975, UEL, BBLC, C7.

Lothian told the American branches of the English Speaking Union in October 1975, "We thought and hoped that you would appreciate as much as we do, one of the jewels of democracy, if I might so describe it, and particularly one of the keys to our shared ideals—the Magna Carta." His speech went on to merge the Ford Administration's themes of democracy and renewal with the British desire to downplay the causes of the Revolutionary War: "should anybody ask why we are helping to celebrate what was apparently a national defeat, the answer is that it is because we all realise that the results have been not only to our mutual advantage but also to the advancement of world democracy. In any case many of us may now share the suspicion that the War of Independence happened primarily because of the immense distances and lack of communication between our two countries." Finally, he explained that current threats to their mutual security meant that it was now "even more important that the English speaking West should be increasingly united," and closed by summarizing the rights endowed by the Magna Carta and stressing the ways this shared document fundamentally united the American and British people: "From this source have come some of the noblest pages of British history (one can think of people such as Wilberforce, Florence Nightingale, Shaftsbury, who fought for the rights of the underprivileged) and I hope that you may too derive some inspiration from what is best in British history, for after all it is also part of your own history."[124]

Such heavy-handed rhetoric was hardly necessary. Just as Warner had predicted, American interest in the Magna Carta was great at both elite and popular levels. A grand reception ceremony took place when the loaned document and its showcase, officially a gift from Parliament to Congress, arrived at the U.S. Capitol in 1976. An American Honor Guard was on hand to relieve the British Honour Guard that had escorted the Magna Carta to its

[124] "Lord Lothian's Speech to various branches of the American ESU," October 1975, UEL, BBLC, C7, pp. 2, 7, 10, 17.

destination, and the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Carl Albert, hailed the document as "the first expression of the idea of liberty under the law and of limitation of arbitrary powers of government" and bluntly stated that its arrival was the "most significant part of our Bicentennial celebration."[125] This and similarly high-profile public statements were very satisfying to British foreign policy elites such as then Foreign Secretary Crosland, who praised the BBLC for its work and delighted in the Magna Carta's having "caught the imagination of the members of Congress, and given the opportunity to the most distinguished members of that body to stress in public the debt they owed to common traditions and the close links that still exist between our Parliaments." By the time of its final meeting at the FCO in October 1976, the BBLC was pleased to report that over one million visitors had seen the showcase since the opening ceremony.[126] In this way, Britain had effectively used its cultural resources, rather than its scarce funds, to both please their American ally and publicly underscore the unique bonds of the Anglo-American special relationship.

Similar themes of cultural connection and unity also found expression within Britain itself during 1976. At the opening of an American-sponsored exhibit on Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson in London, Vice President Nelson Rockefeller told the British public that this exhibit was the "centerpiece of our Bicentennial celebration overseas" and admitted that the "roots of the American Republic lie deep in British soil."[127] In addition, the BBLC had heavily encouraged and promoted celebrations of the bicentennial within the UK and the event was marked in numerous ways throughout the nation. During the first two weeks of July 1976, the City of London held a festival themed upon the 200th anniversary of the

[125] Records of the final meeting of the BBLC, 15 October 1976, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UEL, BBLC, C17, p. 2.
[126] Records of the final meeting of the BBLC, 15 October 1976, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UEL, BBLC, C17, pp. 2, 6-7.
[127] Charles Ritcheson, "Final Draft Vice President Rockefeller's speech at the opening 'The World of Franklin and Jefferson,'" 11 September 1975, GFL, Counselors to the President, Speechwriter Job Applications, Robert T. Hartmann Files, 1974-77.

Declaration of Independence and the *Sunday Times* sponsored a separate exhibit about the 1776 revolution. Furthermore, the London Hayward Gallery worked with the Atkins Museum of Kansas City to produce a major American Indian Art exhibit and the Victoria and Albert Museum cooperated with Yale University to create an exhibit of American colonial furniture.[128] Other British observances were media-driven, such as the British Broadcasting Corporation's well-timed program which recognized and honored Americans for their contributions to the English language,[129] or locally inspired and organized, such as the Ulster American Exposition and Folk Park in Northern Ireland, which was designed as both an educational asset and a tourist attraction to commemorate the region's historical links with the United States.[130]

The themes of Anglo-American cultural connections and partnership became so pervasive as to appear in pop culture during the bicentennial as well. For example, the July 1976 issue of *People* magazine contained a large article that interviewed thirteen modern celebrities dressed and photographed as notable figures of the American Revolution. The article included New York Jets quarterback Joe Namath as George Washington, singer Sonny Bono as Nathan Hale, first daughter Susan Ford as Martha Washington, and a single Briton, actor Rex Harrison, as King George III. Harrison's comments about the man he portrayed in the magazine were more substantive than most and, rather like his government's official contributions to the bicentennial, softly manipulated history to offer praise for the modern Anglo-American special relationship: "When it comes to King George III of England,

[128] William Blue, "Memorandum for the Record," 20 January 1975, American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, GFL, PLO, Bicentennial Subject File: Publications, Milt Mitler Files, 1973-77; and James E. Connor, "Meeting with Henry Brandon," 28 September 28, 1976, GFL, WHCF, GI 3 Gifts from or to the United States.
[129] Larry J. Sabato, "A Yank at Oxford in the Bicentennial Year," *VQR: A National Journal of Literature and Discussion*, Summer 1976, http://www.vqronline.org/essay/yank-oxford-bicentennial-year.
[130] "Northern Ireland Stands Tall in 26-nation Birthday Party," *The Ulster-American Connection*, May 1975, No. 1, p. 1.

sympathetic fellow Briton Rex Harrison looks on the bright side. 'He may have been slightly deranged,' says the actor, 'but his loss of the American colonies has been mitigated by history. Independent, Americans grew strong and became allies rather than reluctant subjects. I would like to suggest that even in George's faltering mind, there prevailed a sense of history which could have anticipated the endurance of our transatlantic bonds.'"[131]

