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Master's Thesis in International Studies

**The Effect of Political Party Change
on ODA Expenditure in the UK**

- A Rhetorical Analysis of Party Manifestos -

정당교체가 영국의 공적개발원조(ODA) 지출에
미치는 영향 분석

February 2023

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The Effect of Political Party Change on ODA Expenditure in the UK

-A Rhetorical Analysis of Party Manifestos-

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Abstract

Keyword : Foreign aid; Official Development Assistance (ODA); Political party; Left-wing; Right-wing; Rhetorical Analysis; Party manifestos; Political manifesto

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ODA expenditure for any given democratic donor country is primarily determined by the incumbent political party. In line with common speculation, Thérien (2000, 2002) and Tingley (2009) argue that as a government becomes more right-leaning on the political spectrum, foreign aid effort decreases. Based on the indicated theoretical framework, this article selects the United Kingdom as a case study amongst other two-party democracies to identify distinct patterns of ODA expenditure that arise from the change in the majority party and whether the ‘challenger’ party displays extra effort on foreign aid policies during the election periods of 1970, 1974, 1979 and 1997. The results from the rhetorical analysis of party manifestos indicate that in the case of the UK, only the left-leaning party leverages ODA policy as a strategic tool in challenging the incumbent party. Furthermore, ODA expenditure increases with the politically left-leaning party (Labour) and decreases when the majority party changes to the political right (Conservative).

경제협력개발기구(OECD)의 자료에 의하면 공적개발원조(ODA)는 원조국들의 경제상황 변동에 큰 탄력성을 보이는 유일한 형태의 대외원조다. 일반적인 경우, 원조국의 ODA 지출 관련 결정은 각 국가의 여당 또는 우세 정당에 의해 이행된다. Thérien (2000;2002)과 Tingley (2009)는 일개 정부의 정치적 스펙트럼이 우경화(보수화)됨에 따라 해외 원조 지출이 감소한다고 주장한다. 본 논문은 이 주장을 바탕으로 영국의 사례연구를 통해: 첫째, 우세 정당의 교체가 ODA 지출 수준에 미치는 영향 분석과; 둘째, 선거 시점에서의 야당의 ODA 정책 활용성을 분석한다.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CMP	Comparative Manifesto Project
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department of International Development (UK)
EC	European Communities
EEC	European Economic Community
ERM	European Exchange Rate Mechanism
FCO	Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (UK)
G7	The international Group of Seven
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNI	Gross national income
GNP	Gross national product
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
LDC	Least developed country
MP	Member of Parliament
NF	National Front (UK)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

NHS	National Health Service
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ODM	Overseas Development Ministry
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PM	Prime Minister
RPI	Retail Price Index
SET	Selective Employment Tax
SoS-ID	Secretary of State for International Development
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
US/USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAT	Value-added tax
WWII	World War II

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and question of research

In most democratic donor countries, the political party in charge, whether it be by seat majority or presidency, decides the direction and scale of aid given to recipient countries. In a two-party political system like the UK or the US, opposing parties compete for power via showcasing attractive policies and promises to win over the public's favour. In the election periods, we frequently come across policy instruments such as national security spending, financial deregulation, and public goods, which party leaders utilise to promote their campaign. Foreign aid or ODA policies are no different of a tool in principle. Depending on the international political climate and the perception of the voting public towards foreign aid, politicians will adapt and produce relevant policy to maximise their advantage in an election.

Often, political parties in two-party democracies broadly divide between the left and right wings of the political spectrum. Britain is no exception. In the UK, we have the Conservatives representing the centre-right and the Labour Party for the centre-left. Amongst other donor motives, researchers suggest that the political spectrum of the donor country leadership determines the direction and volume of ODA (Fleck and Kilby, 2006; Tingley, 2010; Thérien and Noel, 2000).

The conclusions from previous empirical research suggest that the politically left leaning leadership tend to exert more effort on foreign aid especially for altruistic reasons, whereas right-wing ODA efforts often depend on economic and political incentives gained from the provision of aid. Thus, the usage of political landscape by the opposing parties during an election period raises several questions. Does the ‘challenger’ party exhibit extra effort in the expansion of ODA policies over the incumbent party during an election period? Does the change of majority party from right-wing to left-wing increase ODA expenditure as research suggests? If not, what are the political factors that influence ODA expenditure regardless of party change? This paper finds that in the case of the UK, ODA/GNI ratio increases when the majority party changes from the Conservatives to Labour, and that for the election periods in discussion (1970, 1974, 1979 and 1997) only the Labour Party demonstrates a more concerted effort to incorporate foreign aid policy pledges in their manifestos. Following an introduction to the history of UK’s ODA development, an in-depth rhetorical analysis of party manifestos is conducted to present the results of the study.

1.2 Background of Research

The vast majority of existing research that discusses the role of domestic politics in foreign aid focus on the effectiveness of aid and determinants of aid allocation based on the analysis of donor-recipient ideological affinity and socioeconomic trade-offs (Alesina and Dollar, 2000; Burnside and Dollar, 2000; Boone, 1996;

Dreher et al., 2013; Easterly, 2003; Goldsmith, 2001; Wood and Hoy, 2021; Wright and Winters, 2010). Although comparatively less in number, literature on the impact of donors' domestic political spectrum on aid policy and expenditure has increased, especially in the 21st century. (Fleck and Kilby, 2001; Honeyman, 2019; Thérien and Noel, 2000; Thérien, 2002; Tingley, 2010). Authors such as Thérien and Tingley provide theoretical and empirical evidence to support the conclusion that politically left leaning governments tend to provide more generous sums of aid, especially with a focus on recipient countries' social welfare. Only partial research exists that specifically highlights the ODA policy narrative of political parties in sampled donor countries.

Analysis of political parties' influence becomes particularly difficult when samples include multi-party democracies such as Denmark, France, Germany, Norway, and Sweden, as they often lack consistency in dominant parties. This does not allow for the accurate evaluation of the effect of political party change on ODA expenditure. Therefore, selecting a sample from two-party democracies, such as the UK or the US allows for a distinct analysis of ODA policies and expenditure that arise during the change of power in the respective political parties.

Both the Parliament of UK and the US Congress operate under a bicameral legislature, which guarantees a voting procedure when passing a bill. Whilst there are similarities in the leadership election process between the two countries, there is a major difference in the formation of government. The UK general elections are held regionally to elect the constituency's Member of Parliament (MP), where the

majority winning party's leader then becomes the Prime Minister. In contrast, the US president is elected as an individual representing either the Republican or Democratic party. The fact that the UK votes for a political party calls for the necessity of a united party manifesto that all party members adhere to. This allows for a more coherent policy direction to be established that the majority of MPs in the House of Commons stand behind. The president of the US, on the other hand, campaigns with his or her individual manifesto that is in line with the representing party's values, but without the guaranteed support of the Congress unless the party majority of the Senate and House of Representatives are unified. This increases the necessity for new policies to prioritise national interests and adhere to the popular demands of the congress when the Congress is divided. This paper initially aimed to conduct a comparative analysis of the two-party democracies, however, data on the ODA expenditure over each US presidency suggests a pattern of constant decline regardless of the majority party contrary to the UK. Below is a table compiling the ODA data for each US presidency from 1961 to 2021.

Table 1. US periods of party change and average ODA expenditure

Years	Party of President	President	Average ODA during Incumbency (Million USD)	Average ODA/GNI (%)
1961-1963	Democrat	Kennedy	22908.2	0.59
1964-1969	Democrat	Johnson	22278.2	0.48
1970-1974	Republican	Nixon	15673.1	0.28
1975-1977	Republican	Ford	15839.07	0.25
1978-1981	Democrat	Carter	16285.3	0.23
1982-1989	Republican	Reagan	18345.5	0.22
1990-1993	Republican	G.H. Bush	19072	0.19

1994-2001	Democrat	Clinton	13805.8	0.11
2002-2009	Republican	G.W. Bush	28305.1	0.18
2010-2017	Democrat	Obama	35526	0.19
2018-2021	Republican	Trump	35961.38	0.17

Towards the end of the Republican leadership of Eisenhower in 1960, the existing foreign aid programmes suffered a considerable loss of support from the American public as well as the Congress. The public dissatisfaction perceived in this period was partially due to the 1958 political novel by Eugene Burdick '*The Ugly American*', a 76-week national bestseller, which realistically depicted the blatant failures of US foreign policy in Southeast Asia. Thus, in the 1960 US presidential election, rebranding the US foreign policy as well as aid became a priority for both the Republican and Democratic Party. After a tightly contested election, John F. Kennedy, a junior Senator from Massachusetts brought home the victory, defeating the incumbent Republican Vice President Richard Nixon. On September 4, 1961, the United States Congress passed the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, structurally reforming the US foreign assistance programme including the separation of military and non-military aid. And on November 3, 1961, the Democratic President established the US Agency for International Development, commonly known by its abbreviation, USAID.

As shown in the table above, the US ODA/GNI ratio peaked during Kennedy's time and constantly fell until the Republican President G.W. Bush increased ODA spending between 2002 to 2009, in response to the September 11 terrorist attack in 2001. The only other period of ODA/GNI ratio increase was under the Democrat

President Obama, who improved the average ratio over the incumbent period by 0.01% compared to his predecessor, G.W. Bush. Now, the party government is rarely unified in the US, as it is often difficult for a single party to win both the House majority and Senate majority in Congress. The annual federal budget process customarily initiates with the President's budget request produced in cooperation between the President's Office of Management and Budget and federal agencies. This budget then has to be approved by Congress, and thus having party unity in government is crucial for passing new bills and budget plans. Accordingly, a unified Congress is seen for the three periods of ODA budget increase¹. Thus, the question whether the challenger party exhibits more foreign aid efforts or the hypothesis that the change of government from a right to left-wing party increases ODA spending, becomes irrelevant in the case of the US. Therefore, for this research paper, US is omitted, and an in-depth case study of the UK is conducted to provide supporting evidence to confirm the hypothesis based on the given research questions.

