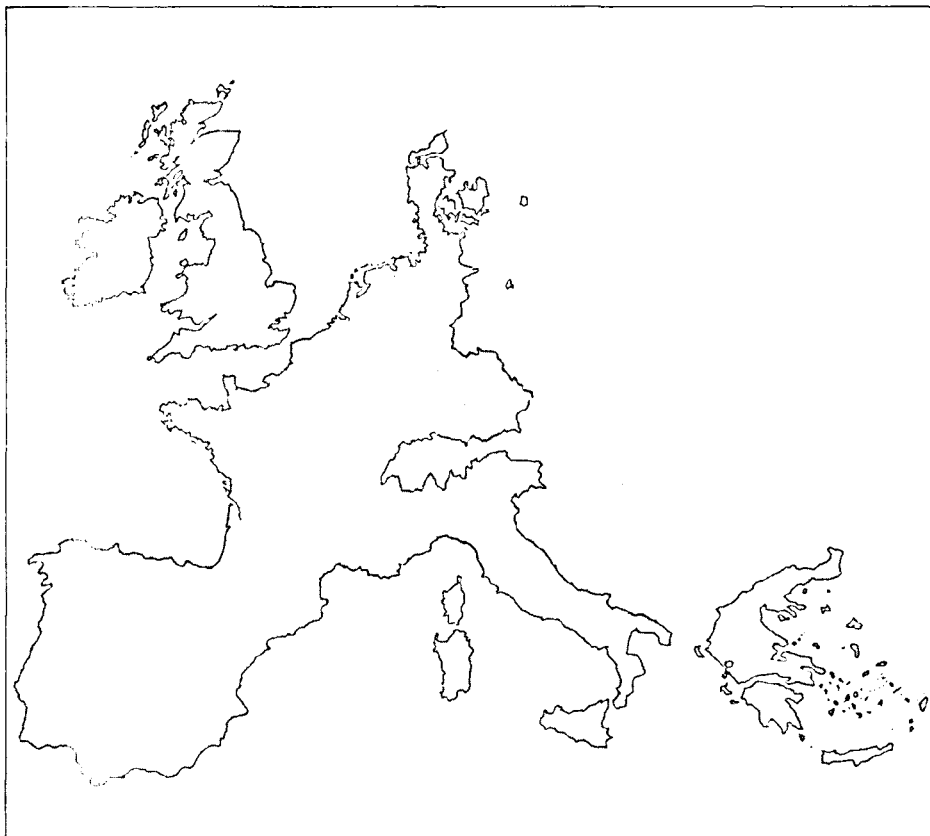


THE OTHER EUROPEAN ASSEMBLY



ESC

THE
ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL
COMMITTEE
OF THE
EUROPEAN
COMMUNITIES

THE OTHER EUROPEAN ASSEMBLY

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

ESC

JANUARY 1986

CONTENTS

- 5 MESSAGE BY GERD MUHR, CHAIRMAN OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE
- 9 THE POSITION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AMONG THE INSTITUTIONS
- 10 THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE — GENESIS OF OPINIONS
- 11 A CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY
- 13 THE OTHER EUROPEAN ASSEMBLY, BY ROGER LOUET, SECRETARY-GENERAL
- 17 THE EMPLOYERS' GROUP, BY HANS-WERNER STARATZKE, GROUP CHAIRMAN
- 19 THE WORKERS' GROUP, BY J.M. VAN GREUNSVEN, GROUP CHAIRMAN
- 21 THE "VARIOUS INTERESTS" GROUP, BY MRS KÄTE STROBEL, GROUP CHAIRWOMAN
- 24 SOME INSTANCES OF COMMITTEE OPINIONS AND STUDIES WHICH MADE A SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY LEGISLATION AND THINKING



Gerd Muhr

Born in Honnef-am-Rhein on 11 April 1924

On completing primary education trained as a mechanic

Served in the German Navy from 1942 to 1945 and was made a prisoner of war

Released in 1946 and resumed employment as a mechanic in Honnef-am-Rhein

Joined IG Metall on 1 September 1946

Appointed Works Council Chairman in 1946 and Honorary Chairman of the Honnef-am-Rhein DGB branch in 1947

Manager of IG Metall's Siegburg office from 1 March 1949 to 30 June 1955

Became Labour and Social Law Specialist attached to the IG Metall Board on 1 July 1955 and Head of the Social Policy Division in 1956

Elected Executive Member of the IG Metall Board on 20 June 1963,
Re-elected at the Bremen Congress (1965) and Munich Congress (1968)

Elected Vice-President of the DGB at the 8th Ordinary Federal Congress held in Munich in 1969.

Re-elected 1972, 1975, 1978 and 1982

Honorary Judge of the Federal Labour Court since 1962

From 1969 to May 1984, in annual rotation with an employers' representative, Chairman/Vice-Chairman of the Board of the Association of German Pension Insurance Organizations

Member of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities since 1970

Member of the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization since 1970,
Workers' Vice-Chairman and Spokesman since 1980

Chairman/Vice-Chairman of the Executive Board of the Federal Employment Institute since 1980

Elected Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee on 24 October 1984.

MESSAGE BY GERD MUHR,

CHAIRMAN OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

One of the foundations of the European Community is parliamentary, pluralist democracy. This requires freedom of association for economic and social groupings and participation of the major elements of society in the making of decisions affecting them. To meet this requirement the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities was set up in 1958, the model being the corresponding national bodies that existed at that time in most Member States. As advisory assembly serving the Commission and the Council, the Economic and Social Committee comprises representatives of the major interest groups in each Member State. Although the Committee is not the sole body providing a forum for dialogue and consultations, it is special in that it brings together in permanent debate groups that are pursuing different aims. From the confrontation of these groups there emerge common positions and also differences of view which are of great relevance for the political decision-makers. Knowledge of the views of the interest groups is particularly important since the Community bodies do not have any administrative outposts at national, regional or local level. Mention should also be made of the fact that the consultations among the interest

groups within the Committee are more useful than individual or isolated contacts, since they reveal not only the different views but also the common ground and show what possibilities there are of compromise between the positions of the various interest groups. The Community decision-making process is frequently criticized for not being sufficiently democratic, and in this connection it is worth noting that the exercise of influence by the interest groups is out in the open. The fact that the Plenary Sessions of the Committee are public plays a major role here. The Committee also provides feedback for the organizations in question concerning the legislative activities of the Community. In short, the balancing of interest before political decisions are taken and the permanent dialogue between the various economic and social groups and the political authorities further an essential aspect of the Community's political life: the concurrence of the major interest groups with the decisions taken in Brussels.

What problems is the Community now confronting more than 25 years after it was founded? In the Committee's view there are two main problems —one of an economic nature and the other institutional. What they both have in com-

mon is that if solutions are not found soon the people of Europe will ultimately lose their enthusiasm for the Community. The problems in question are the reduction of unemployment and the creation of a new institutional framework.