Seeing its preferred cultural message appear in popular publications such as *People* would no doubt have been satisfying to the British government, given all the work done and money spent to highlight shared Anglo-American heritage and praise their diplomatic partnership. Indeed, every aspect of British participation had been carefully curated to ensure the most positive narratives and the widest publicity. For example, when planning Britain's gift to Philadelphia—the "Bicentennial Bell" was in effect an exact reproduction of the original Liberty Bell cast by the same English company that produced the first bell over 200 years earlier—every aspect of symbolism and opportunity for publicity was meticulously planned.[132] When officials in Philadelphia requested an additional message be added to the bell's surface, the phrase chosen was "Let Freedom Ring" because it had the particular merit of being the last line of the American anthem "My Country 'tis of Thee," which, as the BBLC pointed out, is sung to the same tune as "God Save the Queen."[133] Once again, no detail was too small when it came to emphasizing the linkages and similarities between the Americans and the British. Furthermore, one of the main reasons the BBLC initially endorsed the project was because President Ford had said he would visit Philadelphia in 1976 and it

[131] "Up Front: A Spirited Group of Celebs Offers America a 200th Birthday Chuckle," *People*, 12 July 1976, p. 17.
[132] Maria Downs to Theodore Marrs, 12 June 1975, GFL, Public Liaison Office (PLO), Bicentennial Subject File: Publications, Milt Mitler Files, 1973-77; William L. Blue, "Memorandum for the Record," 20 January 1975, GFL, PLO, American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, Bicentennial Subject File: Publications, Milt Mitler Files, 1973-77; John Marsh, Memorandum, 13 June 1975, GFL, Bicentennial Subject File, John Marsh Files, 1974-77, Counselors to the President; and George Springsteen, "Memorandum for Mr. Brent Scowcroft," 3 June 1976, GFL, NSA, Country File: United Kingdom, Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada.
[133] Records of the eighth meeting of the BBLC, 9 December 1975, p. 3.

was considered likely he would be the person to issue the bell's first peal, an event sure to generate publicity.[134] But as it turned out, someone even better suited to the BBLC's publicity goals would have that honor.

Though the Magna Carta had been the UK's official centerpiece, it was the state visit of Queen Elizabeth II that served as the real masterstroke of British cultural diplomacy during the bicentennial. Ever interested in creating high-profile but cost-effective opportunities to place itself at the heart of the American celebrations, the British government raised the prospect of a royal bicentennial visit as early as December 1974. Kissinger immediately saw the value of this idea, telling Ambassador Ramsbotham, "I am for it. We would be delighted. It would come at a good point in our relationship."[135] Unknown to the British but telling of the perceived influence of British royalty in the United States, President Nixon had mused in March 1973 about just such a visit.[136] Ford was equally taken by the idea, Ramsbotham reporting that the president even considered initially that it would be "rather appropriate" were the Queen to visit on July 4, U.S. Independence Day.[137] Ultimately the Ford administration decided against July 4 but nevertheless invited Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, Prince Phillip, to Washington, DC during the most intense period of bicentennial festivities, July 1976.

A prominent royal visit was a perspicacious decision particularly because, for it to benefit the objectives of both governments, it depended entirely on American affinity for the British and their monarch. Significantly, both governments treated the existence of such affinity as axiomatic. Lothian, for example, declared in 1975 that the monarch's presence in

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[134] Records of the sixth meeting of the BBLC, 12 February 1975.
[135] Memcon, Department of State, Kissinger and Ramsbotham, 23 December 1974, p. 1, GFL, NSA, Kissinger-Scowcroft West Wing Office Files, Box 26, Folder "United Kingdom (18)."
[136] President Richard M. Nixon, Ronald L. Ziegler, and Henry A. Kissinger meeting in the President's office in the Old Executive Office Building, 10:50 am, 29 March 1973, The White House Tapes, Conversation 424-026, http://www.easynixon.org/tapes/424-026.
[137] Ramsbotham to FCO, 2 January 1975, UKNA, FCO 26 / 1738.

the United States "must particularly enhance the strength of our mutual relationship," and such confidence was soon justified.[138] When the forthcoming visit became public knowledge, the American people quickly demonstrated their zeal to incorporate Britain's royalty into their period of national celebration. Indeed, the news of the Queen's visit spurred much public commentary on the special relationship, and the White House was deluged with letters from Americans interested in both Anglo-American ties and the continuation of the alliance. Al Clark, Sr. of Quincy, Florida sent such a letter to President Ford and received a reply, from Deputy Special Assistant to the President Milton Mitler, which indicated that the administration was pleased by public expressions of support for the special relationship and also recognized a connection between enthusiasm for the Queen's visit and American affinity for the British in general:

> On behalf of President Ford, I would like to thank you for your letter and newspaper columns in which you make reference to the strong ties which exist between the United States and the United Kingdom.
>
> The President asked that I extend to you his very best wishes and his appreciation for your kind words. The longstanding ties of heritage, friendship and alliance between the United Kingdom and America are well recognized. The President, Mrs. Ford, and all Americans look forward to the visit of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Phillip as a symbolic reaffirmation of these ties.
>
> I am sure you will find that wherever the Royal family visits in our country in July, Americans will express in many ways their affection for them and the British people.[139]

The Queen received hundreds of invitations from American individuals as well as communities, large and small, which felt a visit from the British monarch would be the most suitable way to conclude their celebrations of the American bicentennial.[140] For example,

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[138] "Lord Lothian's Speech to various branches of the American ESU," October 1975, p. 4.
[139] Milton Mitler to Al Clark, Sr., 20 February 1976, GFL, PLO, Bicentennial Subject File: Publications, Milt Mitler Files, 1973-77.
[140] "Luncheon Toast for Queen Elizabeth at White House," 7 July 1976, GFL, Office of the Editorial Staff, Robert Orben, Special Assistant to the President Files, 1973-77.