1.3 Research Framework and Methodology

Critical Discourse Analysis is a common methodology used in the study of political rhetoric, especially regarding political parties and social activism groups (Breeze, 2011; Edwards, 2012; Dobson, 2007; Joly and Dandoy, 2016; van Dijk, 1998;2021, etc.). van Dijk defines critical discourse analysis as “a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance,

¹ The unified party government of 87th, 88th, 107th, 108th, 109th, 111th Congress was the only period of ODA/GNI ratio increase between 1960 and 2021.

and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context.” (1998:1). “Text and talk” in the context of political research extend to the usage of speeches, interviews, Hansard records (UK), Congressional Hearings (US), as well as written articles such as Party manifestos. In the field of manifesto research, however, the use of systematic discourse analytical studies has not yet been located, even though there are some 400 articles focusing on political party election manifestos (van Dijk, 2021). This paper examines the effect of political party change on ODA expenditure within the scope of two questions: 1. “Does the ‘challenger’ party exhibit extra effort in the expansion of ODA policies over the incumbent party during an election period?” and 2. “Does the change of the majority party from right-wing to left-wing increase ODA expenditure as previous research suggests?”. Thus, focusing on the analysis of the independent variable i.e., political party behaviour, represented by individual leadership’s election manifesto.

Justifications for the usage of party manifestos as a primary source of research are, first, the material on other sources such as speeches and Hansard records severely lack in quantity. This sentiment is shared by Honeyman (2019) in her research of the overseas development aid policy of the ‘New’ Labour Party under Tony Blair, where she explains the difficulty in conducting a critical discourse analysis of speeches because “Part of the issue is that Tony Blair and Gordon Brown did not place themselves front and centre during debates, both in the House of Commons and in the media, on international development issues, despite both being self-professed supporters of the policy ... surprising considering the commitment of the two men to development issues, and also ... that Tony Blair is considered to be one of the

most verbose Prime Ministers in living memory (2019:320). This presents significant problems when considering the option of linguistic analysis of individual leaders such as a Prime Minister and President in relation to foreign aid policy. Thus, the analysis of political party's positioning on foreign aid by the study of election manifestos, will better convey the leadership's stance as well.

Second, party manifestos provide a credible source of information when it comes to the policy making agenda. Joly and Dandoy (2016) state that, "Through their manifestos, approved by members at party conventions or general assemblies, parties "univocally" express their official priorities and preferences in light of coming elections and potential government negotiations. Issued before the elections, they are also a form of advertisement to the public, containing policy pledges to be executed when in government. Given their purpose and timing, manifestos constitute an important opportunity—and instrument—to study the impact of political parties on the executive agenda" (2016:2) and that research by several authors such as Budge and Laver (1993), Caul and Gray (2002), Keman (2007) and Klingemann et. Al (1994) have already confirmed this impact in various policy areas. Additionally, the authors suggest that "... the decisions made during those negotiations (manifesto writing), and included in the government agreement, are effectively carried out to a large degree" and that "While some might argue that foreign policy is too unpredictable and dependent on current events to include specific policies in the government agreement, in fact, the foreign policy sections of government agreements contain, on average, more concrete policy proposals than other policy domains. Hence, we can assume that the decisions and concessions made during

government formation are meaningful and specific.” (2016:18).

Therefore, this paper conducts an in-depth analysis of UK political party manifestos, with a focus on the periods of party transition, to find out whether the ‘challenger’ parties really exert extra effort on ODA policy over the incumbent party. The periods of discussion are indicated by the years 1970, 1974, 1979, 1997 for the UK, where the majority party changed either from Conservative to Labour or vice versa. The indicator used to assess donors' aid expenditure (effort) is the ODA ratio to gross national income (GNI) in percentage terms. This empirical standard was adopted by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) as the “gold standard” of foreign aid in 1969 and taken up in the United Nations General Assembly resolution in October 1970, where a target ratio of 0.7% in ODA/GNI was set as an objective for donor countries to achieve over the next decade. Accordingly, for a fair judgement of a party’s effect on ODA expenditure, calculation of the average ODA/GNI (%) ratio over a party or president’s incumbent period is made for each leadership as a standard of measure. The timeframe for average ODA/GNI (%) ratio calculation is based on the governments’ fiscal year. Hence, the figures for the exact year of change in leadership as indicated above, are included in the previous regime’s calculation to avoid misinterpretation of the newly incumbent parties’ aid efforts.

Additionally, this research applies rhetorical analysis (under critical discourse analysis) of party election manifestos within the scope of the specific language and tones used in its description of ODA policy directives, to determine whether

politically left or right parties are more generous in foreign aid donations. This form of linguistics analysis allows for a thorough comparison of Party Election manifestos to discover each party's motives and directions for foreign aid policy. Typically, critical discourse analysis utilises computer software programmes to analyse a vast quantity of speeches, interviews, and comments from debates, allowing researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the underlying political motives. Be that as it may, limitation regarding validity is often raised due to the varying types of sources of information, as well as the general insufficiency of material in political discourse (Honeyman, 2019). This finding directly relates to van Dijk's (2021) statement mentioned earlier that there has not yet been a systematic discourse analysis in the field of manifesto studies. As quoted two paragraphs above, Honeyman (2019) also expresses the difficulty in carrying out a full discourse analysis in political research, which directed her to the usage of rhetorical analysis., a concept again adopted for this study.

The approach of rhetorical analysis of primary sources, therefore, does not have the rigidity of computerised critical discourse analysis, however, it provides an alternative method to explore the field, which would otherwise be inaccessible. Consequently, the outcomes of this study can be considered as less systematic than a quantitative discourse analysis, but it allows rational conclusions to be reached from rhetorical analysis, which is the first of its kind in the analysis of political party behaviour during election periods and its effect on ODA expenditure.

1.4 Limitations

The series of DAC High Level Meetings from 2014 to 2017 on the modernisation of the DAC statistical system announced the grant equivalent system as the new standard for measuring ODA from 2018. The transition of calculation methods to ODA grant equivalents including debt relief, translates to the fact that the previous ODA/GNI ratio records may be deemed less accurate. However, the specific time periods in discussion for this research omit post-2018 data. The OECD data that is used for the pre-2018 timeframe, therefore, provides a fair comparison measured under the same categorisation and does not undermine or negate the findings of this study. Furthermore, OECD dataset is limited to 1960 and onwards, which may hinder the reliability of average ODA/GNI ratio for the period of MacMillan's Conservative leadership, respectively. Again, this paper omits the pre-1960 period from its dataset to avoid the margin for error.

2. Literature Review

The literature on foreign aid can be categorised largely into three areas of research. First, the effects of aid in the form of results analysis; second, the determinants of aid allocation; and third, the effect of domestic politics on foreign aid policy and expenditure. The first two fields will be discussed marginally to leave room for the third section, which introduces the core theoretical background of this paper.

First, and possibly the most common area of research in foreign aid literature is the analysis of outcomes and results of the allocated ODA. This type of research is often carried out institutionally by the bilateral/multilateral donor agencies, governments, and NGOs such as the OECD and the World Bank, amongst other scholars from private institutions. Zimmerman (2007) argues that such research often severely lacks “focus on development results”, criticising the inability to answer the simple question of whether foreign aid really works. He states that the implementation of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was a countermeasure to “look better and more systematically at the concrete results of development efforts” (Zimmerman, 2007:4). Be that as it may, seminal research in this field such as “Aid, Policies, and Growth” (Burnside and Dollar, 2000), provides a good deal of evidence to support the correlation between quality of development policies and economic growth. Furthermore, over the past two decades, there has been a plenitude of credible empirical research on ODA, especially for geographic or sector-specific studies (Arellano et al., 2008; Galiani et al., 2014; Rahnama et al.,

2017).

Second field of literature is on the determinants of aid allocation, which has gathered significant attention in the study of foreign aid typified by notable works such as *Who Gives Foreign Aid to Whom and Why?* (Alesina and Dollar, 2000). This research highlights socio-political factors such as “colonial past and political alliances are major determinants of foreign aid” (2000:33). Whilst the empirical evidence finds significant differences between donors, they find “considerable evidence that the pattern of aid giving is dictated by political and strategic considerations.” “An inefficient, economically closed, mismanaged non-democratic former colony” (2000:33) that is politically favourable to its former coloniser obtains more ODA than another country with a comparable level of poverty and a superior policy posture but no colonial history. This paved way for a series of studies to follow not only on donor motives, but also assessing whether recipient country’s democratic affinity, good policies, and geo-political significance or, simply their needs, determine the allocation of foreign aid (Alesina and Weder, 2002; Bandyopadhyay and Vermann, 2013; Dreher et al., 2013; Neumayer, 2003; Swiss, 2017). A number of additional research focuses on a specific donor country’s allocation of ODA (Furuoka, 2017; Kim and Oh, 2012).

Third is the effect of political spectrum positioning (i.e., Left-Right) of donor country’s government on ODA funding and policy development. This type of work is best exemplified by Jean-Philippe Thérien (2000;2002). Thérien is one of the most cited and recognisable authors in the literary field of Left-Right political ideologies

and its effect on ODA. He states that while the division of left and right in political science is often criticised “on grounds of reductionism”, the notion of “Right-Left distinction as a conceptual road map to understand development assistance offers many more advantages than drawbacks” (Thérien, 2002:462). Having the courage to pioneer a new system of interpretation away from the traditional international relations theories of Realism, Liberalism, and neo-Marxism, he contributed to the active development of discourse on domestic politics and foreign aid, as seen in the works of Honeyman (2019), Tingley (2010) and Zimmerman (2007). Thérien (2002) argues that in principle, the Left is more egalitarian than the Right, suggesting that the Right is “more concerned with the issue of results”, i.e., the cost-benefit analysis of results, while the Left places “more emphasis on moral principles” (2002:460). The suggested line of discourse creates the base for this research’s argument, that the political left is often inclined to distribute more and promote ODA in terms of altruistic motives, at least on the surface level. An interesting socio-political point is raised in his work that “thanks to the popular base the NGO community provides it with, the Left enjoys a wider political visibility and is more vocal than the right”, explaining why in contemporary domestic politics “the concerns of the Left ... have been given a higher profile” (2002:462). Fleck and Kilby (2006) confirm this correlation between ideology and foreign aid. Based on the analysis of panel data from 1960 to 1997, the authors found that “Under liberal regimes, the distribution of US bilateral aid more closely mirrors that of small donors known for their development-oriented and humanitarian approach to aid. Commercial concerns have greater weight under conservative regimes than under liberal regimes. Specifically, under conservative Congresses (relative to liberal Congresses), the US allocates aid

in a manner that appears more mercantilist oriented.” (2006:220). As contemporary international relations are swept by the wind of globalisation and international cooperation, this paper finds that it applies to the case of United Kingdom’s Left-wing (Centre-left) Labour party, which has continuously differentiated itself from the Right-wing Conservatives by promoting foreign aid as a moral obligation and key to global security in the party’s election manifestos (see 1964, 1974, 1997 Labour Party manifesto).

