THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION: OPPORTUNITIES SEIZED; PROBLEMS UNRESOLVED THE EUROPEAN

Stephen George
Jean Monnet Professor
Department of Politics
University of Sheffield
England.

PAPER PRESENTED TO THE BI-ENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY STUDIES ASSOCIATION (ECSA), CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA, MAY 1995

Summary

During the years of Jacques Delors' presidencies, and indeed going back to before 1985, the European Commission very successfully played the role of policy entrepreneur. This is not an original assertion, but it has been contested, so in Part 1 of the paper the concept of policy entrepreneur is defined, and evidence is assembled that the Commission did play that role in a number of policy sectors. A distinct strategy is discerned which the Commission pursued.

The success of the Commission in acting as a policy entrepreneur extended the scope of integration and of its own competences. However, as well as provoking something of a backlash post-Maastricht, the success of the Commission in seizing opportunities only added to problems that had been identified much earlier in the history of the Commission and had never been adequately resolved. These problems relate to the managerial and implementation capacities of the Commission. Part 2 of the paper reviews these problems, and some recent solutions that have been proposed to them.

INTRODUCTION

Just over two years ago, when Neill Nugent and I started work on a book on the European Commission (George and Nugent, forthcoming), it would have seemed absurd to talk of the Commission being in crisis. It had just come through a period of unprecedented success under the Delors presidencies, re-emerging as an effective supranational actor to such an extent that it was even suggested that the neofunctionalist theories of integration, which had appeared dead following the 1965 crisis and the subsequent period of Eurosclerosis, had not been so wrong after all (Tranholm-Mikkelsen, 1991).

A few years later there are distinctly black clouds over the Breydel building. Partly of course this is due to the problems over the ratification of the Maastricht treaty, and the part that the Commission played as scapegoat for those traumatic events. Partly they are the result of the uncertainties caused by further enlargement of the EU. Partly, though, they result from a whole series of problems internal to the Commission, which have been present for a long time, but have never been effectively addressed.

This paper starts with what some would see as the positive side of the story: the achievements of the Commission in seizing the opportunities offered by change to play the role of policy entrepreneur to extend both the scope of European integration and its own competences. Having established that there is a distinct strategy that can be traced through the published research on a number of policy areas, the paper turns in Part 2 to its second concern, with the problems of implementation and management of policies, problems that have not been adequately addressed despite having been identified many years ago, and which have been exacerbated by the successes of the entrepreneurial strategy identified in Part 1.

PART 1. OPPORTUNITIES SEIZED: THE COMMISSION AS POLICY ENTREPRENEUR

To argue that the Commission under Delors acted as a policy entrepreneur to extend the scope of European integration and its own competences is hardly original. So far as the crucial breakthrough of agreement on the single market programme is concerned, it rapidly became almost an accepted view that:

> The renewed drive for market unification can be explained only if theory takes into account the policy leadership of the Commission (Sandholtz and Zysman, 1989: 96).

However, this interpretation was vigorously contested by Andrew Moravcsik (1991) who argued that the process leading to the Single European Act (SEA) was simply one of intergovernmental bargaining. According to Moravcsik, the Commission's White Paper on the single market was 'a response to a mandate from the Member States' rather than 'an independent initiative from a policy-entrepreneur' (Moravcsik, 1991: 45-8). He subsequently elaborated a theoretical framework that identified constrained bargaining between national governments as the key to understanding policy-making in the EC (Moravcsik, 1993). The main constraints on governments came from the international system and from domestic politics.

Moravcsik's position is open to criticism on a number of fronts. I have argued elsewhere (George, 1994) that he seriously underestimates the extent to which the domestic constraints on governments are themselves influenced by the operation of transnational and transgovernmental networks of elites, within which the European Commission plays a central, and sometimes even a co-ordinating role. That argument will not be rehearsed again here, but it does connect with the criticism outlined below, that Moravcsik does not properly understand what is implied in the concept of a policy entrepreneur.

Policy Entrepreneur

An entrepreneur is somebody who recognises and exploits market opportunities, not somebody who creates such opportunities. 'Policy entrepreneur' is therefore a good phrase to describe the activities of the Commission in setting the agenda of the EU. The Commission does not necessarily create opportunities for new initiatives: it can, though, exploit the opportunities that already exist.