Georgia Senator Sam Nunn requested that the Queen visit his state because "the people of Georgia would like an opportunity to honor the royal couple. I cannot think of a more fitting climax to Georgia's Bicentennial observance."[141] The Elizabethan Garden on Roanoke Island, North Carolina, lobbied the White House and invited the British royals to visit and tour a new "garden-within-a-garden dedicated to Queen Elizabeth II." Many of these invitations included references to the Anglo-American partnership during World War II and noted American cultural affinity for the British.[142] References to the Revolutionary War itself were conspicuously absent. For example, the minister of Boston's Old North Church, itself an icon of the American Revolution, explained his parish's desire for a royal visit during the bicentennial: "We believe such an event at this place would express clearly and strongly . . . the friendship and appreciation we feel for our shared heritage."[143]

In this way, the Queen's visit stimulated overt public expressions of Anglo-American cultural affinity and thus served as another wellspring of British soft power helping to sustain the modern operational dynamic of the special relationship. The Queen was unable to accept every invitation extended by Americans, but she accepted several. These included that of the Old North Church and at Philadelphia on July 6, where she rang the new "Bicentennial Bell" for the first time.[144] Of all the many functions in which the Queen participated, though, the most visible and significant was the official state dinner at the White House on July 7.

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[141] Sam Nunn to Gerald Ford, 2 October 1975, GFL, PLO, Bicentennial Subject File: Publications, Milt Mitler Files, 1973-77.
[142] Jesse Helms to Ted Marrs, 18 August 1975, GFL, Counselors to the President, Bicentennial Subject File, John Marsh Files, 1974-77; Theodore Marrs to Edward Glover, 20 August 1975, GFL, PLO, Bicentennial Subject File: Publications, Milt Mitler Files, 1973-77; and Ruth Agnor, President, Lexington–Rockbridge County Chamber of Commerce, to John Marsh, 20 February 1976, GFL, PLO, Bicentennial Subject File: Publications, Milt Mitler Files, 1973-77.
[143] Reverend Robert Golledge to Gerald Ford, 3 July 1975, GLF, PLO, Bicentennial Subject File: Publications, Milt Mitler Files, 1973-77.
[144] The bell would hang in the bell tower of the Independence National Historical Park. Theodore Marrs, Memorandum for Jack Marsh, 5 January 1976, GFL, PLO, Bicentennial Subject File: Publications, Milt Mitler Files, 1973-77; and Jim Hunter, "Memorandum for Bill Nicholson," 2 July 1976, GFL, WHCF, GI 3, Gifts from or to the United States.

Above all, this was an occasion for speechmaking, symbolism and renewing the narrative of special Anglo-American relations. In greeting the Queen on the south lawn of the White House, President Ford recalled how Britons and Americans had "worked together and fought together side by side," and he applauded the "common values of an Anglo-American civilization." Furthermore, Ford made no distinction between American affinity for the Queen and American affinity for the British people in general. He recalled that the monarch's last visit to the United States was in 1957, and Ford paraphrased Dwight D. Eisenhower's insightful comment that "America's respect for Britain was symbolized in our affection for the royal family." Queen Elizabeth, by way of response, ignored the contemporary reality of British decline and stressed not only the unique intimacy of Anglo-American relations, but also the classic notion of two equal nations bound by their common responsibility and destiny: "Mr. President, the British and American people are as close today as two people have ever been. We see you as our strong and trusted friend, and we believe that you, in turn, will find us as ready as ever to bear our full share in defending the values in which we both believe."[145]

The state dinner that evening was a particularly large and glamorous affair that was televised in both the United States and the UK and attended by Hollywood as well as Washington, DC elites; as White House Social Secretary Maria Downs later recalled, "that was a dinner and a half, as they say."[146] The exchange of toasts between the two heads of state picked up familiar themes. Ford thanked the Queen for Britain's contributions to the

[145] Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Exchange of Remarks Between the President and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom: The South Grounds," 7 July 1976, GFL, Office of the Editorial Staff, Robert Orben, Special Assistant to the President Files, 1973-77.
[146] Ford was facing tough competition in numerous primaries in the summer of 1976, and it was rumored that this was the reason for the disproportionate number of uncommitted Republicans invited to the state dinner for Queen Elizabeth II. Maria Downs, interview by Richard Norton Smith, 18 June 2009, Gerald R. Ford Oral History Project, Gerald R. Ford Foundation, https://geraldrfordfoundation.org/centennial-docs/oralhistory/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Maria-Downs.pdf, 19; "British Queen Faces Hectic Day After Gala Party at White House," *The Grand Rapids Press*, 8 July 1976, p. 3; and Betty Ford with Chris Chase, *The Times of My Life* (New York: 1978), pp. 222-226.

bicentennial and made the obligatory reference to Anglo-American wartime cooperation, explaining that the "ties that bind us together have, through two world wars, served as a bulwark in the defense of liberty and the dignity of man himself." The Queen in turn, as Anglo-American leaders had done for decades, emphasized the "interdependence" of their Cold War alliance, explaining that "today, no nation can stand alone. We depend, as never before, upon each other."[147] Crucially, though, they also spoke to the future of Anglo-American relations. The president proclaimed before his national audience, via the Public Broadcasting Service, that the special relationship would remain a fixture of international diplomacy and he openly promised the continuity of natural and reliable Anglo-American partnership: "In our third century, I know that the United Kingdom will be on our side and the United States will be on your side." Like Ford, the Queen seized the opportunity to recognize the stability and mutual advantages of the special relationship: "One thing is certain, and that is the strength and permanence of Anglo-American friendship. It has grown and prospered down the years. It has brought with it benefits beyond measure to our peoples. May it long continue to flourish for the sake of both our countries and for the greater good of mankind."[148]

Finally, few major celebrations of Anglo-American relations pass without at least the figurative presence of Winston Churchill and the following day President Ford and the Queen duly attended church services together, dedicating the Washington National Cathedral in memory of the former British Prime Minister and honorary American citizen. During the ceremony, workmen lowered a 1000-year-old stone from London's Westminster Abbey as Reverend Francis B. Sayre waxed poetic about the special relationship: "We put that English

[147] Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Exchange of Toasts Between the President and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom: The Rose garden," 7 July 1976, GFL, Office of the Editorial Staff, Robert Orben, Special Assistant to the President Files, 1973-77.
[148] Ibid.