Milner and Tingley (2010) investigate how domestic political ideological orientation can impact ODA expenditure by analysing the votes in the House of Representatives from 1979 to 2003. By examining several types of aid policy and the votes of legislators’ representing ideologically divided districts, they conclude that “Districts and legislators who prefer a larger role ... in the economy and have stronger tastes for egalitarianism seem to be more disposed toward providing economic aid to others abroad” (2010:227). Specifically, Milner and Tingley (2010) found that legislators in more liberal districts favour economic aid than the conservative-leaning districts, with an opposite dynamic over military aid. In the systematic analysis of “domestic political determinants of aid behaviour over time and within countries” (2010:47), Tingley (2010) creates a standard of measure for government ideological position using data from the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP), which effectively codes various fields of government orientation based on political party manifestos. Alike other literature in the field, Tingley (2010) confirms that “notably, as governments become more conservative, the share of GDP committed to foreign aid effort declines” (2010:47), conforming to the prevailing

narrative that the ideological left tend to be more generous in ODA distribution.

3. Overview of ODA Development in the UK

3.1 Early Days of UK's Foreign Aid: 1920s-1960s

The foundation of Britain's ODA policy began with the active decolonisation of the British Empire during the Labour premiership of Clement Attlee from 1945 to 1951. With the increase of social unrest in the British colonies between 1935 and 1938, the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940 was passed replacing the Colonial Development Act of 1929. This allowed for the distribution of aid in social services and general welfare, lifting the previous limitation that aid can only be given for the support of commercial activities. Following the revised Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1945, the Overseas Resources Act of 1947 was passed to establish the Colonial Development Corporation and the Overseas Food Corporation. This marked the first time that the UK operated a systematic aid programme that prioritised the needs of the recipient country over donor interests.

The post-war (WWII) period saw the development of concept for foreign aid programmes led by the US and a few ex-colonial powers in Europe. According to the economist Jagdish Bhagwati, it was the British Labour Party during Attlee's premiership that had originally suggested a target percentage of donor countries' income to be transferred to the developing countries. "The original target, 1% of

GNP, was the idea of Sir Arthur Lewis, the economist who was adviser to Hugh Gaitskell, leader of the British Labour Party, who wanted a target for his party's political platform in the 1950s." (Bhagwati, 2005)². This suggests that the OECD's target ratio of 0.7% ODA/GNI set for DAC members in 1970, can be traced back to the Labour Party's initial proposal ³.

Britain's foreign aid policy had suffered, however, under the second term of the Conservative PM Winston Churchill's leadership (1951-1955), and only began to take its proper course during Harold MacMillan's Conservative leadership between 1957 and 1963. MacMillan's Conservative government accelerated the decolonisation process of the wider British empire, historically emphasised by his famous 'Wind of Change' speech given in South Africa in 1960. As quoted from the speech addressed in Cape Town, "The wind of change is blowing through this continent... that must in our view include the opportunity to have an increasing share in political power and responsibility, a society in which individual merit and individual merit alone is the criterion for a man's advancement, whether political or economic." (MacMillan, 1960), he initiated the support for not only the political but of the economic independence of the under-developed countries as well. The wind of common effort from the developed countries allowed for the creation of

² British Labour Party's manifesto in 1959 (Available at <http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/1959/1959-labour-manifesto.shtml>) states "This is why we have solemnly pledged ourselves to devote an average of 1 per cent of our national income each year to helping the underdeveloped areas." The initial target statement was made in 1957: "As long ago as 1957, the Labour Party announced in its Colonial Policy pamphlet on Economic Aid that 'the next Labour Government would therefore at once announce plans to expand Britain's aid by allocating an average of 1% of our national income over a period of years as Britain's contribution.'"

³ History of the 0.7% ODA Target (OECD, Original text from DAC Journal 2002, Vol 3 and 4, pages III-9 – III-11, Revised 2016)

“Resolution of the Common Aid Effort” adopted by the DAC on 29 March 1961 in London, laying out the background for the development of a more coherent aid policy within the UK. In 1961, the Department of Technical Cooperation was established to replace the Colonial Office, which quickly became redundant as a result of decolonisation.

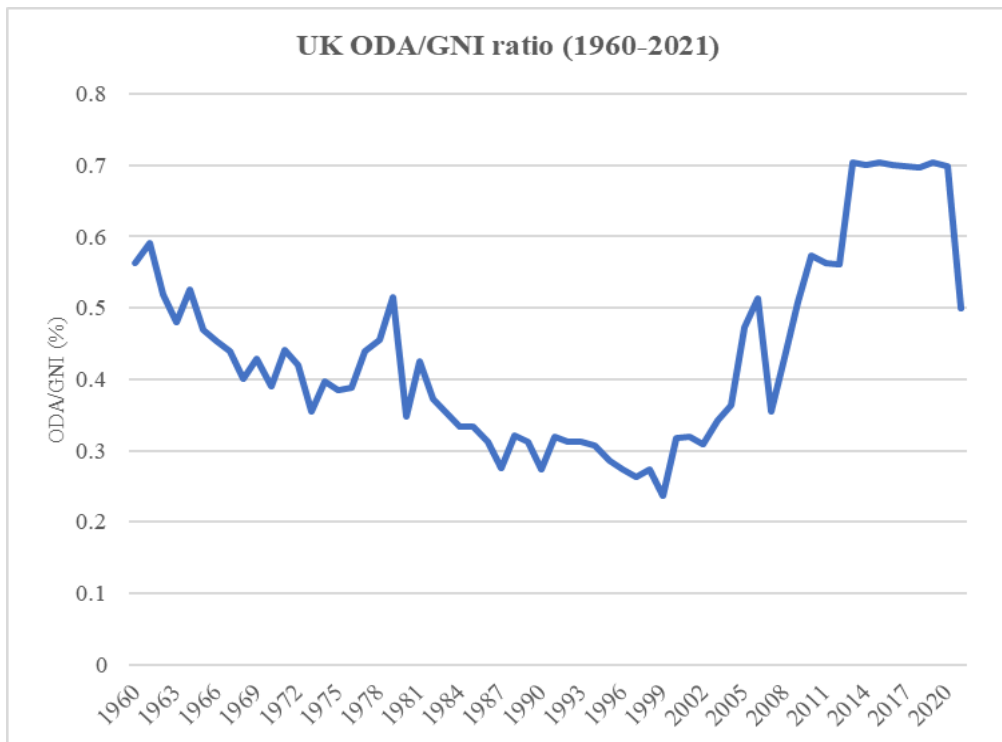
3.2. UK ODA Development: 1960s-2000s

After the short-lived leadership of Alec Douglas-Home, which lasted a mere 364 days, it was during the Labour premiership of Harold Wilson (1964-1970) when ODA policy became institutionalised with the establishment of the Ministry of Overseas Development (ODM). Barbara Castle, a well-known female political figure, was appointed the first minister of the newly found ministry allowing for a cabinet seat, elevating the public profile of ODA. Despite the effort under Wilson’s leadership, the percentage of net ODA/GNI fell from 0.53% in 1964 to 0.39% in 1970 by the end of his term⁴. Although authors such as Tam Dalyell (1983) and Victoria Honeyman (2019) suggest that the fall in ODA expenditure was largely due to the Sterling crises of 1964-1967, which led to the devaluation of the British pound in 1967, additional factors regarding the change in the direction of foreign policy may provide a better explanation. Jim Tomlinson (2003) suggests that the Labour establishment of the Overseas Development Ministry, which to a great degree pressed the development agenda within the Commonwealth, was due to a “tactical

⁴ Rounded up from 0.526% in 1964 and 0.389% in 1970. OECD data.

stimulus (was) linked to the party's opposition to the Conservative application for Britain's entry to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1962, which Labour denounced as a betrayal of Commonwealth interests." (2003:423). Shortly after in 1967, however, Harold Wilson delivered a speech to the House of Commons in which he defended the United Kingdom's second application for accession to the common market of the European Economic Community. This shift in Labour party's foreign policy may better explain the reason behind the fall of ODA expenditure during Wilson's premiership of 1964 to 1970. In 1970, with the election of Conservative prime minister Edward Heath, the Overseas Development Ministry founded in 1964 by Harold Wilson, was incorporated into the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and renamed the Overseas Development Administration. During the period of Edward Heath's premiership (1970-1974), the percentage of ODA/GNI expenditure remained at an average of 0.4%, which largely followed suit to the previous years under Labour leadership.

Figure 1. UK ODA/GNI ratio in percentage terms: 1960 to 2021⁵



Labour government returned to power in 1974, with the second premiership of Harold Wilson (1974-1976) and continued through James Callaghan’s election in 1976. With the return of power, the Ministry of Overseas Development once again gained its independence from the Foreign Office in 1975 after the Labour government’s announcement in 1974. 1979, the final year of Labour premier Callaghan, observed the highest figure of ODA/GNI ratio since Harold Macmillan’s leadership⁶ at 0.51%, which compared to the final year of Edward Heath’s previous Conservative regime (0.4% in 1974) saw a 25% increase.

⁵ Figure 1. represents triennial data of UK’s ODA/GNI ratio in percentage terms between 1960 to 2021. OECD data.

⁶ In 1961, at the peak of Harold Macmillan’s leadership, ODA/GNI ratio was recorded at 0.59%, the highest figure observed until 2013.