The single market programme can be used as an illustration of this process. Before assuming office in January 1985, Delors spent much of the autumn of 1984 casting around for a 'big idea' that would provide a focus and an impetus for the incoming Commission (Grant, 1994: 70). Institutional reform, monetary union, and defence co-operation were all considered, but eventually the completion of the single market was chosen.

There were two main reasons for this decision. First, extensive consultations indicated that each of the other possibilities would be strongly resisted by the governments of some Member States, but the opening up of the European market would command general support. Indeed, there was already a momentum underway to dismantle the barriers that were fracturing the market and hindering economic development. Second, Delors believed that market integration would inevitably bring other important issues onto the agenda. For example, it would only be possible to pass all the laws necessary to complete the single market if there was a reform of the decision-making process; and movement towards a more integrated market would raise the question of monetary integration.

So, Delors was instrumental in giving the single market objective a high priority. He promoted it in the early months of his presidency through speeches, interviews, and in his dealings with national governments. He encouraged the members of the European Round Table of Industrialists to bring pressure to bear on governments to support the single market programme, so utilising a transnational network to push forward the issue. He commissioned the Cecchini Report (Cecchini et al 1988) of leading European economists to put the weight of technical experts behind the project.

The issue was already on the agenda, but Delors singled it out and pushed it to the top of that agenda. He acted as a policy entrepreneur, recognising an opportunity to promote a policy that went with the grain of existing thinking, that would increase the level of integration between the Member States, and that would put other integrative measures onto the agenda in its wake.

A Strategy for the Commission

A number of case studies in addition to the single market programme indicate that a similar strategy was used by the Delors Commission on more than one occasion to drive forward the process of integration. Indeed, the pattern of the strategy can be seen at work before 1985 in the activity of Etienne Davignon under the Thorn Commission. Davignon utilised transnational networks and technical expertise to launch the drive for a technological research programme for the EC. His approach was followed and refined by the Delors Commission in a number of policy sectors, including telecommunications and energy.

Technology Policy

The actions of the Commissioner for Industry in the Thorn Commission, Etienne Davignon, were a precursor of the strategies followed by the Delors Commissions. Delors presented the single market programme as a response to a changing international situation which had reduced the competitiveness of the European economy, and so posed problems for European governments. Davignon had earlier responded to growing concern about the lack of global competitiveness of the European information technology (IT) industry in the early 1980s. A balance of payments surplus in this sector in 1975 had turned into a deficit by 1982, and by 1985 European firms were providing only 40 per cent of the European market and only 10 per cent of the global market (Sharp, 1989: 207).

Davignon exploited this problem by calling into existence a policy network at the European level. He invited senior figures from Europe's leading IT firms to meet together in the 'Big 12 Roundtable' to discuss how the Japanese and US challenge to Europe's technological base might be countered (Sharp and Shearman, 1987: 47-9). The solution that was formulated within the meetings of the Round Table was to try to organise a collaborative programme of pre-competitive research at the European level. The model was the way in which the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) had organised collaborative technological research between leading Japanese companies.

> Thus, the Commission helped to engineer an industrial consensus for new collaborative schemes, was supported by industry in urging the transfer of authority over technology policy to the EC level, and was ultimately able to convince governments to launch the Esprit programme in 1983. (Peterson, 1991: 276)

Esprit was the first of a number of collaborative research programmes which were eventually rolled up into the Research Framework Programmes. The strategy by which a start was made in extending the competences of the Commission and the scope of European integration was to exploit a problem of international competitiveness, and create support for a European solution by calling into existence a transnational network of producers which could put pressure on individual governments to accept a European solution to the problem. The same techniques were later used to push forward the single market. Delors added the utilisation of technical experts in the form of the economists who prepared the Cecchini report. We can see these same techniques at work in the case of two other policy sectors, telecommunications and energy, with new features of the strategy also appearing.