The Community is now in its 11th year of crisis. This is nowhere more evident than in the unemployment trend. Despite a few limited cyclical upswings, unemployment has grown steadily over the years and now stands at over 10% (*). This means more than 13 million jobless in the Community. The pattern of unemployment has changed too. Unemployment has become increasingly structural in character, which means that it has been impossible to eliminate when there have been optimum growth rates and that inadequate skills or mobility are not to blame either. At the same time the periods people are out of work for, have increased. Long-term unemployment is already the fate of millions of people in the Community. This means that more and more unemployed are falling outside the social security safety net and that a pheno-

(*) excluding Spain and Portugal.

menon known as the new poverty is beginning to emerge. On top of the traditional inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth we now have inequalities between those who still have a job and those who have lost their job or have never had one. The latter are of course mainly young people, who account for a disquietingly large proportion of the unemployed.

Society and the political systems in the Community and, ultimately, the Community itself, are based on values that must be shared by the population if they are to be lasting. But what values is a young person to have who despite all his efforts is unable to find a job? Do we really believe that there will be no consequences for our States, our societies and the Community itself if these young people have to live on welfare handouts after leaving school? Do we seriously believe that these young people will become responsible citizens or that they will one day advance the work of European integration?

The Community is clearly in need of renewal. Fortunately studies in this area are in progress again; these studies go beyond the politics of the day and look ahead to European union. European Union should bring about a more comprehensive and firmer integration of our

economies, social systems and societies in a political unit based on the fundamental principles of solidarity and closer union of our peoples.

The dynamic force of European Union should stimulate a deepening of existing policies and the formulation of new policies. European union calls for a new institutional balance leading to better synchronization of the legislative process in the Community.

In formulating its objectives European union must build on the present level of integration and aims of the European Community, deepening the latter and adapting them to the requirements of the late eighties and the nineties.

The economic and social objectives of "Europe of the second generation" should not be the wishful thinking of unworldly idealists but realistic, Community-minded answers to problems the Community has been confronted with for years.

EN FOI DE QUOI les plenipotentiaires soussignés ont apposé leur signature au bas de la présente Convention.

ZU URKUND DESSEN haben die unterzeichneten Bevollmächtigten ihre Unterschriften unter dieses Abkommen gesetzt.

IN FEDE DI CEE i plenipotenziari sottoscritti hanno apposto le loro firme in calce alla presente Convenzione.

TEN BLIJKE WAARVAN de ondergetekende gevolmachtigden hun handtekening onder deze Overeenkomst hebben gesteld.

Fait à Rome, le vingt-cinq mars mil neuf cent cinquante-sept.

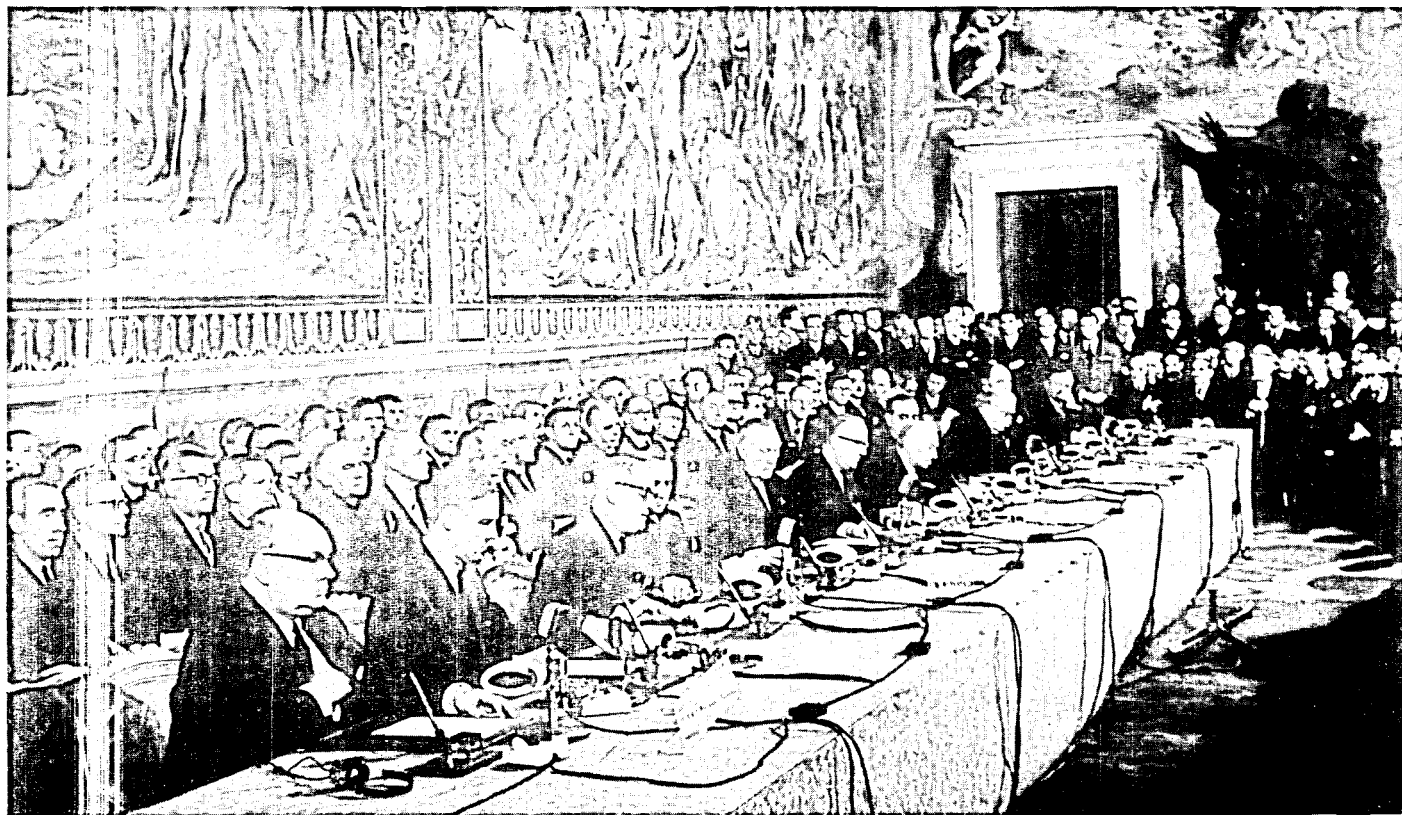
Geschehen zu Rom, am funfundzwanzigsten März neunzehnhundertsiebenundfünfzig.