Table 2. UK ODA donations (1960 – 1997) *OECD data

Year	Party in Power	Prime Minister	Net ODA (Million USD)	ODA/GNI (%)
1960	Conservative	Macmillan	4328.2	0.56
1961	Conservative	Macmillan	4692.3	0.59
1962	Conservative	Macmillan	4165.6	0.52
1963	Conservative	Macmillan/ Douglas-Home	4051.7	0.48
1964	Conservative/Labour	Douglas-Home/ Wilson	4668.6	0.53
1965	Labour	Wilson	4211.0	0.47
1966	Labour	Wilson	4120.9	0.45
1967	Labour	Wilson	4098.1	0.44
1968	Labour	Wilson	3843.0	0.40
1969	Labour	Wilson	4136.6	0.43
1970	Labour/Conservative	Wilson/Heath	3800.0	0.39
1971	Conservative	Heath	4442.8	0.44
1972	Conservative	Heath	4368.7	0.42
1973	Conservative	Heath	3946.8	0.36
1974	Conservative/Labour	Heath/Wilson	4316.0	0.40
1975	Labour	Wilson	4155.8	0.38
1976	Labour	Wilson/Callaghan	4338.0	0.39
1977	Labour	Callaghan	4940.9	0.44
1978	Labour	Callaghan	5283.3	0.46
1979	Labour/Conservative	Callaghan/ Thatcher	6152.5	0.51
1980	Conservative	Thatcher	4012.9	0.35
1981	Conservative	Thatcher	4882.1	0.43
1982	Conservative	Thatcher	4271.9	0.37
1983	Conservative	Thatcher	4171.6	0.35
1984	Conservative	Thatcher	4009.8	0.33
1985	Conservative	Thatcher	4221.3	0.33
1986	Conservative	Thatcher	4016.3	0.31
1987	Conservative	Thatcher	3676.8	0.28
1988	Conservative	Thatcher	4502.9	0.32
1989	Conservative	Thatcher	4434.7	0.31
1990	Conservative	Thatcher/Major	3848.6	0.27

1991	Conservative	Major	4403.2	0.32
1992	Conservative	Major	4341.0	0.31
1993	Conservative	Major	4441.9	0.31
1994	Conservative	Major	4700.8	0.31
1995	Conservative	Major	4453.7	0.29
1996	Conservative	Major	4315.4	0.27
1997	Conservative/Labour	Major/Blair	4428.1	0.26

The Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher, the longest-serving British prime minister of the 20th century, experienced the largest cutback in its history of UK's ODA spending. In 1979, Thatcher inherited a highly inflationary economy, which set the record at 24.21% in 1975 and maintained double figures at 13.42% in 1979 and 17.97% in 1980. Thus, the priority for Thatcher's Conservative leadership was to lower inflation rates through tight monetary policy, which resulted in a deep recession where unprecedented rates of unemployment was observed at an average of 11% (of the total labour force) from 1981 to 1987, highest since the Great Depression. By the end of the Thatcher administration in 1990, ODA/GNI ratio was recorded at a mere 0.27%, the lowest figure since 1960. Although the great scale of the 1980s economic recession provides a convincing self-explanatory reason for the decrease in ODA expenditure, Christopher Erswell (1994) provides supporting evidence that the Conservative premier's sentiment towards foreign aid was not a generous one. Excerpt from an interview with MP Joan Lester in 1991, claims that "Margaret Thatcher certainly wasn't interested in Third World countries. She certainly wasn't interested in aid and development. Neither was the Chancellor – Geoffrey Howe, and Lawson under Patten"⁷. This statement is supported by the fact

⁷ Interview with Joan Lestor. 28 March 1991.

that in 1979, during Thatcher's first year as premier, the Overseas Development Ministry (ODM) was once again transferred back under the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and again renamed "Overseas Development Administration".

Following a series of economic and social issues, Thatcher resigned as Conservative Party leader and prime minister in 1990. John Major, the Chancellor of Exchequer at the time succeeded the premiership as the new Conservative party leader. Two years later, Major won the general election amidst the deepening recession and continued rise in unemployment. It was a surprising outcome as the polls leading up to the election day indicated Labour's victory. Intriguingly, whilst comparing the Labour and Conservative party manifestos for the 1992 UK general election, it was found that Neil Kinnock, then Labour Party leader, makes no mention at all of foreign aid policy in the Labour Party manifesto. On the other hand, the Conservative manifesto under the incumbent Prime Minister, John Major, highlights several positive developments to foreign aid such as pressing for debt relief assistance for the poorest countries (Major's 'Trinidad Terms', official debt reduction to two-thirds for LDCs), promotion of good governance, sensible economic policies, anti-corruption policies as well as human rights and rule of law (1992 Conservative manifesto). Major did receive increased public support after the swift and successful response to the Gulf War, as well as replacing the hugely unpopular Community Charge (commonly known as poll tax, introduced by Thatcher) with Council Tax, but the common speculation still remained at the most a hung government, if not a Labour majority. The Conservatives did maintain a

strong connection to the media, even going to the extent of pursuing one of the most popular British tabloids, *The Sun*, to decorate their first page on the election day with the headline: “If Kinnock wins today will the last person to leave Britain please turn out the lights” (*The Sun*, 1992)⁸. The combination of aggressive media promotion and comparably a much better detailed and well-constructed manifesto, which also initiated Conservative party’s recognition of the promotional value of altruistic foreign aid policy can therefore be considered as one of the main contributions leading to the unforeseen victory over Kinnock’s Labour party. Despite the promises for aid efforts, however, net ODA expenditure during Major’s incumbent period witnessed a fall of over 12% even compared to Thatcher’s period in power (ODA/GNI percentage ratio Major/Thatcher: 0.296%/0.332%).

3.3. UK ODA Development: 2000s to Today

The 1997 UK general election granted the Labour Party an opportunity to return to office after 18 years of absence. Tony Blair led a very successful campaign against John Major achieving a landslide victory, winning 43.2% of popular votes (30.7% for John Major), with a net gain of 146 seats in the House of Commons. Following the massive parliament majority, Blair’s ‘New Labour’ government proceeded with ease facing only the defeated Conservative opposition. This allowed the Blair administration to create a new Department of International Development (DFID)

⁸ “Forty years of The Sun: Frivolous content”, BBC News. Last updated 14 September 2004.

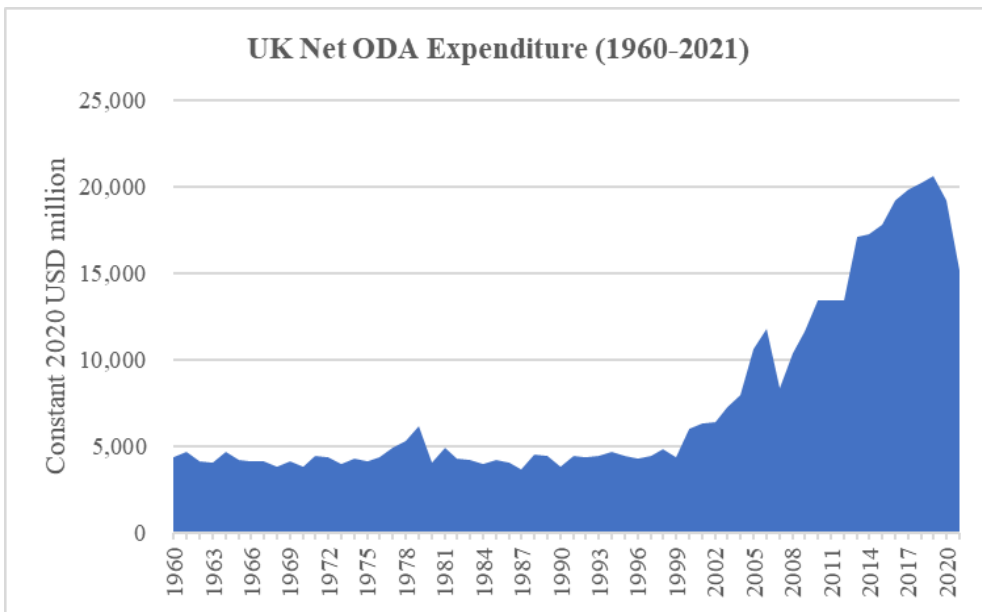
independent from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, to which he appointed Clare Short as the Secretary of State for International Development (SoS-ID). The DFID set out two white papers on international development in 1997 and 2000, titled *Eliminating World Poverty* with differing subtitles. This was the first white paper on foreign aid policy by any government in 22 years since Harold Wilson's second white paper in 1975. Both white papers show a great deal of altruistic motives and moral justification for ODA. In particular, the first of the white papers, *Eliminating World Poverty: A Challenge for the 21st Century*, contains a foreword by Clare Short, introducing international development policy as a method to "achieve the sustainable development of this planet" emphasising that "we all have a moral duty to reach out to the poor and needy" and ultimately that Britain can "give a lead which would make us all very proud of our country and also secure a safe and decent future for all of us" (DFID White Paper, 1997). On top of the promise to reach the United Nations target of 0.7% ODA/GNI ratio, a new cabinet-level secretary of state, and increased budget and staff for the international development office, Tony Blair displayed commitment to his foreign aid policies, often highlighting the moral case for aid rather than the benefits accrued by the United Kingdom. Below is an excerpt from Tony Blair's speech given during a Labour Party Conference in 1998:

*"Thousands of communities, tens of thousands of people, many starving and destitute, will live not die, have hope, not despair, and may never know it was a new Labour government in Britain that had the courage to say: 'You are our brothers and sisters, and we accept our duty to you as members of the same human race'"*⁹

⁹ Tony Blair, "Transcript of Labour Party Conference Speech", 1998

This focus of primarily promoting ODA as a matter of morality was an iconic movement, which created a visible moral high ground above the previous Conservative’s foreign aid policies which mostly emphasised the protection of UK’s interests. This was a notable development for ODA policy making in general, which influenced other DAC donor countries’ behaviour in major events such as the 2005 G8 meeting in Gleneagles, where ODA commitments to Africa was one of the highest profile issue areas. As Emma Mawdsley (2015) writes, “All donors—North and South—construct a narrative that blends national self-interest with doing good, the only difference being how these elements are framed, balanced and projected. In the case of DFID under New Labour, there was a heavy tilt towards the high moral ground, and DFID did indeed achieve some positive and progressive outcomes, notably around policy coherence for development” (2015:346).