stone in yon western entrance which is our tribute and memorial to Sir Winston Churchill, who in the blood of his parentage was rooted on either side of the sea and whose dauntless defense of liberty was our glory and our salvation on both sides of the Atlantic."[149] Bagpipers of the Scottish Black Watch and a crowd of 10,000 were on hand to join in singing Churchill's favorite American song, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," at the culmination of the dedication. Afterwards, thousands of onlookers cheered as President Ford led Queen Elizabeth down the front steps of the cathedral.[150]

The Bicentennial in Perspective

British and American objectives of the bicentennial were different in scope. The British government viewed the bicentennial principally in the context of Anglo-American relations and of encouraging international confidence in Britain as a going concern. Whilst undoubtedly a welcome diversion in media attention from Britain's economic misfortunes, domestic political returns for the government were of marginal importance. The Labour Government did not face a General Election until 1979 and though the Nixon and Ford administrations favored Britain remaining in the EC, the referendum on renegotiated terms of British membership was successfully completed before bicentennial celebrations really got underway. The situation in the United States was much different. The opportunity to celebrate and strengthen Anglo-American relations was important and one that the Ford administration took seriously. For instance, American officials intended Vice President Rockefeller's attendance at the London opening of the bicentennial exhibit "The World of Franklin and Jefferson" to "demonstrate the importance the President attaches to the Bicentennial, particularly its international meaning."[151] The FCO duly regarded it as "an

[149] Richard Growald, "Washington Cathedral," *United Press International*, 8 July 1976, GFL, First Lady's Staff, State Visits File, Shelia Weidenfeld Files, 1974-77.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Jack Marsh to Ford, 9 August 1975, GFL, WHCF, Subject File, Box 14, FG 1-2 / CO 156-160.

indication of the importance which the U.S. Government attaches both to this exhibition and to British participation in the Bicentennial celebrations."[152] Nevertheless, Anglo-American relations were secondary to and subsumed within two higher U.S. priorities. The first was the U.S. presidential election of November 1976 and, as the incumbent, Ford was best placed to capitalize upon bicentennial publicity. For example, in March 1976 Bob Mead, Ford's television advisor, advised White House Press Secretary Ron Nessen that "The Queen's visit to the White House this summer has all the markings of a Bicentennial television extravaganza. Live broadcast of the State Dinner in honor of the Queen would have, I feel, a tremendous impact on the public. . . . Candidly, this being an election year, this would give the President and Mrs. Ford some lovely exposure. It's a free bonus."[153]

The second priority, which incidentally also fed Ford's re-election campaign, was to use the bicentennial to close the chapter on Vietnam and Watergate especially and focus instead on America's future. Vice President Rockefeller told Callaghan in July 1975 that he had this in mind when setting up his National Commission on Critical Choices for America.[154] Similarly, Ford struck a valedictory tone in his 1976 State of the Union address. Noting an economic upturn, reform of the international monetary system and a turnaround in overseas relations such that "Our principal alliances with the industrial democracies of the Atlantic community and Japan have never been more solid," Ford returned to the roots of the Republic to dramatize America's progress. "Tom Paine aroused the troubled Americans of 1776 to stand up to the times that try men's souls because the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. . . . I see America today crossing a threshold, not just because it is our

[152] FCO Backgrounder for the visit of Vice President Rockefeller, 12 September 1975, UKNA, FCO 82/544.
[153] Bob Mead to Ron Nessen et al. "Visit of Queen Elisabeth in July," 18 March 1976, GFL, WHCF, Subject File, Box 57, CO 160, 3/1/76 – 3/31/76.
[154] Minutes of meeting between Prime Minister and U.S. Vice President Rockefeller, 3 July 1975, UKNA, FC0 82/544.

Bicentennial but because we have been tested in adversity. We have taken a new look at what we want to be and what we want our Nation to become."[155]

None of this, however, negates the fact that both the United States and Britain sought to harness commemoration of their past separation for the purposes of a collaborative future. The Americans made numerous special arrangements and gestures to facilitate British activities and profile in the United States. For instance, the State Department recommended that the Vice President and Mrs Rockefeller accompany Queen Elisabeth and Prince Philip to Andrews Air Force Base upon their departure from Washington, DC because, though "There is no formal reason for the Vice President to do this . . . considering the care both sides are giving to this visit . . . it would be a fitting gesture."[156] Meantime Prime Minster Callaghan's Bicentenary message epitomized the thoroughly modern political messages developed through and around these celebrations. Provided to the *U.S. News and World Report*, the message presented an image of Britain as a stalwart ally and as having a special role in transatlantic relations—a role which was reassuring to the United States in the context of recent tensions: "When the Labour Party came into office in 1974, I found that the competitive element in Europe's relations with the United States was becoming increasingly confrontational. It was as though European co-operation could only be achieved at the expense of the United States. Now, largely as a result of British influence, I believe it is realised in the European Community will only develop as such by co-ordinating those

[155] Gerald Ford, Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress Reporting on the State of the Union, 19 January 1976, GFL, https://fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/speeches/760019.asp.
[156] Clift to Scowcroft, "Queen Elisabeth II's Departure from Washington," 6 July 1976, GFL, WHCF, Subject File, Box 57, CO 160, 7/1/76 – 7/6/76.

policies—especially in foreign affairs—where our united voice and united strength can most effectively make themselves felt and heard."[157]

Given that the British government approached the bicentennial focused mainly on Anglo-American relations, British planning is particularly revealing of the strategic calculations that underpinned the range, distribution and target audience of Britain's bicentennial contributions. First, while British officials capitalized keenly on U.S. visitors to bicentennial activities in Britain, they were adamant that "We wanted the main publicity impact to be in the U.S."[158] Second, the British were evidently watching, and responding to, shifts in relative political power away from the U.S. Eastern Seaboard. As White House Fellow John Borling noted in September 1974, the British were providing a "broad ranging program with emphasis on the particular relationship we have historically enjoyed. The slant, of a part of it, is away from the eastern seaboard and into middle America."[159] Third, British contributions were designed to promote a particular narrative of Anglo-American relations, one of shared values, entwined cultures and a history of steadfast togetherness in defense of their shared way of life. It is telling in this context that when events seemingly went "off message," they often attracted criticism. For instance, commenting in a letter to Callaghan on a British Museum exhibition for the bicentennial featuring King George III and the "American revolt," George Catlin, a prominent advocate of UK-U.S. relations and father of Labour Cabinet Minister Shirley Williams, observed that "if the scholars of the B.M. had wanted to put on exhibition some anti-American propaganda, their learned men could scarcely have done better."[160]