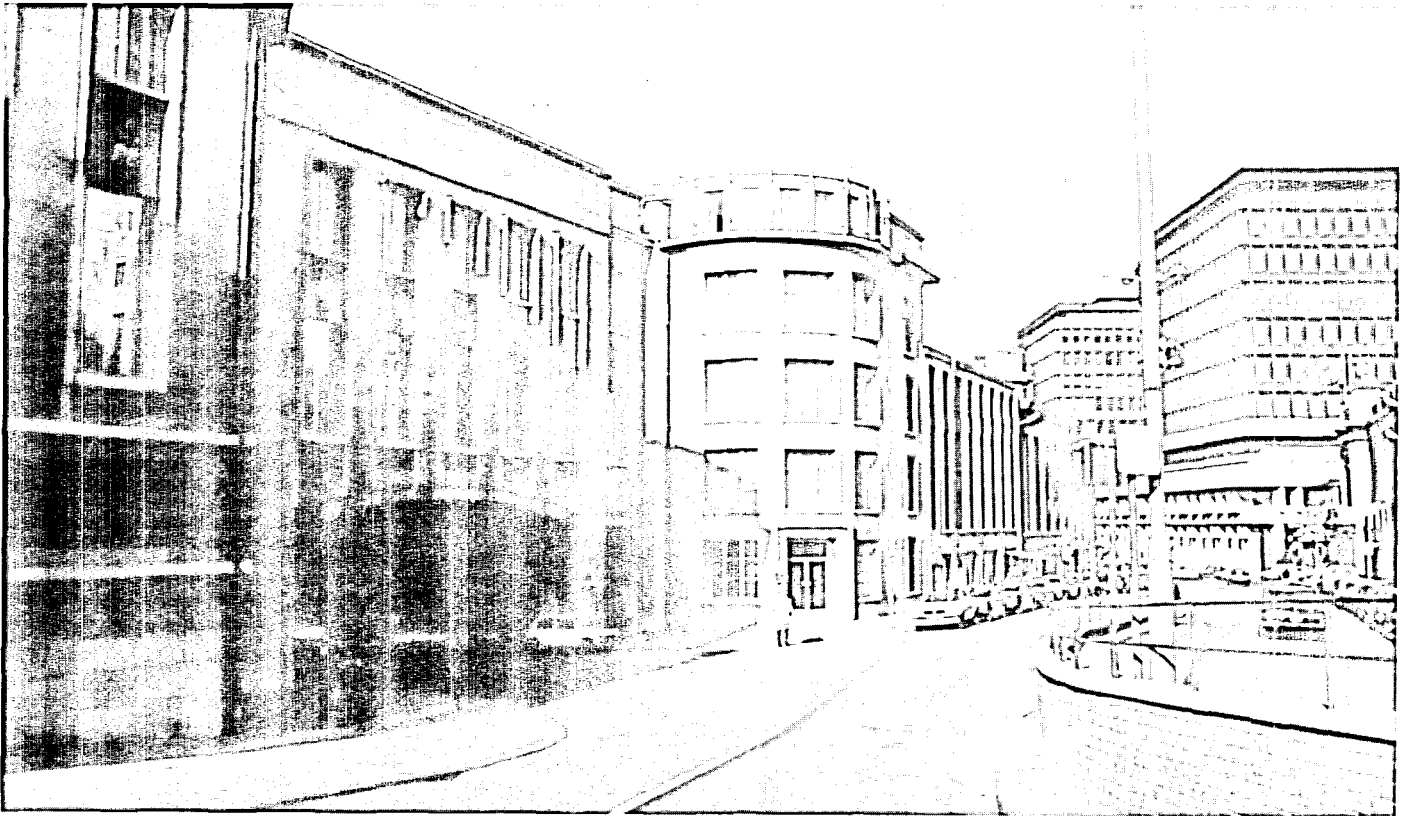
Fatto a Roma, il venticinque marzo mille novecentocinquantesette.

Gedaante Rome, de vijfentwintigste maart negentienhonderd seven en vijftig.

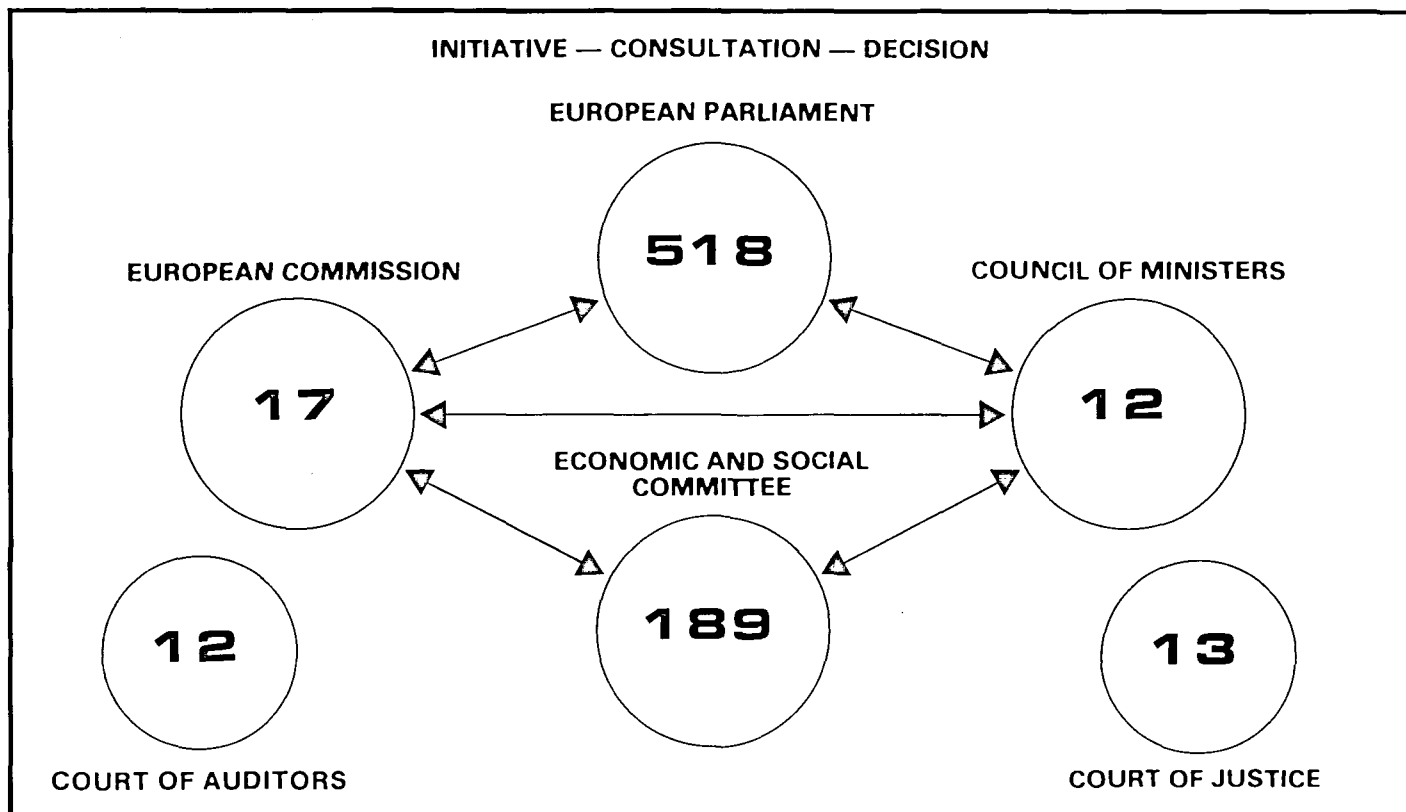
P. H. Spadolini *Spadolini*
Delors *Delors*
Sinn *Sinn*
Andriessen *Andriessen*
Berth *Berth*
Spadolini *Spadolini*