Figure 2. UK Net ODA Expenditure: 1960 to 2021¹⁰



¹⁰ Figure 2. represents triennial data of UK’s net ODA expenditure between 1960 and 2021. OECD data.

As figure 2. represents, by 2005, UK's net ODA spending has more than doubled from the previous Conservative leadership ending in 1997. Taking currency inflation into account, Blair's Labour government recorded a 0.51% ODA/GNI ratio in 2006, which was the highest since the final year of Callaghan's office in 1979 and just under double of 0.26% recorded in the final year of Major's Conservative premiership. The political philosophy of the New Labour Party was influenced by the concept of 'Third Way' introduced by Anthony Giddens, which attempted to orchestrate socialism and capitalism by a synthesis of centre-right economic policies and centre-left social policies. This placed Blair in a centre-left position if not centrist on the political spectrum, which was seldomly conveyed even in his ODA policies evident from the 2000 DFID White Paper. Contrary to Clare Short's entirely humanitarian foreword, Blair mentions that "It is also in the UK's national interest. Many of the problems which affect us – war and conflict, international crime and the trade in illicit drugs, and the spread of health pandemics like HIV/AIDS – are caused or exacerbated by poverty", encouraging public support for foreign aid ultimately to protect British interests. Regardless, Blair was in full support of ODA, and in 2004 committed the UK to meet the UN target of 0.7% ODA/GNI by 2013.

Table 3. UK ODA donations (1998 – 2021) *OECD data

Year	Party in Power	Prime Minister	Net ODA (Million USD)	ODA/GNI (%)
1998	Labour	Blair	4849.5	0.27
1999	Labour	Blair	4345.6	0.24
2000	Labour	Blair	6000.2	0.32
2001	Labour	Blair	6281.0	0.32
2002	Labour	Blair	6377.1	0.31
2003	Labour	Blair	7245.4	0.34

2004	Labour	Blair	7946.0	0.36
2005	Labour	Blair	10583.4	0.47
2006	Labour	Blair	11757.3	0.51
2007	Labour	Blair/Brown	8313.9	0.36
2008	Labour	Brown	10401.8	0.43
2009	Labour	Brown	11621.5	0.51
2010	Labour/Conservative	Brown/Cameron	13413.7	0.57
2011	Conservative	Cameron	13417.0	0.56
2012	Conservative	Cameron	13415.7	0.56
2013	Conservative	Cameron	17108.7	0.70
2014	Conservative	Cameron	17238.7	0.70
2015	Conservative	Cameron	17799.4	0.70
2016	Conservative	Cameron/May	19242.8	0.70
2017	Conservative	May	19862.6	0.70
2018	Conservative	May	20209.8	0.70
2019	Conservative	May/Johnson	20591.5	0.70
2020	Conservative	Johnson	19253.4	0.70
2021	Conservative	Johnson	15150.6	0.50

The 2010 UK general election resulted in the second hung parliament since 1929¹¹. David Cameron’s Conservative Party did win in the number of seats and votes, however, still fell 20 seats short for a House majority. Less than a week later, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats formed a coalition government to begin the leadership under David Cameron as the Prime Minister. Interestingly, even after stating that the “new Conservative government will be fully committed to achieving, by 2013, the UN target of spending 0.7 per cent of national income as aid. We will stick to the rules laid down by the OECD about what spending counts as aid. We will legislate in the first session of a new Parliament to lock in this level of spending for every year from 2013” in the 2010 Conservative manifesto, Cameron attempted

¹¹ 1974 UK General Election resulted in the first hung parliament since 1929.

to renege on his promise in 2013, which almost led to the decimation of the coalition. It was the Liberal Democrats in 2010 Cameron-Clegg coalition agreement that set out the commitment to enshrine the 0.7% target in law, which was continuously postponed on the grounds of lack of parliamentary time since 2010. Cameron, under pressure from Tory backbenchers who considered the increase in aid budget an unfair judgement, attempted to scrap the legislation in 2013, but after the extreme public backfire received, he announced that there would be no change in plans to enshrine the ODA expenditure target in law¹². Following the timeline set during Blair's government, the UK reached the 0.7% ODA/GNI ratio in 2013 for the first time in history. In 2015, Britain passed a bill that enshrines in law its commitment to spend 0.7% of its GNI on ODA, becoming the first G7 nation to do so. It is interesting to note that despite frequent pledges to meet the target from both the Conservative and Labour party over time, no action was taken until Liberal Democrat MP Michael Moore introduced it as a private member's bill in September 2014 to finally secure a parliamentary debate¹³. Since the 2010 election, the Conservatives, once again managed to hold onto the office for more than a decade throughout the turbulent governments of Theresa May, Boris Johnson, and UK's shortest serving PM Liz Truss¹⁴, leading up to the most recent Conservative party leader, (and again an ex-Chancellor of Exchequer) Rishi Sunak, who was newly

¹² "Coalition split looms as David Cameron drops foreign aid pledge", The Guardian. Published Sun 5 May 2013.

¹³ "UK passes bill to honour pledge of 0.7% foreign aid target", The Guardian. Published 9 March 2015.

¹⁴ Conservative party's Liz Truss served as Prime Minister for a mere 50 days beginning on 5 September and ending on 24 October 2022. She resigned after the government crisis caused by the September 2022 mini-budget, which also resulted in the dismissal of the then Chancellor of Exchequer, Kwasi Kwarteng.

appointed as the Prime Minister in October 2022.

After experiencing the strong public backlash in 2013 against ODA budget cuts, both May and Johnson promised to continue meeting the target of 0.7% as part of their election campaign pledges. UK's principal international development institution, DFID, which historically suffered mergers with the Foreign Office every time a change to Conservative leadership took place since 1964¹⁵, remained independent until June 2020, when PM Johnson announced it would be once again merged with the FCO. This decision faced divided responses from all parties, where several notable Tory members such as David Cameron and Andrew Mitchell (Secretary of State for International Development from 2010 to 2012) criticised by each commenting that it would mean "less expertise, less voice for development at the top table and ultimately less respect for the UK overseas" and that abolishing the department would be a "quite extraordinary mistake" during the parliamentary hearing. In response to the merger, Labour leader Keir Starmer voiced the absence of rationale regarding the decision, stating that it was a mere "tactics of pure distraction" from the government's poor handling of the Covid-19 crisis¹⁶. Institutionally aligning Britain's aid efforts with UK foreign policy through the merger with FCO was a particularly controversial move because whilst better

¹⁵ DFID originates from Labour PM Harold Wilson's Ministry of Overseas Development (ODM) established in 1964. The ODM was merged with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in 1970 under Conservative PM Edward Heath and re-established as an independent ministry during Wilson's second term as PM in 1974. The ODM was re-merged with the FCO in 1979 under Conservative PM Margaret Thatcher. In 1997, it was renamed the Department for International Development (DFID) by Labour PM Tony Blair and granted functions as a separate ministry.

¹⁶ "International development and Foreign Office to merge", BBC News. Published 16 June 2020

coherence in foreign policy direction can be achieved, many critics feared that the ODA expenditure will now focus primarily on UK national interests and less on tackling global poverty. This concern came to reality in July 2021, when Johnson passed the motion with a parliamentary majority to cut foreign aid down to 0.5% of GNI from the previous 8 years of achieving the 0.7% target. This cost the poorest countries £4 billion in budget cut and faced 24 opposing Conservative votes including Theresa May, ex-Cabinet minister Jeremy Hunt, former Secretary of State for International Development Andrew Mitchell, Defence Committee Chairman Tobias Ellwood, and Tom Tugendhat, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee. During the House of Commons debate on 13 July 2021, Rishi Sunak, then Chancellor of Exchequer, attempted to extinguish the criticism by explaining that “What we are asking the House to vote for today is a road map for returning to 0.7%. That road map reaffirms our values while recognising the reality that covid has caused severe damage to our public finances. It puts beyond doubt the fact that the reduction in the aid budget is temporary; it defines a reasonable set of tests for when we will return to 0.7%; and it makes those tests objective and verifiable, based on data, not dates, measured not by the Government ourselves, but by the independent Office for Budget Responsibility.” (UK Parliament Hansard, Volume 699: debated on Tuesday 13 July 2021). Britain’s ODA expenditure now remains reduced at 0.5% of gross national income, amounting to just over £15 billion. This is the first cut back in foreign aid spending in the last 14 years since 2007.

4. Political Parties and ODA Efforts

In calculating the average ODA/GNI ratio for the incumbent period of each Conservative and Labour Prime Ministers, a pattern is observed where change of the majority party from Conservative-to-Labour results in the increase of the figure, and in cases of Labour-to-Conservative, a decrease in the ratio. Out of six political party changes resulting from general elections between 1960 and 2021, transition from Conservative-to-Labour (C-to-L) party occurred in 1964, 1974, and 1997, while Labour-to-Conservative (L-to-C) switches took place in 1970, 1979, and 2010 respectively.

With the following justification, we will omit the years 1964 and 2010 from this rhetorical analysis of party manifestos. In 1964, Macmillan was the forerunner of British foreign aid, establishing the Department of Technical Cooperation to adapt to the rapid process of decolonisation, which demanded overseas development and aid to be set up to continue Britain's relevance in its sphere of influence. Thus, comparably high level of ODA was naturally expected. In 2010, when the Cameron-Clegg coalition government took office, the increase of ODA/GNI ratio to 0.7% by 2013 was a goal initially set by Blair's Labour government, which, as mentioned earlier, was opposed by Cameron but forced to take course due to the pressure from the public as well as the coalition partner Liberal Democrats. Therefore, the two periods are deemed irrelevant in terms of this research.