Telecommunications

Originally part of the general concern with information technology, telecommunications came to be treated as a separate policy area by the Commission from approximately 1982 onwards. It is another example of an issue placed on the agenda of the EC by external developments being seized upon by the Commission to establish a common policy.

Telecommunications in Europe was dominated by national monopoly suppliers, the Post, Telephone and Telegraph (PTT) public utilities. Attempts by DG XIII to insert itself into the sector prior to 1982 proved fruitless. It was a sector dominated by national policy communities, which collaborated at the international level to preserve the status quo.

An opportunity was opened for the Commission by the implications of deregulation of the telecommunications market in the United States in the early 1980s. This led to pressure from the government of the United States for the EC to open its markets for telecommunications equipment. AT&T, which had been forced to open up its domestic operations, was anxious to recoup lost revenue by moving into Europe, and IBM was looking to diversify into what promised to be an increasingly profitable market (Dang-Nguyen et al, 1993: 103).

The Commission responded by establishing a Task Force on Telecommunications, based within DG III, but with members drawn from DGs XIII, IV, and XII. The Task Force tried to get national producers to agree to co-operate in the interests of developing an effective European response to the American challenge. It picked up on an idea that had been floated in other forums in the 1970s by technical experts, but which had made little progress: that there should be an Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) for the whole of Europe. This avoided attacking the monopoly position of PTTs in the supply of traditional telephone services, so allowing them to be co-opted into a transnational network that would promote a joint European response in the new technological areas of the sector.

In this the Task Force was not particularly successful. The PTTs were resistant to co-option. However, through the use of technical experts the Commission did manage to create a momentum in favour of a European response. It commissioned a number of reports on how Europe was losing out to the United States following US deregulation, and used these to build a momentum in the same way that Delors and Cockfield had used the Cecchini Report on the 'Costs of Non-Europe' (Cecchini et al, 1988) to build up momentum for the internal market. Although the reports were mainly prepared by American experts (Dang-Nguyen et al, 1993: 104), the Task Force also co-opted onto technical advisory committees the experts who had originally advocated the ISDN (Fuchs, 1994: 105). These committees formed 'epistemic communities' (Dang-Nguyen et al, 1993: 181-2) that acted as a counter-weight to the hostility of the management of the PTTs.

The emerging policy network was broadened to bring in producer groups, UNICE, and the Information Technology User Group (INTUG), which had an interest in seeing an increase in the efficiency and a decrease in the cost of telecommunication services. To get around any attempt by the PTTs to sabotage the process by failing to establish common technical standards, the Task Force asked CEN, which was already working on the harmonisation of a whole range of other technical standards, to add this to their agenda (Fuchs, 1994: 105).

A new element in the strategy was that the Commission tried to ride its project on the back of the successful Esprit and single market programmes. The Esprit programme had grown out of a general acceptance that there needed to be European-level intervention in IT research. The Commission consistently developed a discourse in which telecommunications were spoken of as a sub-sector of IT. Yet, 'the industrial and political situation in telecommunications was strikingly different from that of IT in general (telecommunications being one of the more competitive sectors of the European economy)' (Fuchs, 1994: 181).

The Commission's discourse on telecommunications also drew heavily on the 1992 single market programme. It was assumed in the terms of the Commission's approach that a single market required a common infrastructure, of which telecommunications would be a part. Thus the creation of a European policy for telecommunications gathered momentum by association with the 1992 programme (Fuchs, 1994: 181).

Having established the legitimacy of a European policy for the sector, the Commission produced a Green Paper on the Development of the Common Market for Telecommunications, Services and Equipment in 1987. This discussion document became the basis for the development of a policy in the sector much as the White Paper on the internal market had been the basis for the 1992 programme. It advocated deregulation and increased competition, proposals that were consistent with developments in those Member States that had begun to respond to the problem at national level.

The Green Paper advocated the separation of regulation of the sector from operation of the system, a reform that had already been introduced in Britain, France, and Germany; and the introduction of Open Network Provision (ONP), so that rival operators could compete using a common infrastructure. A concession to the PTTs was that they would remain in control of the provision of network services.