1957 — SIGNING OF THE ROME TREATY



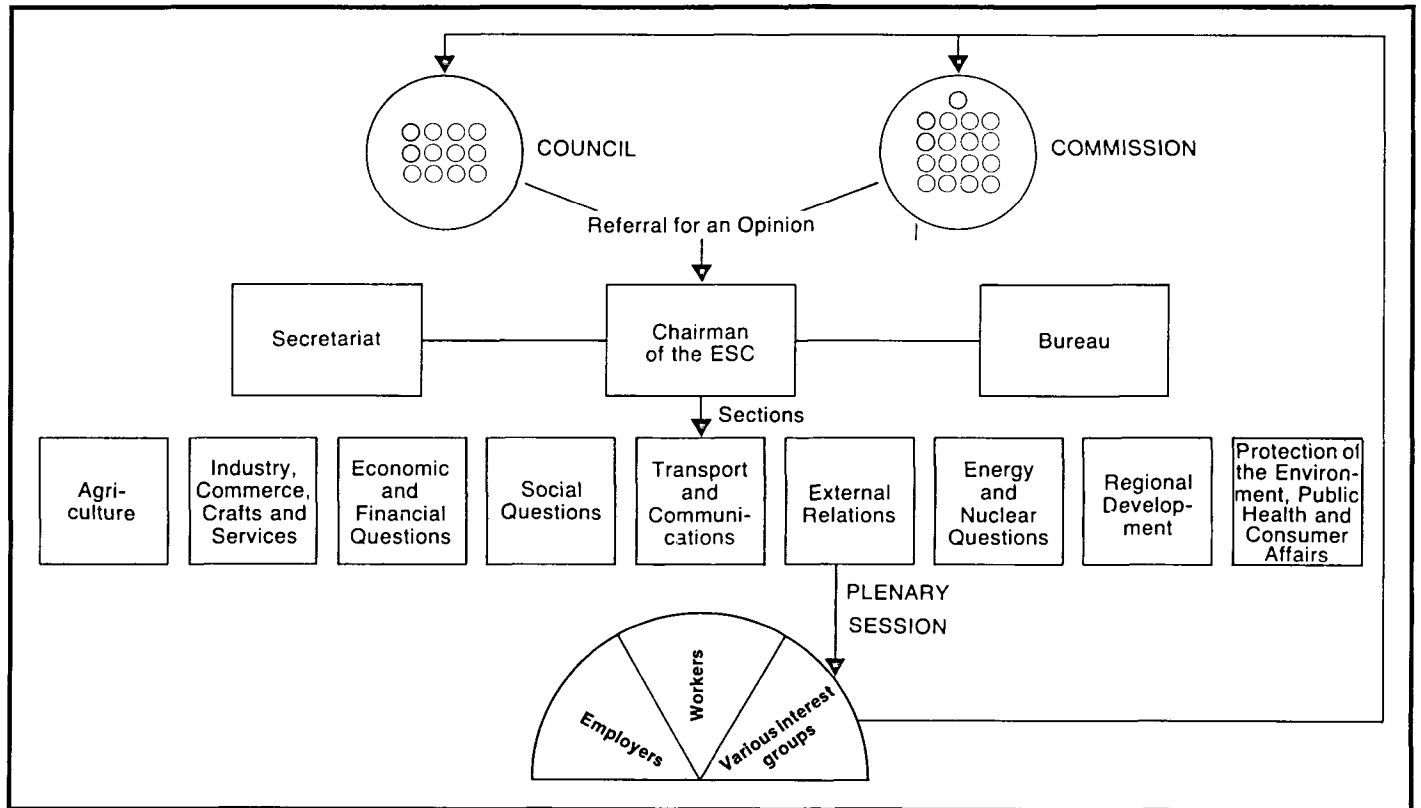


THE POSITION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AMONG THE INSTITUTIONS



THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

GENESIS OF OPINIONS



A CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY

The Economic and Social Committee, a Consultative Assembly of representatives of economic and social groupings in the Member States, forms an integral part of the European Community framework:

- **The Commission**

initiates and implements European legislation;

- **The Council**

decides — but, beforehand, the draft legislation is submitted to two representative assemblies:

- **The European Parliament,**

which has also budgetary and supervisory powers — and to:

- **The Economic and Social Committee,** which can also issue opinions on its own initiative.

The Economic and Social Committee was set up to involve the various economic and social interest groups in the establishment of the Common Market and give them an institutional vehicle for putting across their point of view on the various issues to the Commission and the Council.

The Committee consists of representatives of —

- **Employers (Group I),**
- **Workers (Group II),**
- **Various interest groups (Group III),** such as agriculture, transport, trade, small enterprises, the professions and consumers.

Its 189 members come from the 12 Member States as follows:

from Belgium	12
from Denmark	9
from France	24
from Greece	12
from Germany	24
from Ireland	9
from Italy	24
from Luxembourg	6
from the Netherlands	12
from Portugal	12
from Spain	21
from the United Kingdom	24

The members are proposed by the Member States' governments and appointed by the Council of the European Communities for a term of four years. They may be reappointed.

The Committee members live and work in their home countries and only come to Brussels for Committee meetings.

The Committee's *Chairman and Bureau* are elected by the Committee from among its own members for a term of two years. The Bureau, consisting of 27 members, has the job of organizing the Committee's work.



Roger Louet Secretary-General

Born Paris, 11 March 1926.

General Secretary of the Paris branch French trade union Confederation of Force Ouvrière (FO) 1954; National Secretary of FO in 1959; member of the French Economic and Social Council and Vice-Chairman of the Section for Social Questions. Member of the ILO Governing Body and delegate to the ILO annual conference for 14 years; Chairman of the central planning authority (training — qualifications); negotiator of major social contracts in France (Grenelle, etc.); Former reader at the Institut des Hautes Études de la Défense Nationale; One of the founder members of the EEC standing committee on employment; Director-General of the ESC from September 1973 and Secretary-General since 1979.

THE OTHER EUROPEAN ASSEMBLY

by Roger Louet, Secretary-General

Set up 27 years ago by the Treaties of Rome as the Economic and Social Committee of the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community, its first plenary session was held in May 1958 in Brussels.

The purpose of this consultative assembly is to involve all the economic and social interest groups in the decision-making process of the European Community. The Committee members are appointed by the Council of Ministers of the Community and drawn from the ranks of the most representative national organizations of employers, trade unions, farmers, the professions, the transport sector, commerce, small and medium-sized industries and crafts, not to mention consumers and other interests such as social welfare organizations and cooperatives.

Although the European man in the street knows little or nothing about the Committee, it nonetheless directly represents him through interest groups with which he can identify. The Committee's role complements that of the European Parliament, which is the political representative assembly.

Some people may ask why the Community needs two assemblies? The answer to that question can be found in the mirror of the national image. Indeed, in every Member State, the social partners, the two sides of industry, the interest groups, are consulted on matters of social and economic policy by the governments concerned. They exert a considerable influence nationally in the law-making process, either through constitutional bodies or through informal procedures. It would be inconceivable to leave them out of the decision-making process of the European Community.

Since its inception the Economic and Social Committee has grown considerably in stature. In 1972 it acquired the right to issue opinions on its own initiative, to publish all its Opinions, to open its doors to the public and the press. With the accession, first of the United Kingdom, Denmark and Ireland, and subsequently of Greece, members from these countries provided new blood.