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[157] NJ Barrington (Guidance and Information Policy Department) to RA Fyjis-Walker (British Embassy Washington, DC) attaching Prime Minister message given to the U.S. News and World Report, 24 May 1976, UKNA, FCO 82/660.
[158] Record of meeting to discuss Bicentennial publicity, 20 January 1976, UKNA, INF 12 / 1301.
[159] Borling to Armstrong, 27 September 1974, GFL, WHFC, Subject File, Box 56, CO 160, 8/9/74 – 10/31/74.
[160] Sir George Catlin to James Callaghan, 9 June 1975, Bodleian Library, MS Wilson, 781.

Finally, the British clearly aimed to engage all levels of American society, recognizing the value of popular affiliation with the "mother country" as well as encouraging the sympathy and understanding of economic and political elites. The British sought to reach out to small communities across the country, where John Warner had advised the bulk of celebrations would take place. Requesting additional resources to do so, the British Embassy in Washington, DC stressed that this would "create a great reservoir of goodwill for us at the 'grass roots' level."[161] The Queen's visit provided ample opportunity for elite rehearsal of the tropes of Anglo-American specialness but it was also experienced by all sections of American society, be it live or via the extensive accompanying media coverage; the State Dinner alone was covered live by 257 television stations plus being beamed to the UK by satellite.[162] Furthermore, the copy of the Magna Carta rested in the Capitol rotunda as a poignant reminder to the American public of the origins of many of the ideals and institutions they held dear. Ambassador Ramsbotham reported that Speaker Albert had welcomed the loan "not only for its prestige but also because he said it would be the greatest popular attraction of all the Bicentennial projects."[163] However, the mode of delivery and presentation of the Magna Carta copy were carefully designed to engage, too, elected representatives on both sides of the Atlantic. It was presented as a gift from Parliament to Congress and the Americans considered the visit of UK Parliamentarians for the loan of the Magna Carta copy to have been successful and well-publicized.[164]

[161] British Embassy Washington, DC (R.A. Fyjis-Walker) to Raymond Jones (GIPD), 12 June 1975, UKNA, FCO 26 / 1735.
[162] Bob Mead to EPS Control et al., "Queen's State Dinner," 6 July 1976, GFL, WHCF, Subject File, Box 57, CO 160, 7/1/76 – 7/6/76.
[163] British Embassy Washington, DC (R.A. Fyjis-Walker) to Raymond Jones (GIPD), 2 June 1975, UKNA, FCO 26 / 1735.
[164] Jeanne Davis to Jon Howe, "Background and Talking Points for Vice President's June 16 meeting with UK Ambassador Ramsbotham," 15 June 1976, GFL, WHCF, Subject File, Box 57, CO 160, 6/15/76 – 6/30/76.

UK and the United States intent to use the bicentennial to help promote Anglo-American relations, and their rationale for doing so, therefore emerge quite clearly from the archival records. Their success, or otherwise, might be gauged in terms of their immediately perceived impact and then their longer-term resonance. At a base level the British were satisfied that their contribution to the bicentennial had uniquely emphasized the Anglo-American connection and had not been upstaged by any other foreign national contribution. Data to support this British impression is limited but one example is American reception to France's "sound and light spectacle" at Mount Vernon, President George Washington's historic home. Senior White House advisor Robert Hartman considered the *Son et Lumière* production to be uninspiring and later noted: "One learned that the French Navy, rather than Washington's Army, really won the American Revolution."[165]

Hartman was not alone in this assessment. The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association (MVLA), the group responsible for the operation and preservation of the estate since 1860, used comment cards and questionnaires filled out by 373 visitors to the French production to assess its success. While the final analysis of the MVLA's survey pointed out that most feedback was positive, it also described a notable amount of unfavorable feedback as well, with numerous comment cards expressing criticisms such as, "Over emphasis on the roll [sic] of the French, Frenchmen, and France," "Too much of a French commercial," and "Too much French propaganda." Significantly, the MVLA report was decidedly sympathetic to such negative comments, noting that "the unfavorable reactions paralleled our own early criticisms of program content, particularly the emphasis on French participation in the

[165] Robert Hartman, *Palace Politics: An Inside Account of the Ford Years* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1980), p. 396.

Revolution. . . . Should a decision be made to revise the program, these comments might provide useful guidelines."[166]

In contrast to the elaborate, factual, and ultimately controversial *Son et Lumière* production of the French government, the British efforts recognized that historical accuracy was not the point of contemporary diplomatic commemoration. Rather, the UK worked to de-emphasize the war as much as possible and simultaneously construct and popularize a story of Anglo-American relations that, while ostensibly about the past, was designed with the concerns of the present and the strategic goals of the future in mind. Consequently, Anglo-American bicentennial celebrations were successfully characterized by the declarations of contemporary friendship and shared heritage that typified their twentieth-century relationship, rather than the details of their eighteenth-century conflict.