Table 4. UK periods of party change and average ODA expenditure

Years	Party in Power	Prime Minister	Net ODA (Million USD)	Average ODA (Million USD)	Average ODA/GNI (%)
1960-1964	Conservative	Macmillan	21906.4	4381.3	0.54
1965-1970	Labour	Wilson	24209.6	4034.9	0.43
1970-1974	Conservative	Heath	17074.3	4268.6	0.41
1974-1979	Labour	Wilson/Callaghan	24870.5	4974.1	0.44
1980-1997	Conservative	Thatcher/Major	77133	4285.2	0.32
1997-2010	Labour	Blair/Brown	109136.4	8395.1	0.39
2011-2021	Conservative	Cameron/May/Johnson	193290.2	17571.8	0.66

Disregarding the anomalous transition from C-to-L in 1964 and L-to-C in 2010, we see a pattern in party change and ODA disbursements. In the remaining two cases of C-to-L transition, namely Edward Heath premiership to Wilson/Callaghan in 1974 and Thatcher/Major to Blair/Brown in 1997, the average ODA/GNI ratio for each party's incumbent period increased by more than 7% (7.3% for C-to-L in 1974, and 21.9% for C-to-L in 1997). By calculating the average ODA/GNI ratio for the entirety of each party's incumbent period, it allows for a fair judgement of aid efforts including plans and policies that may take longer to implement. This chapter presents a rhetorical analysis of party manifestos within the scope of the aforementioned

periods of party transition.

4.1 Labour to Conservative in 1970 and 1979

Labour to Conservative: UK General Election of 1970

The 1970 UK general election resulted in an unforeseen victory for the Conservatives led by Edward Heath. Heath won 330 seats over Wilson's 288, although popular votes suggested a closer race, each expected to receive 46.4% and 43.1% of the public vote. As Harold Wilson's Labour Party won the two previous elections in 1964 and 1966, the Conservative victory came as more of a surprise to many. Contrary to the incumbent Labour Party manifesto, the challenger party's manifesto did not hesitate to directly denounce the opposition's policies.

Following the foreword from party leader Edward Heath, the 1970 Conservative manifesto begins with a title "The Failures of Today", which introduces the section highlighting Labour's failures under the subtitle "Labour Has Nothing to Offer". It states that "Labour's policies for the future are their policies of the past. Nothing to curb the rise in prices. Nothing to cut the human waste of unemployment. Nothing to see that extra social help goes where the need is greatest. More taxes. More blanket subsidies. More state ownership. More civil servants. More government interference. No new encouragement to earn and save. No new incentive to invest and expand. No new policy to bring about better relations in industry. No new deal for our farmers.". Interestingly, the Conservative manifesto also criticises temporary foreign aid cuts made during Wilson's premiership in the same section, even though Heath's

administration ultimately spent less on aid in comparison. Heath's cut in foreign aid spending could have been expected from the apparent lack of policy direction for ODA in the election manifesto. As quoted below, there is a stark difference in the tone of language and choice of words used to describe aid policy objectives between the two manifestos:

1970 Conservatives Manifesto on Foreign Aid Efforts:

“Britain must play a proper part in dealing with world poverty. We will ensure that Britain helps the developing countries:

- *by working for the expansion of international trade;*
- *by encouraging private investment overseas;*
- *by providing capital aid and technical assistance to supplement their own efforts.*

We have accepted the UNCTAD target for aid to developing countries, and will increase the British programme as national prosperity returns. We will re-examine the objectives and performance of the programme so that the maximum mutual advantage is gained.”

1970 Labour Manifesto on Foreign Aid Efforts:

“The Ministry of Overseas Development, which Labour set up, has meant that aid is better co-ordinated and directed and thus more effective, than ever before. The improved economic climate will enable us to make progress. In the next five years Labour is to increase our aid programme by about one-third, from £219 millions in 69/70 to £300 millions in 73/74. Labour will seek to devote 1 per cent of our Gross

National Product to aid the developing world by 1975 and to achieve an official flow of aid of 0.7 per cent of GNP during the Second Development Decade - this accepts the target set by the Pearson Commission. Multilateral agencies will receive a larger proportion of total aid flow and more resources will be devoted to rural and co-operative development and population planning.”

The primary observation is that the Conservatives take a traditionally right-wing realist position of striving for power in dealing with global issues. This is evident from the difference in tone of language depicted in the title of each manifestos' foreign policy section, which the Conservatives set as “A Stronger Britain in The World” compared to Labour’s “Britain in the World Community”. Wilson’s Labour Party manifesto also dedicated a subtitle “The Fight Against World Poverty” before introducing its aid policy objectives unlike its opponent. Looking closely at the text on foreign aid, the Conservatives emphasise “maximum mutual advantage” gained from the British aid programme, ensuring the “expansion of international trade” as well as “encouraging private investment overseas”, which directs towards the conclusion that foreign aid policy will prioritise the protection of British interests. Although the Conservatives state that “we have accepted the UNCTAD target for aid to developing countries”, the manifesto makes no promise of meeting the UN target of 0.7% ODA/GNI and subjects the increase of Britain’s ODA spending under the condition that it shall happen only once “national prosperity returns”. There is a distinct lack of detail in the policy directives, which suggests the lack of motivation for building concrete aid policies in the 1970 Conservative Party.

In comparison, Labour Party manifesto outlines specific objectives including the exact figures and timeframes that each pledge intends to be achieved. It vocalises the party's promise to increase foreign aid expenditure in statements such as "In the next five years Labour is to increase our aid programme ... from £219 millions ... to £300 millions in 73/74" as well as suggesting that they will "seek to devote 1 per cent of our Gross National Product to aid ... by 1975". Wilson's continued support for the institutionalisation of aid programmes is conveyed not only in the mention of the Ministry of Overseas Development, which he set up in 1964, but also in pledging that "multilateral agencies will receive a larger proportion of total aid flow". The incumbent party's efforts continuously align with their previous agenda, which sought to increase overseas support under the socialist axiom "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need" (1964 Labour Party manifesto).

Labour to Conservative: UK General Election of 1979

The 1979 UK general election resulted in favour of the Conservative Party leader Margaret Thatcher, who became the first female head of government not only in the UK but in Europe as well. Thatcher won 339 seats in the House of Commons, compared to 269 seats acquired by Wilson's successor James Callaghan. As the challenger party, the Conservatives focused its campaign on economic issues pledging to control the rising levels of inflation and to balance out the increasing authority given to trade unions. Contrary to the Labour party, Thatcher's campaign borrowed a hand from several media companies. Under the specific coordination of

Thatcher's advisors, *The Sun*, once again printed a series of satirical articles denouncing previous Labour party leaders. The campaign advisors, Gordon Reece and Timothy Bell also employed Saatchi & Saatchi to produce the Conservative campaign poster titled "Labour Isn't Working". As mentioned in the previous chapter, Thatcher had no interest in foreign aid, which is evident from the election manifesto.

On the other hand, Callaghan reiterated the party's support for full employment and the National Health Service (NHS), as well as following Wilson's footsteps in promoting aid policies as his successor in the Labour Party. In the opening sentence of the foreign policy section of the 1979 Labour manifesto, it states that the "Party's priority is to build a democratic socialist society in Britain and to create the conditions necessary to free the world from poverty, inequality and war. We condemn violations of human rights wherever they occur and whatever the political complexion of the Government concerned, and will further human rights in all international organizations.", suggesting a liberalist approach to its international agenda. The sharp contrast in ODA efforts exerted in the election manifestos of the two parties becomes evident when comparing the texts shown below:

1979 Conservatives Manifesto on Foreign Aid Efforts:

"Like other industrial countries, Britain has a vital interest in bringing prosperity to poorer nations which provide us with a growing market and supply many of the raw materials upon which we depend. The next Conservative government will help them through national and international programmes of aid and technical co-operation and by the encouragement of voluntary work. But we also attach

particular importance to the development of trade and private investment through such instruments as the European Community's Lomé Convention. In particular, we will foster all our Commonwealth links and seek to harness to greater effect the collective influence of the Commonwealth in world affairs.”

1979 Labour Manifesto on Foreign Aid Efforts:

“We will continue to pursue our policy of aid to the poorest countries and the poorest people, with the emphasis on rural development. Under Labour, aid is increasing at 6 per cent a year. We will seek to implement the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product for official aid as soon as economic circumstances permit. Labour will take account of human rights considerations when giving aid. Help will continue to be given to the victims of repressive regimes, including the provision of refugee programmes. The Labour Government approach the North-South dialogue in a spirit of cooperation. It will actively participate in the UNCTAD 5 and other negotiations seeking to establish a more just world trading system which recognizes the needs of poorer countries.”

The foreign aid objectives of the 1979 Conservative manifesto follow suit to the pledges made by the previous Tory leaderships, where strong emphasis is put on the potential economic benefits accrued from international aid programmes. Once again, the title of the Conservatives manifesto’s foreign policy section, “A Strong Britain in a Free World” highlights the realist approach in dealing with international affairs. For instance, the manifesto claims that Britain’s “vital interest in bringing prosperity to poorer nations” is ultimately to “provide us with a growing market and supply

many of the raw materials upon which we depend”. Although it briefly mentions that humanitarian “voluntary work” will be encouraged, the focus is returned to protecting UK interests by stating that particular importance is attached to “the development of trade and private investment”.

In contrast, the 1979 Labour manifesto continues its altruistic approach towards ODA policies. The usage of language is noticeably different from the foreign aid policy section of the Conservative manifesto. For example, the emphasis on the provision of aid to the “poorest countries and the poorest people”, as well as making “human rights considerations” and helping “victims of repressive regimes including ... refugee programmes”, all suggests a philanthropic approach, which diverts far away from the foreign aid directives of the Conservative party. However, this liberal stance taken by the Labour party may have cost them the election. The late 1970s observed a growing public support for the far-right political party National Front (NF), due to the vast increase in immigration from the African-Caribbean and Asian countries. This allowed the opportunity for Thatcher to criticise Labour’s immigration policy and gain additional votes from the sparse yet firmly rooted far-right population.