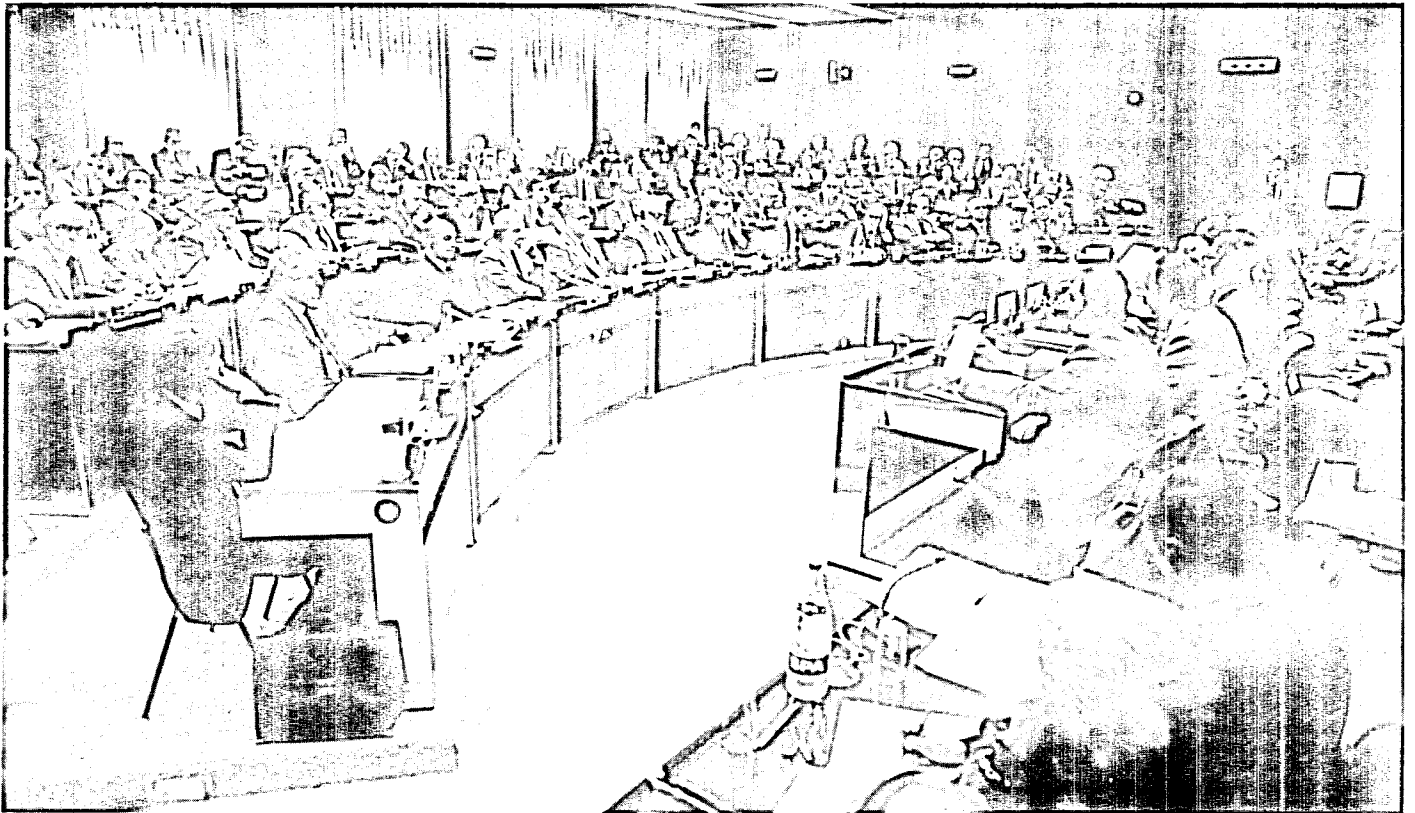
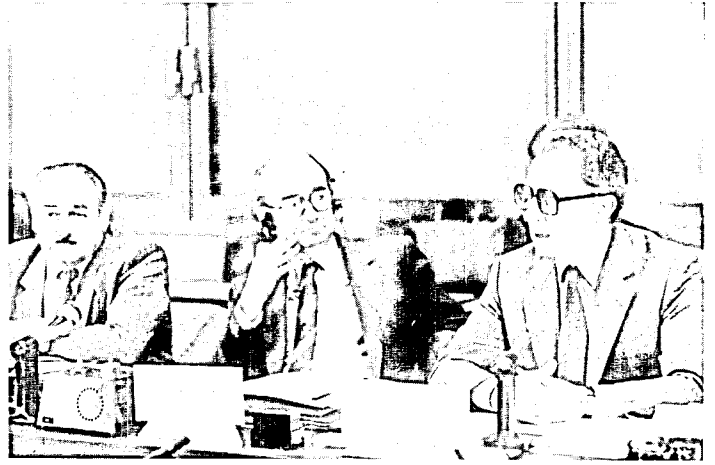
This process of rejuvenation was repeated with the accession of Spain and Portugal.

A new awareness of the significance of an institution such as the Committee

has accordingly grown up among the members themselves, and this has been further heightened by the current recession. This is in part the result of a lengthy process whereby the Committee has taken upon itself greater freedom of action. However, it is also a consequence of the widening gap which the Committee members have come to see between the political views and approach of the Council representatives and actual day-to-day economic and social developments.

Despite the acknowledged value of its work and its discussions, the Economic and Social Committee for a long time remained in the shade. It used to be regarded as the most unobtrusive of the Community institutions. The public knew next to nothing about it and it had very little impact on the Community's decision-making process.