The British Embassy in Washington, DC was well placed to establish an overall impression of the impact of bicentennial activities. In terms of the United States, Ambassador Ramsbotham considered that "The Bicentenary was a remarkable phenomenon . . . it has served more than anything else to restore America's buoyancy and sense of perspective."[167] This was a view echoed in the North America Department of the FCO, one official concluding that "the Bicentennial has removed the shame and cynicism of post-Watergate and post-Vietnam America, leaving a more realistic appreciation both of America's potential and of America's limitations."[168] As for the Anglo-American relationship, the British Embassy in Washington, DC reported "a tremendous surge of interest in the British role in

[166] H. H. D. Heiberg, Jr., "Analysis of Sound and Light Program Questionnaire," 1 September 1977, Records of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, Mount Vernon, Virginia, pp. 1, 5-6; and "Compilation of Comments," 31 August 1977, Records of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, Mount Vernon, Virginia, pp. 6-7.
[167] Ramsbotham to Crosland, 3 January 1977, UKNA, FCO 82/725.
[168] Minute by Ramsay Melhuish (North America Department), 20 January 1977, UKNA, FCO 82/725.

the Revolution"[169] and that the "triumphant" Royal visit "let loose a flood of warm sentiment about Britain and enabled Americans to pay a joyfully open tribute to the Queen and her husband, who command enormous respect and affection amongst old and young alike."[170] Similarly, Anthony Crosland, Callaghan's successor as Foreign Secretary, agreed with these evaluations and confessed that while he had "sometimes been sceptical about the value of State visits" in general, the Queen's bicentennial trip had changed his mind and he was now forced to admit that her presence in the U.S., "on top of the British Bicentennial contributions, had provided a combination which produced a profound effect on the American internal psychology."[171]

American officials picked up similar impressions. John Warner, Director of the ARBA, considered that the royal visit had "added a link of strength to the bicentennial contribution which would endure for years."[172] Speaking of UK-U.S. relations, Ambassador Armstrong suggested that the bicentennial had refreshed them.[173] She also highlighted the Royal visit and its positive reach to a wide public: "Our close political relationship, it must be said, would be impossible to maintain were it not for the support it is given by the great majority of our peoples. They seem instinctively to understand and share in the other's grief, difficulties, and triumphs. Most striking to me - - and I have just witnessed its manifestation - - is the periodic demonstration of unity and affection that marks our relationship. Earlier this month I experienced at first hand, indeed participated, in the spontaneous outpouring of warm

[169] British Embassy Washington, DC (R.A. Fyjis-Walker) to Raymond Jones (GIPD), 12 June 1975, UKNA, FCO 26 / 1735.
[170] Ramsbotham to Crosland, 3 January 1977, UKNA, FCO 82/725.
[171] Records of the final meeting of the BBLC, 15 October 1976, pp. 6-7.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Anne Armstrong, "One People Oration," delivered at Westminster Abbey, 29 July 1976, GFL, Counselors to the President, Robert T Harmon files, 1974-77, speechwriter job applications, Box 96.

regard for the Queen and Prince Philip during their state visit to the United States. It was a welcome that enveloped all our generations."[174]

It is not being suggested here that the bicentennial resolved all issues within the UK and U.S. or between them. Ambassador Ramsbotham forthrightly warned Foreign Secretary Crosland in January 1977 that "this display of feeling should not be mistaken for any lessening of the critical appraisal which Americans have been making of the United Kingdom. Their goodwill towards Britain, exemplified very genuinely in President Ford's relations with the prime minister, nevertheless camouflages some harsh judgments."[175] Still, though, the immediate effect of the bicentennial was to raise awareness of Britain in the United States, consolidate affiliative sentiment between UK and U.S. publics and intensify Anglo-American contact and exchange at all levels of society. In an age of soft power considerations, the intensification of "feeling" and "goodwill" at both elite and popular levels represented a degree of diplomatic progress, a way of offsetting Britain's economic and military decline. The British centerpiece gifts and Britain's pivotal role in the birth and development of the United States had been carefully engineered to create an impression that, among America's Cold War allies, Britain was somehow "first amongst equals." This, of course, was helpful in Britain's claim to roles as an Atlantic intermediary and as "Fidus Achates" to the United States.

In the longer term, the value of the bicentennial to Anglo-American relations was threefold. First, planning for the bicentennial coincided with a relative rise in the utility of soft power and newfound American need to work with allies. This encouraged Anglo-American officials to consider, and recognize publicly, the contribution of culture to both

[174] Ibid.
[175] Ramsbotham to Crosland, 3 January 1977, UKNA, FCO 82/725.

affinity between their publics and the "common cast of mind" that enabled their unusually high levels of policy congruence. Consider in this respect the following extract from a draft speech by U.S. Ambassador to the UK, Elliot Richardson:

> Almost two centuries ago, the political ties which bound us in a common allegiance were dissolved; and it cannot be doubted that the event was and remains of the greatest importance. To dwell upon the political separation of our peoples, however, is to obscure a truth that seems to me to possess coordinate importance. There are, in fact, many levels of formative and determinative discourse among peoples. Some of these are often, even usually, more important in defining and establishing "reality" than a multitude of official pronouncements, diplomatic exchanges, or even wars. The observation applies with special force to relations between our two countries. It is a matter of history that our national objectives have occasionally clashed; but in the broad view, the more significant characteristic of Anglo-American relations is the development and proliferation of a wide and unique community of interests . . . binding the two countries and their people in a close and special way. The reasons for this are not, narrowly speaking, political. They include the common language and literature, the great body of shared concepts and assumptions about the individual in society and in relation to government; the importance of education and of the free flow of knowledge and ideas; and an inbred sense of duty to leave the world better than we found it. If I am right in this line of thinking, these are elements of a single cultural fabric, the more meaningful and more lasting because it was and continues to be made by individuals, not governments.[176]

Richardson's ideas about a single cultural fabric highlight a continuum in Anglo-American official thought running throughout the period of planning for the bicentennial. They echo the conclusions of the 1968 State Department Paper and of the 1969 FCO/Washington, DC Embassy analysis regarding the future of Anglo-American relations. They speak also to the unusual depth and consistency—and consequent political utility - of mutual affiliation between British and American publics. Richardson's emphasis on the "not, narrowly speaking, political" underpinnings of the "unique community of interests" ties in with Ambassador Armstrong's afore-cited observation that British and American peoples "seem instinctively to understand and share in the other's grief, difficulties, and triumphs."

[176] Charles Ritcheson, Ambassador Richardson remarks, 2 July 1975, Opening of the Pennsylvania Academy Exhibition "Young America," GFL, Counselors to the President, Robert T Harmon files, 1974-77, speechwriter job applications, Box 96.