4.2 Conservative to Labour in 1974 and 1997

Conservative to Labour: UK General Election of 1974

The February 1974 UK general election resulted in a hung parliament for the first time since 1929. Albeit under a minority government, Harold Wilson became the Prime Minister for the second time, having won 301 seats to Edward Heath's 297 seats. A total of 318 seats were required to form a majority government, and with both the Conservatives and Labour failing to form a coalition with the Liberal Party, Wilson called for an early election in September, which was held in October 1974. The October election resulted in another victory for the Labour Party, this time achieving a majority government. As the Labour Party leader from February 1963 to April 1976, the 1974 election granted Wilson a second term as the Prime Minister, following his incumbency from 1964 to 1970. This was also the first general election since UK's accession to the European Communities (EC) in 1973. Throughout the 1970s, the nation's economic condition was in a dire state especially with concerns over inflation, which officially became a crisis when the Office for National Statistics reported on 15 February 1974, that a 20% increase in prices was observed compared to the previous year based on the Retail Price Index (RPI). This, among other domestic issues such as the 1972 UK miners' strike, initially led to the dissolution of Parliament requested by the then Prime Minister Edward Heath, allowing for the 1974 general election to be held, often known as a crisis election.

The February 1974 Labour Party manifesto, while mainly addressing the immediate threat of the 1973-1975 recession resulting from the 1973 oil crisis, did not leave out its determination for foreign aid provisions. Under the section titled “Peace and Justice in a Safer World”, introducing its four foreign policy principles, the second point even promised implementation of the then recent 0.7% ODA/GNI target announced by the United Nations:

“Two We shall commit Britain to a policy of equality at home and abroad which would involve radical changes in aid, trade, and development policies. In particular, the next Labour Government will seek to implement the United Nations Development Target of 0.7 per cent of GNP official aid and will increase the aid programme to meet it and will actively seek to re-establish a more generous and more liberal world trading pattern for the developing countries.” (1974 Labour Party Manifesto)

The February 1974 Conservative Party manifesto, on the other hand, omits in its entirety the mention of foreign aid. The section on foreign policy titled “Britain, Europe and the World” focuses on the utilisation of British membership to the European Community to provide regional security and integrated regional economic cooperation. The comparison of the introductory paragraph of the foreign policy section in each respective party manifesto clearly narrates the differences in political ideology for the two parties.

February 1974 Conservatives Manifesto on Foreign Policy:

“The prime objective of our foreign policy is to preserve peace and maintain the security and prosperity of the British nation. In order to achieve this, we need friends and allies. In the last 4 years, sometimes in very difficult circumstances, Britain has made or consolidated friendships in the Far East, China, the Indian Sub-Continent, Africa, and the American Continent. Progress has lately been made in re-establishing a proper relationship with the Soviet Union.” (1974 Conservative Manifesto)

February 1974 Labour Manifesto on Foreign Policy:

“As in domestic policy the lesson of the last few years in Foreign Policy is that a narrow, selfish, inward looking approach to international problems is doomed to failure. We are, more than ever, one world and Labour's foreign policy will be dedicated to the strengthening of international institutions and global cooperation in response to the threats to the peace and prosperity of us all.” (1974 Labour Manifesto)

The two introductions to each political party's foreign policy proposal may seem to present a similar central message that healthy international relations must be maintained and broadened for peace and prosperity of the UK. The tone of the excerpts, however, convey a distinct contrast. The Labour Party manifesto uses phrases such as “strengthening of international institutions”, “global cooperation” and “one world”, indicating altruistic motives in international relations. In comparison, the Conservative manifesto emphasises “British nation” and “Britain”

as well as “allies”, suggesting a protectionist approach. This ideological contrast becomes undeniably clear when we compare at the sentence “security and prosperity of the British nation” and “peace and prosperity of us all”. The Labour manifesto also sharply criticises the previous Conservative leadership by describing their foreign policy efforts as “narrow, selfish and inward looking”.

The Second general election of 1974 was held in October, and two new sets of Party manifestos were published accordingly. The October 1974 manifestos were more detailed in nature, with further emphasis on policy directions for each section. Although both parties did in fact attempt to tackle inflation and soaring energy prices, Labour clearly had a more credible resolution with actual figures, such as “*Stopped printing money to finance unnecessary expenditure*”, and “*Cut VAT from 10% to 8%*”, “*Reduced gross profit margins by 10%, and agreed with the food trade to concentrate profit cuts on essential foods*”, while the Conservatives stated “*We will continue the work of the Price Commission, ... review the Price Code to make it more flexible, to stimulate investment and to help provide jobs. In a time of roaring inflation, price controls are necessary. But if they are too rigid, the money needed by companies to stimulate investment and to help provide jobs dries up.*” giving no concrete evidence on exactly how they will deal with the situation. While both address comparable ideas on agriculture, employment, education, social security, energy, the NHS, women’s rights, justice system, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, a major contrast in foreign policy approach is observed again. In fact, “a major contrast” does not justify as a description for the respective polar opposite foreign policy directions. Below are the excerpts from the foreign policy section of

each party's October 1974 manifestos.

October 1974 Conservatives Manifesto on Foreign Policy:

“We live in dangerous times. As much as in the past Britain must be able to defend herself and her way of life. To us, aggressive war may be unthinkable. To some other countries, it is an acceptable way of gaining their ends. ... secondly, playing our full part in the Commonwealth, to gain as many friends and allies in the international community as possible. ... It also creates the necessary conditions for the expansion of our trade.”

October 1974 Labour Manifesto on Foreign Policy:

“The nations of the world are becoming ever more economically and politically interdependent. The energy crisis of last winter could not be solved by any individual country acting on its own ... The same is true ... in solving the problems of inflation, of poverty, of economic growth and full employment. We are more than ever one world. Labour's foreign policy is, therefore, dedicated to strengthening international institutions and to world co-operation in all fields, including trade and currency.”

“The Government has accepted the United Nations target of 0.7% of the Gross National Product ... We have provided special help for the developing countries hardest hit by the crisis in oil prices and for areas of famine and disaster, ... set up a Disaster Unit to speed our response to emergencies. We shall direct our aid towards the poorest countries and to the poorest people and give emphasis to rural development.”

Given that no other policy proposals strikingly differ in political ideology as they do in the foreign policy directions of the two parties, and the fact that the Conservatives entirely disregarded aid policy in their manifesto, supports the assumption that Wilson's Labour Party was deemed more favourable in the public's eye due to its altruistic motives. The first ever substantive White Paper on British aid policy, *Overseas Development: The Work of the New Ministry* (1965), had also been published under the premiership of Harold Wilson. This outlined the blueprint for the establishment of Ministry of Overseas Development, which assembled Whitehall's dispersed departments responsible for aid policies and allocation. The second White Paper, *Overseas Development. The Changing Emphasis in British Aid Policy. More Help for the Poorest* (1975), was circulated in the second year of Wilson's second premiership. Contrary to rational expectation, there has been no other policy paper on the topic of foreign aid by the Labour Party prior or post the 1965 and 1975 papers, until 1997.

The analysis of 1974 election manifestos therefore reaffirm the assumption that Left-wing governments exhibit more effort in ODA disbursement compared to the Right-wing leadership.

Conservative to Labour: UK General Election of 1997

Following the longest period of Conservative majority in the 20th century (1979-1997), Labour Party Leader Tony Blair won the 1997 UK general election by a

landslide victory of 418 seats to the incumbent Conservative leader John Major's 165 seats. The 1997 general election ended 18 years of Conservative leadership, the majority of which was under the premiership of the longest serving Prime Minister of the 20th century, Margaret Thatcher. It was a key election not only for the Labour Party but for the Conservatives who lost public trust after a series of scandals, including the 1992 Sterling crisis commonly known as Black Wednesday. John Major, the incumbent Conservative leader at the time sought to restore public confidence in Conservatives with the publication of the 1997 Conservative Party manifesto, which he described as the "boldest and most far-reaching manifesto any party has published since 1979" (John Major, BBC News, first broadcast 2 April 1997) during his announcement at the party's general election conference. On the other hand, Blair's 'New Labour' campaign, which stressed the centrist position of the party, proved to be a success in turning the votes of the divided and dissatisfied Tory supporters to Labour's favour. For the 1997 election, Blair's 'New Labour' made five election pledges, with the general aim to transform policies to enhance public fiscal responsibility. Notably, cutting "NHS waiting lists by treating an extra 100,000 patients as a first step by releasing £100 million saved from NHS red tape"; getting "250,000 under-25 year-olds off benefit and into work by using money from a windfall levy on the privatised utilities"; cutting "class sizes to 30 or under for 5, 6 and 7 year-olds by using money from the assisted places scheme", and the promise to not raise income tax rates, as well as cutting "VAT on heating to 5 per cent" were all policies that were favoured by the general public.

Reviewing the 1997 Labour and Conservative Party manifestos, a similar

observation to the general election manifestos of 1974 is made, where the Labour party presents considerably more effort in the promotion of foreign aid policy. Below are the quotations from the section on foreign aid in respective party manifestos.

1997 Labour Manifesto on Foreign aid policy:

“Labour will also attach much higher priority to combating global poverty and underdevelopment. According to the World Bank, there are 1.3 billion people in the world who live in absolute poverty, subsisting on less than US\$1 a day, while 35,000 children die each day from readily preventable diseases.

Labour believes that we have a clear moral responsibility to help combat global poverty. In government we will strengthen and restructure the British aid programme and bring development issues back into the mainstream of government decision-making. A Cabinet minister will lead a new department of international development.

We will shift aid resources towards programmes that help the poorest people in the poorest countries. We reaffirm the UK's commitment to the 0.7 per cent UN aid target and in government Labour will start to reverse the decline in UK aid spending.”

1997 Conservatives Manifesto on Foreign aid policy:

“We will continue to support the Commonwealth, our unique global network, to encourage the spread of democracy; as set out in the Harare Declaration. We will focus our aid programme to encourage sustainable development in countries that are growing towards self-sufficiency under democratic government. We have taken

the lead in alleviating the burden of debt for the world's poorest countries. We also have significant flows of private investment to developing economies. We are more than achieving the long-term UN target of 1% of GDP for the transfer of wealth to less developed countries. We will continue to maintain a significant bilateral and multilateral aid programme reflecting the aspiration of meeting the UN's target of 0.7% of GDP for aid as a long-term objective.”