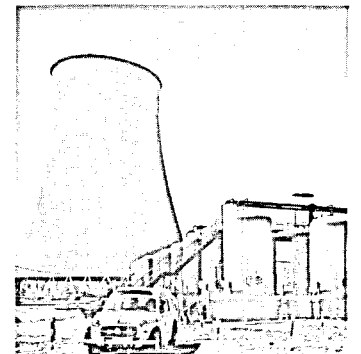
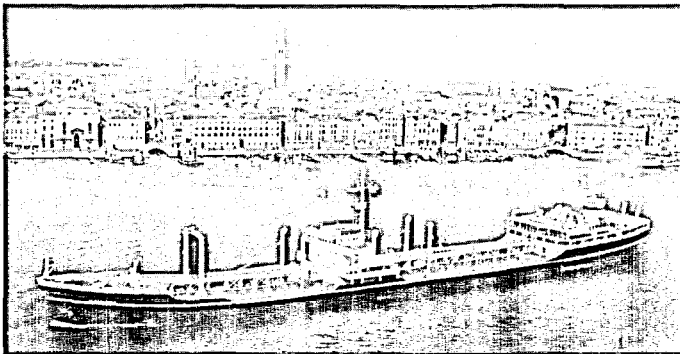
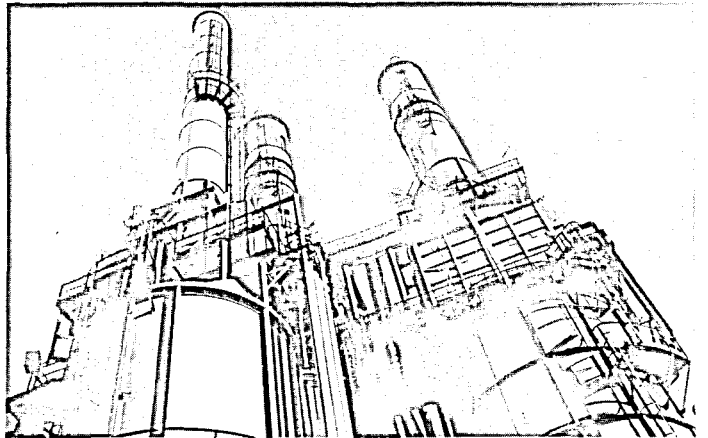
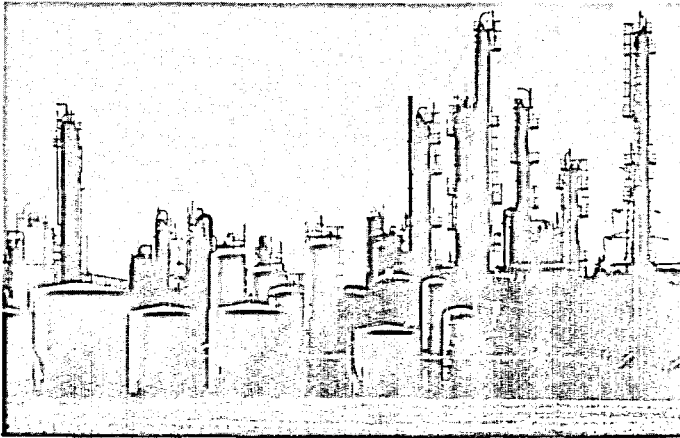
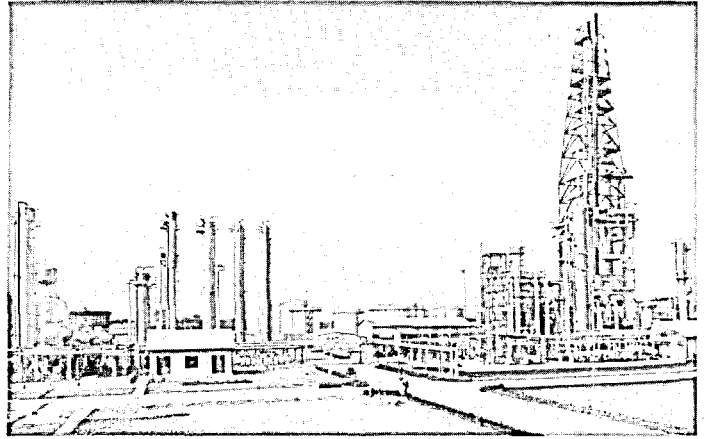
However, it is now becoming what it always should have been: the rallying point of the organized interest groups of Europe, a centre of economic and social discussion where contrasting ideas can be welded into a joint approach, and a source of information and education.



More and more, the Committee has become a goad for the other Community institutions, bringing forth new ideas, insidiously propagating them and urging Community and Europe-minded action. It is not infrequently the case that months later an idea that originally germinated in a Committee Opinion turns up again in a Commission proposal, and in due course becomes part of a Community directive.

The Committee's influence has grown with its activity, and with the progressively greater importance of the social and economic forces whose representatives sit in this assembly. This Committee which, in its early days used to meet four times a year, now holds a plenary session nearly every month. It consisted at first of 110 members and grew to 156 as a result of the accession of four new member countries to the Community. This number was increased upon the entry of Spain and Portugal. In the first three years of its existence, it was consulted on average five times per year. Now it delivers well over one hundred reports and opinions annually. In addition, it regularly organizes conferences on topical issues and receives thousands of visitors on fact-finding trips.

The Committee is a vital instrument of economic and social democracy which can do even more and better. The amount of influence it has depends to a large extent on the backing it receives from the economic and social groups whose interests it represents. It is to these groups particularly that this message is directed. They too have a role to play in the genesis of the Community and in the birth of a European Union, a role which will reflect their determination, right and willingness to become involved.



1. THE EMPLOYERS' GROUP

by Hans-Werner STARATZKE,
Group Chairman

The members of the Group from the 12 Member States of the European Community represent many fields: industry, wholesaling, importing, exporting, the retail trade, public-sector corporations, transport, banking and insurance, and agriculture.

While defending their legitimate interests, they make a major contribution with their knowledge and expertise towards decisions on all Opinions and initiatives which the Committee is called on to prepare.

In addition to the many specific duties it has in the economic and social field, the Employers' Group is particularly concerned to help solve the major problems facing the Community.

The Group strives vigorously to tackle rising unemployment with long-term measures to achieve balanced economic growth and create lasting jobs. To do this, the Community has to agree on a wide range of measures to promote investment and the development of new technologies, and put a stop to protectionist trends. The Employers' Group particularly supports Commission proposals aimed at expanding the free home market for goods and services by removing technical barriers more swiftly

and simplifying border formalities.

For this reason, it looks forwards to the introduction of a single customs document as a step in the direction of a Peoples' Europe.

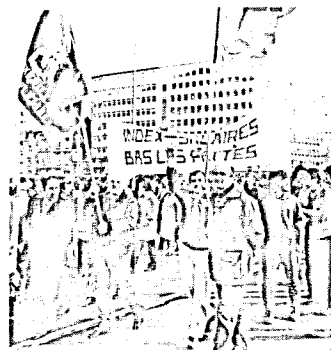
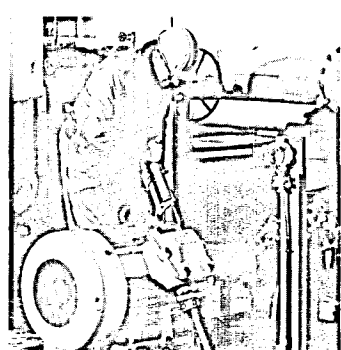
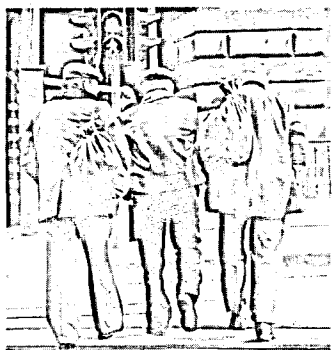
At this time of economic recession and dwindling enthusiasm for the Community, the Employers' Group calls for a new political drive for European integration. The Community's decision-making procedures must be made more democratic, and this means giving a more prominent role to the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee. In this context, the Group gives unqualified support for the improvement of working relations with the European Parliament.

Co-operation procedures between the Group and the Community's professional and trade associations are by now firmly established, and are being fully adhered to. Among the bodies with which the Group has close relations are UNICE (Union of Industries of the European Community), CEEP (European Centre of Public Enterprises), the Permanent Conference of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and the four wholesalers' and retailers' associations.