Interestingly, too, Richardson's "single cultural fabric" resonates of thinking developed by British Ambassador to Washington, DC, Sir Patrick Dean, some nine years earlier. For Dean, "our 'connexion' with the United States is something that neither we nor the Americans have created artificially but something organic . . . It follows from this that it is something that cannot be abolished overnight by some act of policy, even if we wished to do so."[177]

The second important, longer-term contribution of the bicentennial celebrations to Anglo-American relations was that they brought a selective narrative of the past to the present for a huge audience. Given that "objective history" is less relevant to social reality than are perceptions of the past, and that collective memory is "constantly refreshed by people who have an interest in perpetuating a particular outlook,"[178] what was important for the British and American governments was opportunity to shape the past in the interest of present concerns.[179] It is thus noteworthy that in treatments of the far past, fraught Anglo-American relations as the United States pushed for independence were either glossed over or, more often, presented in the form of their being a "family spat."[180] For instance, when attending the opening of the "World of Franklin and Jefferson" exhibit Vice President Rockefeller described the Declaration of American Independence as a "notable triumph of Anglo-American philosophy"[181] and noted that "While Lord North and Patrick Henry would regard our affirmations of Anglo-American friendship amazing, if not treasonable, it is undeniable that our parting two hundred years ago left unbroken a great common political,

[177] Sir Patrick Dean to Sir Paul Gore Booth, 25 October 1967, UKNA, FCO 7 / 771.
[178] David Ryan, "Curtains, culture and 'collective' memory," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (2016), pp. 401-415.
[179] Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream. The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
[180] Robert M. Hendershot, *Family Spats: Perception, Illusion and Sentimentality in the Anglo-American Special Relationship* (Saarbrucken, Germany: VDM Verlag, 2008).
[181] Draft of Vice President Rockefeller's speech, opening "The World of Franklin and Jefferson," British Museum, September 1975, GFL, Counselors to the President, Robert T Harmon files, 1974-77, speechwriter job applications, Box 96.

cultural and historical heritage."[182] This formulation emphasized not only the uniqueness of the Anglo-American experience and ongoing commitment to shared values but also the resilience expected of familial relations. In addition, the bicentennial celebrations brought the more recent past to the Anglo-American present, which was particularly significant in terms of famed Anglo-American cooperation during World War II. Just as elite friendships forged during the 1940s retired from Anglo-American political life, so understanding and appreciation of the wartime partnership passed from experience to received wisdom in this period of the Cold War. Many bicentennial speeches and editorials featured tales of, or referenced, Britain and the United States standing side-by-side in defense of their common way of life. Moreover, in the tradition of family tales told and retold over time, these representations were idealized and adjusted to resonate with contemporary understanding, thereby underscoring the importance in commemoration of not just what is remembered but also what is forgotten.[183]

Finally, the bicentennial entered the living narrative of the special relationship as a referent point in its ongoing animation. It was not uncommon for Anglo-American elites to address each other after particular events during the bicentennial in terms steeped in familial terminology. For example, on July 27, 1976 Ford wrote to Queen Elizabeth II that "Your presence symbolized the excellent relationship that has existed between Britain and the United States for so many years. Ever mindful of the common heritage we share, our two

[182] Jeanne Davis to Jon Howe, 9 September 1975, GFL, WHCF, Subject File, Box 56, CO 160, 9/1/75 – 9/30/75.
[183] For more on collective memory and collective forgetting, see Eric Langenbacher and Yossi Shain, eds., *Power and the Past: Collective Memory and International Relations* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2010); Robert Schulzinger, "Memory and Understanding U.S. Foreign Relations," in Michael Hogan and Thomas Paterson, eds., *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, 2nd edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Richard Neustadt and Ernest May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers* (New York: Free Press, 1986); Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War Between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006); and Chris Weedon and Glenn Jordan, "Collective memory: theory and politics," *Social Semiotics*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (2012), pp. 143-153.

peoples have remained fully committed to the concept of human dignity."[184] The Queen replied on August 8 stressing that, "The great kindness and the warmth with which we were welcomed by the American people has been much appreciated by the people of Britain. It has reminded us all of the close friendship and community of interests which exist and will continue to exist between our two countries."[185] Later the bicentennial became a referent point in rehearsals of Anglo-American amity. One early example of this is when President Carter hosted Prime Minister Callaghan in Washington, DC in March 1977 and, within a surprise explicit resurrection of the nomenclature special relationship, cited how during the bicentennial "the people of the entire United Kingdom participated in an extraordinary degree in helping us reconfirm our commitments to the essence of the American spirit."[186]

The British, convinced that their participation in the bicentennial had strengthened Anglo-American relations, continued to dedicate scarce resources to similarly themed commemorations. For example in 1983, despite how the iconic friendship of President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had emerged as a fresh symbol of Anglo-American Cold War solidarity, the UK felt compelled to recycle its bicentennial tactics of cultural diplomacy, including numerous gifts, cultural exchanges, and visits. To commemorate the bicentennial of the 1783 Treaty of Paris, Congress received replicas of Westminster Abbey's bells, forged in the same foundry as the originals in 1596. In New York the Royal Shakespeare Company performed, appropriately, "All's Well that Ends Well." Following in the wake of Sir Francis Drake, who had sailed up the west coast of North America four hundred years earlier, the Royal Yacht *Britannia* carried the Queen from

[184] Ford to Queen Elisabeth, 27 July 1976, GFL, WHCF, Subject File, Box 40, G3/CO160 (2).
[185] Queen Elisabeth II to President Ford, 8 August 1976, GFL, WHCF, Subject File, Box 57, CO160, 7/8/76 – 7/31/76.
[186] President Carter, Visit of Prime Minister James Callaghan of Great Britain, Remarks of the President and the Prime Minister at the Welcoming Ceremony, 10 March 1977, The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=7143.