Similar to the 1974 Labour manifesto, Labour party's discourse on foreign aid policy leads to altruistic and humanitarian interpretations depicted by the usage of phrases such as “global poverty”, “moral responsibility” and “poorest people in the poorest countries”. In contrast, the Conservative manifesto emphasises “spread of democracy”, “significant flows of private investment”, suggesting the transactional nature of Conservative's foreign aid policy. In discussing the 0.7% ODA/GNI target ratio set by the UN, Conservatives use vague language and avoid making any haste promises by stating that the party's current aid programmes reflect their “aspiration of meeting ... target of 0.7%” as a “long-term objective”. In comparison, the Labour Party directly addresses their objective to “reaffirm the UK's commitment to ... 0.7 per cent UN aid target” and states that when in government, Labour will “start to reverse the decline in UK aid spending”.

5. Findings and Discussion

The adoption of the 0.7% target of ODA/GNI formally recognised at the UN General Assembly in 1970, began to pressure most DAC Member countries to vastly increase their foreign aid efforts. Sweden and Netherlands were the first to meet the target in 1975¹⁷, followed by Norway and Denmark in 1976 and 1978 respectively. The UK was no exception to the pressure of this goal, which in part its politicians contributed to in the making. In the previous chapter, a rhetorical analysis of Conservative and Labour party manifestos was conducted for the years 1970, 1974, 1979, 1997. As hypothesised, the results show that the manifestos of politically left-leaning party, i.e., Labour party, continuously made pledges in regard to the expansion of the government's ODA efforts. In all four periods of majority party change, Labour party manifestos seek to “achieve”, “implement”, “accept” and “reaffirm”¹⁸ the 0.7% target, whilst the Conservative party omits any mention of the target except for the 1970 and 1997 manifesto where it states that the party plans to increase the British effort “as national prosperity returns” and later that it will reflect “the aspiration” of meeting the UN target. This finding supports the argument of Noël and Thérien (2000) that in a bipartisan government, the more left leaning a party, the more likely it is to commit extra effort on foreign aid policies.

¹⁷ Sweden claimed to be the first country to meet the 0.7% target in 1974, however upon revision of the GNP figures, it was achieved in 1975.

¹⁸ Language used in Labour party manifestos to describe each administration's efforts for the ODA target. Ordered in respective of the general elections analysed in chapter 4 of this research: 1970; 1979; 1974; 1997.

In the cases of the 1974 and 1979 Conservative manifestos, each produced under the leadership of Heath and Thatcher, the mention of ODA policy direction is completely omitted. This becomes particularly interesting because for the victorious general election of 1970, Heath does include commitments to foreign aid and meeting the UNCTAD target, albeit in the context of British interest in international trade and overseas investment. Therefore, in order to clearly justify the foreign aid policy outcomes of each administration, it leads to the necessary consideration of external factors that may have had influence.

ODA funding often comes under political scrutiny due to its nature of limited tangible outcome, which can be difficult for governments to justify. Especially under strenuous economic conditions, ODA can be viewed as a sacrifice of self-interest in the public eye, with the possibility of a negative evaluation of the government's efforts. Therefore, although distinct policy characteristics of the two parties continue to be conveyed in their manifestos, factors such as economic conditions, geopolitical tensions along with domestic issues such as immigration may play an important role in the decision-making process. This section discusses the consideration given to multiple external factors that may have influenced the leadership's support or opposition to foreign aid.

Edward Heath's victory in 1970 was an unexpected outcome for many. Harold Wilson had the upper hand in almost every opinion poll before the general election¹⁹,

¹⁹ Marplan (Conservative: 41.5% / Labour: 50.2%); Gallup (Conservative: 42% / Labour: 49%); National opinion polls (Conservative: 44.1% / Labour: 48.2%); Harris (Conservative: 46% / Labour: 48%). Source: Abrams, M. (1970)

but ultimately lost. The end of the 1960s was a difficult period with economic crises leading to the involuntary devaluation of sterling 1967, concerns over inflation and high unemployment rates, imposition of the new Selective Employment Tax (SET), and the unexpectedly poor balance of trade figures dimmed the light on the possibility for Wilson's continued leadership. As seen in the Conservative manifesto, Heath actively criticised Labour's poor performance, and allowed room for the return of the Conservative majority. However, as the polls showed, Heath's victory was not guaranteed. The fear of a potential defeat may have triggered the Conservatives to exert extra effort in their policy directions on a wide range of topics including the section on foreign aid, which is not seen again until the 1997 election. In specific regards to ODA efforts, however, it is difficult to say that the Conservatives went an extra mile as expected for a challenger party. The foreign aid policy included in the 1970 Conservative manifesto is also limited to the role of a "merchant" as categorised by Breuning (1995), which exhibits in its rhetorical theme "benefits of trade to both donor nation and the recipient" as the main objective.

The Winter of Discontent, which signifies the period between November 1978 and February 1979, saw a devastating rise of nation-wide strikes by both the private and public sector trade unions. The 1970s endured one of the worst economic recessions experienced by the British public. Although the Labour party won back the government in 1974, Wilson's second premiership (replaced by Callaghan in 1976) stood no chance in continuing the majority government. As described in Chapter 3, the 1973 oil crisis led to the deep recession of the UK economy, with double digit inflation and the decline of the GDP by more than 3%. In a cabinet meeting held in

November 1974, James Callaghan, a Foreign Secretary at the time famously remarked “Sometimes when I go to bed at night, I think that if I were a young man I would emigrate” even suggesting that the UK under the current economic condition, may face “a breakdown of democracy” (Callaghan, 1987:326). In 1979, Thatcher inherited the government under such difficult state. Thus, when analysing the rhetoric of the foreign aid section in the 1979 Conservative manifesto, it makes sense to highlight the raw materials and benefits of trade and private investment that could be accrued by cooperation with developing nations, especially from within the Commonwealth. The prioritisation of transforming fiscal, industrial, and multitude of domestic policies over foreign aid, therefore, can be regarded as an obvious reaction. If the same election was held under a prosperous economic condition, where Labour might have had a better chance at competition, it is possible that, like Heath, Thatcher may also have had to counter Labour’s altruistic ODA policies with an equally liberal stance of her own.

The 1997 general election on the other hand, was held in a brand-new era represented by hopes of global peace and prosperity with the UK’s economy recovering from the gloomy start to the decade affected by the 1992 Sterling crisis, also known as Black Wednesday. The UK government under premiership of John Major, was forced to withdraw its currency from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) in September 1992, during the UK’s Presidency of the Council of the EU. The economic crisis practically dissolved all credibility of the Major administration, which led to the landslide victory of Tony Blair’s Labour Party in the 1997 general election. It was an interesting time for international cooperation as

well, as the decade began with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991 following the Revolutions of 1989. The fall of the Soviet bloc also indicated the start of new bilateral and multilateral cooperation within and beyond the European continent. As the challenger party, Blair's 'New Labour' extended its efforts for ODA policies in its manifesto, although it cannot be considered as the deciding factor in winning the election. Following the Labour tradition, the 1997 manifesto also uses the phrase "poorest countries and poorest people" which can be found in both the 1974 and 1979 Labour manifestos. By the end of the 1990s, the new media often focused on the humanitarian issues all over the world, especially those suffering from war and famine in developing countries, with multiple new charitable organisations successfully marketing their agenda to the general public. Therefore, Labour's focus on morality as the core motivation of ODA funding proved to be a successful campaign.

All in all, the findings from the rhetorical analysis of manifestos and the discussion of situational factors reaffirm the assumption that Left-wing governments display greater effort in ODA disbursement compared to Right-wing leadership. The fluctuations of UK's ODA spending between the period of 1960s to early 2000s, display a distinct pattern whereby the political left continuously exhibits greater effort for foreign aid.

6. Conclusion

Amidst the aforementioned limitations of party manifesto rhetorical analysis, this paper finds valuable results that provide a better insight into the effect of domestic political parties and their ideological spectrum have on the nation's ODA expenditure. In the case of the UK, it is evident from the average ODA/GNI % data calculated for each party's incumbent period, that ODA expenditure increases when a change of party from Conservative to Labour takes place. Both 1974 and 1997 general elections saw the change of government from C-to-L, and in both instances recorded higher figures of ODA expenditure by the end of tenure compared to the previous Conservative leaderships. The opposite is true when comparing the change of government from L-to-C. Following the 1970 and 1979 elections, both Conservative administrations, led by Wilson's successor Heath and Callaghan's successor Thatcher, indicated a decrease in ODA expenditure represented in the percentage of ODA over the national income compared to their Labour predecessors.

The results of the rhetorical analysis provide a rather unexpected outcome. This paper hypothesises that during the election period, the 'challenger' party will exert more effort on foreign aid and international development policies than the incumbent party. Whilst this is not completely false, results indicate that only the politically left-leaning Labour party exert more ODA efforts as a challenger party. From the review of foreign aid policies in the 1970 and 1979 election party manifestos, a stark contrast between the two parties is seen where the Conservatives inherently focus on the protection of UK national interests, often exhibiting features of a realist

government, while Labour continues the trend of an egalitarian liberalist stance. In both elections, the Conservative Party does not seem to wield any special attention to aid policy as the challenging contender, while Labour constantly produces either new contributions or renews the pledge to previous policy directives during all Labour challenges to the office, except for the 1992 manifesto.

Whilst this study provides a new research framework for the usage of rhetorical analysis in political manifestos, it suffers from limitations of the inability to completely consider the external socio-economic or geo-political factors that may involuntarily hinder the ODA efforts of a government. Chapter 3 chronologically overviews the relationship between ODA development and domestic politics, while Chapter 5 discusses the potential factors that may have influenced the direction of foreign aid policies in an attempt to balance out this limitation. Be that as it may, it grants considerations for future research in this capacity, where a computerised critical discourse analysis supported by a historical review of external variables would produce a more rigid and empirically sound outcome, thus making this paper an ideal first step in the research of political party's influence on ODA funding.

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