In 1988, the year after the publication of the Green Paper, DG IV issued an administrative directive on the liberalisation of the terminal equipment market, arguing that it had the right to act without specific approval by the Council of Ministers because it was acting in pursuance of Article 90 paragraph 3 of the Treaty of Rome (EEC), under which the Commission is charged to ensure that special rights conferred on national companies by their governments do not prevent the completion of the common market. Although the Council of Ministers had approved the Green Paper, which listed liberalisation of the market amongst its objectives, France, Belgium, Germany, and Italy took the Commission to the European Court of Justice, alleging that it had exceeded its powers by not seeking the approval of the Council for the directive. In March 1991 the Court found in favour of the Commission.

Dang-Nguyen, Schneider, and Werle interpret this incident as evidence of a conflict between the interventionist philosophy of DG XIII and the free-market philosophy of DG IV, and state that: 'The Directive was issued by DG IV without consulting DG XIII' (Dang-Nguyen et al, 1993: 108). However, given the internal procedures of the Commission on consultation of all DGs with an interest in a sector, it is difficult to see how this could have been the case.

An alternative explanation is that the directive was another new element in the strategy of the Commission as policy entrepreneur. In effect DG IV was playing the hard-man to DG XIII's soft-man. Faced with the prospect of an enforced opening of telecommunications monopolies by DG IV's exploitation of Article 90 of the Treaty, the PTTs were more likely to co-operate with a negotiated process under the auspices of the Task Force. The Commission adopted exactly this pattern of action as one of its techniques to create a European competence in the energy sector.

Energy

According to Matlary (1993), a similar approach was used to push forward a common energy policy. The opportunity that was initially exploited was the momentum created by the single market programme. An open market in energy was part of the White Paper on the single market, but the opposition of national monopoly suppliers led to it being excluded from the SEA. However, the Commission returned to the issue in 1989, making proposals for a phased dismantling of national monopolies over the electricity grids and gas supply networks.

It was unlikely that the national monopolists themselves would support such moves, but the Commission was able to mobilise the support of large industrial users of energy, working through the existing institutionalised networks of the Union of Industries of the European Community (UNICE) and the Round Table of Industrialists.

In the struggle between the national monopoly suppliers and the Commission to influence governments, Matlary suggests that transgovernmental networks and networks of technical experts were also important in supporting the Commission:

> states' interests were ... subject to modification through the networks in the policy bargaining, where the participants in these networks at least acted as a sort of 'intervening variable' between the states and the Commission in their capacity as bureaucrats and/or experts. (Matlary, 1993: 395)

At the same time as the proposals for a phased dismantling of national monopolies were being negotiated, DG IV was stepping up its attacks on monopolistic practices using its powers under Article 90 of the EEC Treaty. As in the case of telecommunications, the vested interests resisting integration were faced with a choice between a free-market hard-man approach from DG IV or a negotiated soft-man approach from another DG, in this case from DG XVII.

The linking of energy policy to the single market programme was apparent too. In April 1991 Sir Leon Brittan, the Commissioner for Competition Policy, said that there were two sectors that were vital to the internal market, telecommunications and energy (Matlary, 1993: 107). As well as linking the opening of energy supply to the single market programme, Matlary suggests that the Commission used the internal energy market as a starting point to build an agenda for a common energy policy. Although deregulatory in itself, the internal energy market implied increased competences for the Commission in implementing the rules on common access to national grids, and in managing the financing of major new energy infrastructure in the less advanced economies of the EC. In addition, by linking energy developments to concern about the environmental effects of burning fossil fuels, the Commission endeavoured to mark out a role for itself in the environmental protection field, which was ultimately embodied in the TEU. This process Matlary (1993: 40) calls 'agenda building through linkages'.

In the energy sector, then, the Commission can be seen playing a significant role as 'the major driving force' behind the internal energy market (Matlary, 1993: 384) and the central role in the formulation of policy and in the development of the common energy policy (Matlary 1993: 395).

Conclusion to Part 1.