Dr Hans-Werner Staratzke

- After the war a close colleague of Ludwig Erhard. Appointed chief executive and later an executive director of the central body of the German textile industry.
- From 1965 to 1969 he was a member of the German Bundestag, where he chaired the Free Democrat working group on the economy, finance and taxation.
- In 1974, the West German government appointed him a member of the Economic and Social Committee.
- Since 1978 he has been Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee Employers' Group.
- In 1980 he was decorated by King Baudouin of Belgium for special services to European integration.



2. THE WORKERS' GROUP

by J.M. van Greunsven
Group Chairman



The ESC's Workers' Group represents workers and trade unions throughout the Community.

In recent years the members of the Workers' Group have tried through the ESC, with varying success, to make their mark on EEC decision making.

The main concern of workers in the present crisis is unemployment, which is rising alarmingly and at present numbers some 13 million victims throughout the Community (*). This problem, which has now assumed catastrophic proportions, should be tackled through an overall strategy, in the Group's view. Working men and women are well aware that no one country can overcome the crisis on its own; the only solution is a policy coordinated at European level.

Such a policy must be based on full employment and economic recovery, especially through the implementation of new investment programmes in various sectors accounting for around 1% of GNP. At the same time, workers want a Community coordinated approach to the question of shorter working hours, although without the autonomy of the

parties involved being affected in any way. As far as possible, workers' purchasing power should be maintained, particularly that of the weaker groups in society, and there should be no tampering with the protection which social security has to provide, especially for the less fortunate. Finally, it is the view of the Workers' Group that specific measures must be taken to provide jobs for women and young people.

Unless such a policy is got speedily off the ground, there is a good chance that workers will lose confidence in the Community. That workers are not only concerned with material issues is clear from the efforts of their representatives to bring about worker participation in decision-making throughout the Community, even in multinational companies and to ensure that workers are consulted and their interests are respected when new technologies are introduced.

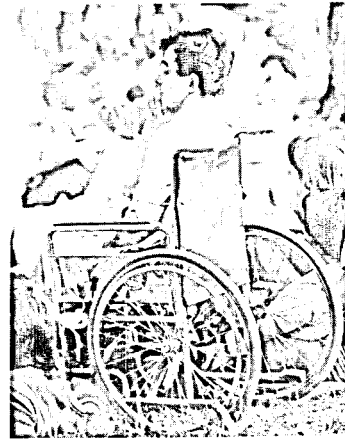
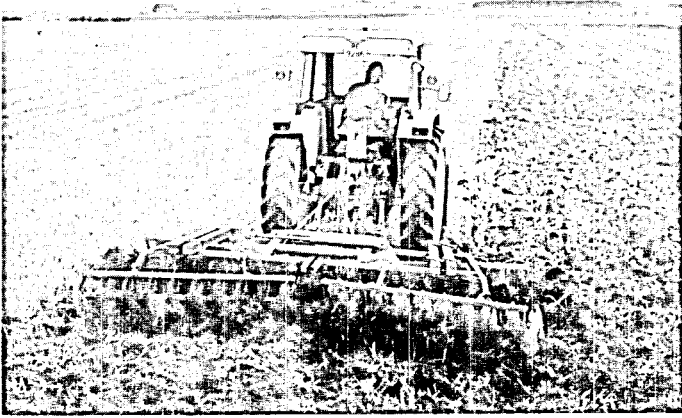
The Workers' Group attaches very great importance to European issues, but this does not mean in any way that it loses sight of the world issues which affect the developing countries in particular. Workers are pleased at the profound dialogue on development strategy which was recently conducted with the

ACP countries. The Group participated actively in the joint ACP-EEC discussions and welcomes the signing of the Third Lomé Convention as a major step towards the development of the Third World.

Mr J.M. van Greunsven

- Born in Tilburg (Netherlands) on 15 October 1929;
- 1 February 1960: Textile and Clothing Federation adviser with the Dutch Catholic Trade Union Confederation (NKV);
- 1963: Member of the NKV scientific advisory bureau;
- 1964: Director of the NKV scientific advisory bureau;
- 1973: Member of the NKV executive with special responsibility for international affairs;
- 1976: After the merger of the NKV with the Dutch Confederation of Trade Unions (NVV), member of the executive of the Dutch Trade Union Federation (FNV) with special responsibility for international affairs;
- February 1964: Appointed member of the Economic and Social Committee;
- From 1975 to 1978: Vice-Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee.

(*) excluding Spain and Portugal.



3. THE "VARIOUS INTERESTS" GROUP

by Mrs Käte Strobel,
Group Chairwoman



As its name implies, Group III is made up of the representatives of a variety of interests — farmers, consumers, small business, the craft trades, the professions and the sciences as well as family associations and the environmental and transport lobbies. Committed representatives of local and regional interests complete the Group's list of members.

Because of the Group's composition, special emphasis is placed on the interests of the public at large as well as on an understanding of other members' interests and respect for their independence.

Group III members play a full part in the preparation of all ESC Section Opinions and Reports. Naturally, the Group specializes in providing Section Chairmen, Bureau members and Rapporteurs for economic issues of particular interest to the small business sector, and more generally for agricultural, Mediterranean, environmental-protection, consumer, medical, scientific, energy, social and cultural questions.

The Group's commitment to Europe is self-evident but is borne out by its close links with the Community-level associations to which the national organizations represented on Group III are affi-

liated, and by its monthly publication "EUROPE III" which is sent to corresponding associations and contains a news section on Community-level organizations.