San Diego to Seattle. At the presidential banquet in her honor, she sought to once again "remind the world that we are allies for always."[187] In such ways, refrains of the bicentennial's Anglo-American narrative continued to reverberate. Fourteen years after Gerald Ford waltzed with the British monarch at the 1976 state dinner, President George H. W. Bush likewise invoked the American bicentennial, this time when hosting the Queen in May 1991, to assure that "I know I speak for the American people when I express the belief that the bonds which connect our nation and yours -- bonds of history, principle, interest, and affection -- will endure until the end of time."[188]

Conclusion

Shortly after the Queen's 1976 visit to the United States, the American ambassador to Britain, Anne Armstrong, gave the esteemed annual "One People Oration" at Westminster Abbey and declared explicitly, "in the spirit of our 'one people,' we have joined you in days of darkness and good. This Bicentennial year has refreshed the link--and I can speak unashamedly of our affection and dependence."[189] Armstrong's assertion was *de facto* a proclamation of successful, collaborative harnessing and manipulation of Anglo-American cultural ties at all levels of UK and U.S. society for the promotion of particular national needs in the pertaining international and domestic conditions. Additionally, it spoke to the evolving elite recognition of the value of soft power and of the perceived relationship between cultural affinity and unusually high levels of functional cooperation during this period of the Cold War. Indeed, the renewal of a narrative extolling special U.S.-UK relations progressed alongside

[187] Oliver Wright, "Two Hundred Years of Anglo-American Friendship," *Illinois Historical Journal*, Vol. 77, No. 4 (1984), pp. 243-244.
[188] President George H. W. Bush, Toasts at the State Dinner for Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom, 14 May 1991, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=19583&st=bicentennial&st1=.
[189] Charles Ritcheson, "'One People Oration' Given by Ambassador Armstrong at Westminster Abbey, London," 29 July 1976, GFL, Counselors to the President, Speechwriter Job Applications, Robert T. Hartmann Files, 1974-77.

considerable continuity in Anglo-American nuclear, intelligence, and military cooperation. Ford upheld Nixon's pledge to support Britain's Super Antelope nuclear warhead program, Anglo-American intelligence gathering, sharing, and analysis remained significant, and extensive collaboration continued in the defense realm, spanning training, procurement, technical development, and shared access to strategic bases such as Diego Garcia.[190]

Cultural ties were, of course, no panacea for Anglo-American problems stemming from British weakness; U.S. Under Secretary of State Phillip Habib noted on October 29, 1976 that "storm signals had gone up everywhere in Washington when Mr. Callaghan mentioned possible withdrawals of troops from Germany."[191] It might also reasonably be asked how far and deep cultural affinity flows through British and American societies; demographic change and shifts in power within the United States away from the Eastern Seaboard were twin threats flagged at the time and since to the special relationship.[192] Nevertheless, elite discourse, such as that between President Ford and Queen Elizabeth II, evidences that in 1976 policy officials believed it both valuable to maintain a familiar language and tone within Anglo-American relations and politically desirable to provide rhetorical tokens of affinity to their respective publics. Equally, public opinion polls confirm

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[190] For the general consensus on continuity see Baylis, *Anglo-American Defence Relations 1939-1984,* pp. 99–115; Robb, *A strained partnership?,* p. 160; Michael Chichester and John Wilkinson, *The Uncertain Ally: British Defence Policy 1960-1990* (Aldershot: Wilkinson, 1982), pp. 43–56; Kenneth O. Morgan, *Callaghan: A Life* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 437–39; Graeme S. Mount, *895 Days that Changed the World: The Presidency of Gerald R. Ford* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2006), pp. 3–18; and Rhiannon Vickers, "Foreign and Defence Policy," in Andrew S Crines and Kevin Hickson, eds., *Harold Wilson. The Unprincipled Prime Minister?* (London: Biteback Publishing, 1988), pp. 261-77. Aldrich identifies UK-U.S. intelligence relations as turbulent but ultimately surviving the period well. Richard Aldrich, *GCHQ: The Uncensored Story of Britain's Most Secret Intelligence Agency,* (London: Harper Press, 2011), pp. 277-340. Robb advances a dissenting opinion about nuclear and intelligence co-operation remaining 'sacrosanct'. However, the basis of judgment—that American policy-makers used this cooperation as a form of leverage vis-à-vis the British government—is hardly a practice confined to this period of Anglo-American relations. Thomas Robb, "The 'Limit of What is Tolerable': British Defence Cuts and the 'Special Relationship', 1974–1976," *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (2011), pp. 321-337, 322.

[191] "Record of meeting between Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth affairs and Under Secretary at the State Department on 29 October 1976," 18 November 1976, UKNA, FCO 82/660.

[192] See, for instance, Sir Michael Howard, "Afterword," in W.M. Roger Louis and Hedley Bull, eds., *The "Special Relationship": Anglo-American relations since 1945* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 387-92.

that at the time of the bicentennial Britons and Americans perceived each other by far more positively than they did any other nationality. Furthermore, the bicentennial publicly confirmed the renewed warmth in Anglo-American relations and created a positive environment around the special relationship that President Carter acknowledged explicitly in March 1977.

Finally, it is not unreasonable to suggest that the bicentennial is an example of the deepening importance of commemoration to Anglo-American Cold War solidarity as the World War II leadership fell away and new generations emerged for whom the wartime cooperation was received rather than experiential wisdom. Commemorative acts help determine processes of remembering and forgetting and, in an Anglo-American context, are powerful tools in sustaining the popular mythology of a special relationship. Hence during the American bicentennial scant attention was paid to Anglo-American conflict around the time of the Revolutionary War or, indeed, to alienation at mass and elite levels prior to the Great Rapprochement of the late nineteenth century.[193] Instead, U.S. independence was presented as a family spat and of little consequence next to enduring shared values, language, institutions and experiences. The cultural mosaic of exchanges, exhibitions, concerts, visits, gifts and so forth of the celebrations became at once contributive to and constitutive of the renewal of the special relationship narrative. Contemporaneous Anglo-American relations were woven into the impervious positive memories of allied wartime cooperation and even further back into the origins of liberty itself. As Thatcher told Reagan early in their relationship, "most Englishmen today would agree with Thomas Jefferson that 'a little rebellion now and then is a very good thing.'"[194]

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[193] Bradford Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement: England and the United States, 1895–1914* (New York: Atheneum, 1968).
[194] Ronald Reagan, Address to Members of the British Parliament, 8 June 1982, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/research/speeches/60882a.