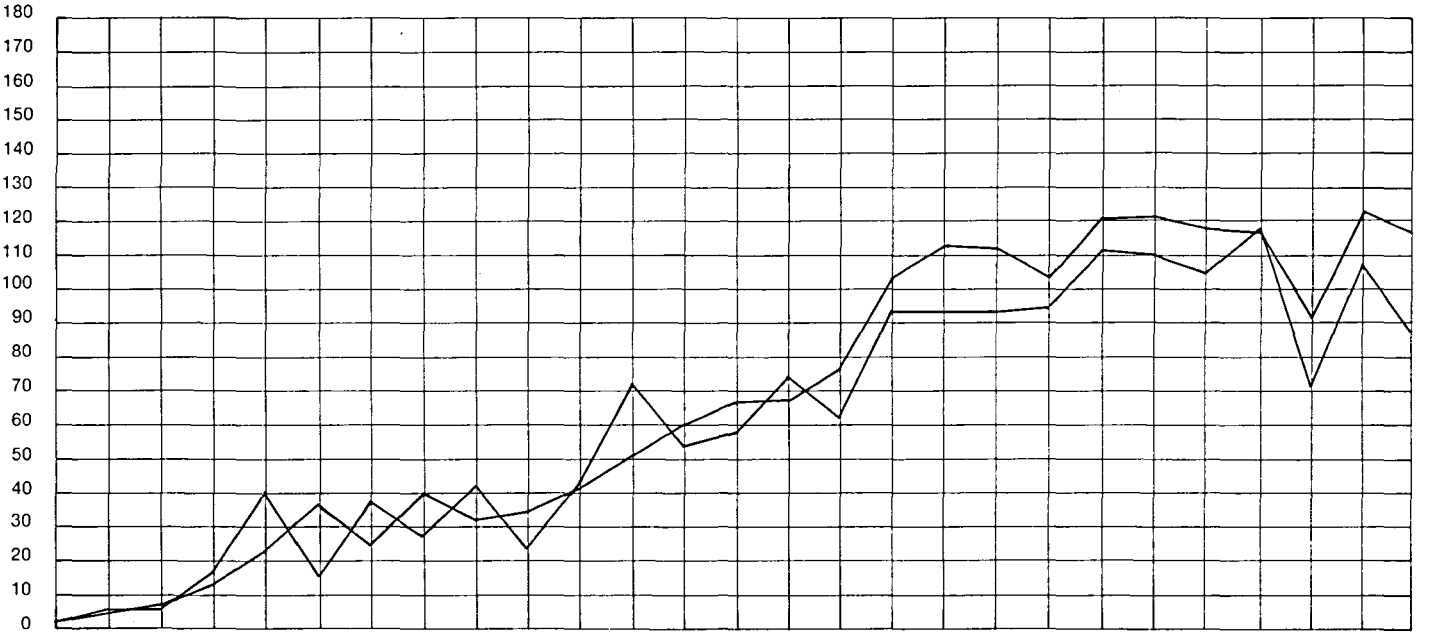
Mrs Käte Strobel

has been the Chairwoman of Group III since 1980. She was a member of the German Federal Parliament for twenty-three years (from 1949 to 1972), a member of the European Parliament for eight years, the German Federal Minister for Youth, Family and Health Affairs for six years and a city councillor in Nuremberg for a further six years.

In her different jobs, Mrs Strobel has always fought for the consumer and shown a special interest in health policy, food legislation, trade policy and family policy. As Vice-President of the European Parliament and its agricultural committee she focussed her attention on the Common Agricultural Policy.

TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS

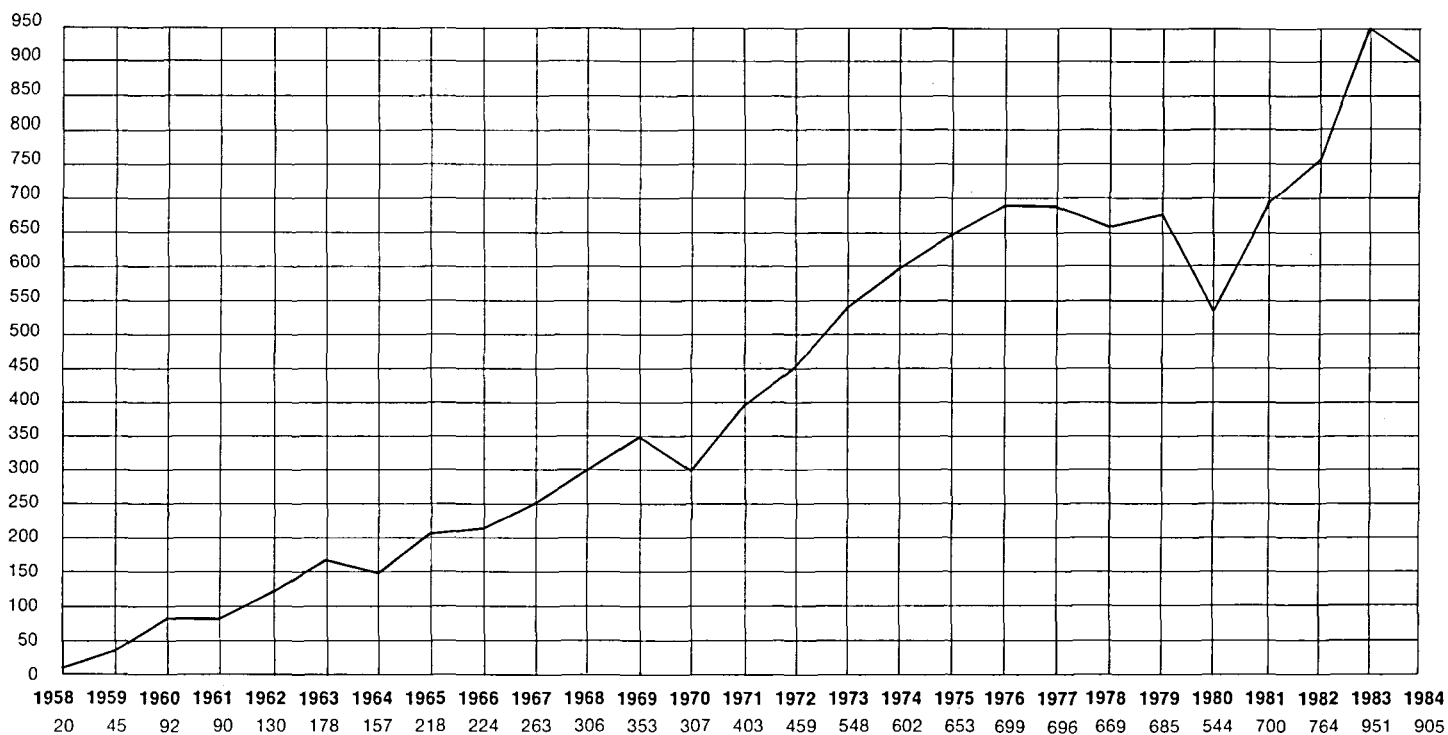
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 B — REFERRALS



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F EXPANSION

MEETINGS

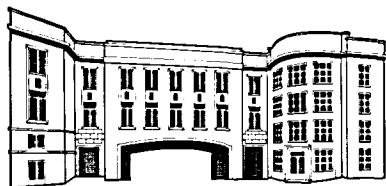


Some instances of Committee opinions and studies which made a specific contribution to Community legislation and thinking

- Unemployment in the Community (February 1976)
- Coordination of employment policy instruments (March 1976)
- The disposal of dangerous wastes (February 1977 + April 1978)
- EEC's transport problems with Eastern bloc countries (June 1977)
- Community Nuclear Safety Code (1977)
- Part-time work (May 1978)
- Present monetary disorder (June 1978)
- Frontier workers (January 1979)
- EEC shipping policy and flags of convenience (April 1979)
- Weights and dimensions (January 1980)
- Dangers of radiation and safety of workers (1980 + 1981)
- Organization and Management of Community R & D (February 1980)
- Revision of the European regional development Fund (April 1981)
- Community Competition policy (April 1981)
- Safety Aspects of Recombinant DNA work (May 1981)
- Problems of the Handicapped (July 1981)
- Agricultural aspects of Spain's accession (September 1981)
- Protection of workers against asbestos (September 1981)
- Consultation of employees (January 1982)
- The EEC's external relations (January 1982)
- The Action Programme on environment (May 1982)
- Relations between the EEC and the United States (October 1982)
- Common Transport Policy (October 1982)
- Small and medium sized enterprises (1974, 1977, 1983)
- Promotion of Positive Action for Women (November 1984)
- Technological Change and Social Adjustment (September 1984)
- Social Security (October 1984)
- Specific Community Action to combat Poverty (November 1984)

Conferences

- Conference on the Enlargement of the European Community (June 1980)
- Conference on the Construction Industry (September 1980)
- Conference on Genetic engineering (May 1982)
- Conference on the Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (January 1983)
- Conference on Europe and the New Technologies (November 1984)



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