If the role of policy entrepreneur is understood not as creating opportunities for new initiatives, but as exploiting the opportunities that already exist, the Commission can be seen to have performed this role very effectively in the policy areas outlined above. A clear and consistent strategy emerges, which has the following elements:

* identifying a problem that has already started to concern governments, and proposing a European solution;

* utilising, and if necessary creating, transnational networks of producers to provide allies in the private sector who will bring pressure to bear on governments to adopt a European solution the problem;

* utilising technical experts to increase the pressure on governments;

* adopting a discourse that links progress in the chosen sector with successes in other sectors, particularly the single market programme - what Matlary calls 'agenda building through linkages';

* breaking down opposition by threatening the use of existing powers under the competition clauses of the Treaties if actors in the sector will not co-operate to find a negotiated way forward.

Using these techniques the Commission under Delors was able to increase the scope of integration, and to a certain extent increase its own competences. However, the very success of the strategy exacerbated problems in the capacity of the Commission to ensure the implementation of common policies. It is to those problems that I turn in the Part 2 of the paper.

PART 2. PROBLEMS UNRESOLVED: THE COMMISSION AS IMPLEMENTER.

As demonstrated in Part 1, much of the effort of the Commission has been devoted to making proposals to further the process of integration. According to interviews conducted during the research for our book (George and Nugent, forthcoming) individuals have tended to be rewarded on the basis of being good proposers, and the best and most ambitious individuals have tended to seek appointments in DGs concerned with policy-formulation rather than with policy-implementation.

Implementation tasks have increased considerably in recent years as a result of the 1992 programme and other successful policy initiatives launched by the Delors Commissions. As Majone (1990) and others have pointed out, the freeing of the internal market implies de-regulation at the national level, but requires re-regulation at the EU level since markets do not regulate themselves. The addition of social and environmental legislation has added more tasks which have to be performed at the European level.

This has presented something of a problem for the Commission, because it is an institution that has adapted in the most part to act as a proposer of legislation rather than an implementer. It has long been argued that the two functions require different types of organisational structure, which Coombes (1970) identified as organic and mechanistic organisations.

In October 1991 the Secretary General of the Commission, David Williamson, admitted to the institution's failings on implementation in a lecture to the Royal Institute of Public Administration in London. He argues that the Commission had to enhance its capacity to manage the post-1992 EC, but it could not do this by becoming a central monolith. The only way he could see to make the European Community system work well in the medium term was to have a closer meshing together of the European and the national public services in administrative and operational terms. A new partnership should be developed modelled on co-operation in the collection of customs duties; and secondments and staff exchanges should be increased (Hennessy, 1991).

Two themes emerged from this lecture: that the Commission needed improve its own implementation procedures, without becoming a monolith; and that for most purposes the Commission had to manage the EC in partnership with national implementation agencies.

Implementation as a Challenge for the Future

The Break-up of the Monolith.

One proposal for improving implementation that was mentioned by Williamson was to create agencies along the lines of the Next Steps initiative in the UK. Williamson was cautious about going in this direction, lest such agencies conflict with the policy decisions or broad executive authority of the Commission (Hennessy, 1991).

On this theme, Metcalfe (1992: 120) notes that the Commission has many of the characteristic weaknesses of national civil services: a hierarchical structure in which vertical lines of authority are more highly developed than horizontal links, leading to over-centralization and problems of co-ordination within as well as between DGs. The problems were identified in the Spierenburg Report, which was produced in 1979, but:

> The report had little impact and did not lead to action. (Metcalfe, 1992: 125)

Another effort was made in the mid-1980s, focusing on the modernization of the internal management of the Commission, and initiated by Commissioner Henning Christophersen. It did raise awareness about management deficiencies, but did not produce significant changes. The record of reform has not been good. The Commission has come late to the process of modernising public management which has taken off in western states since the early 1980s, a central element of which has been decentralisation of decision-making on implementation.

A more radical proposal to break up the monolith of the Commission is floated by Vibert (1994), who agrees with the view outlined above that: 'The Commission is not well organised to manage because it has put its greatest effort into its political role as initiator ... rather than into management' (Vibert, 1994:2). He is quite clear that political direction should be given to the EU not by the Commission but by the European Council and the Council of Ministers, while the Commission should concentrate on its managerial tasks. To facilitate this he advocates unbundling the tasks of the Commission into three main areas: a Single Market Commission, a Treasury Board, and an External Trade Commission. In addition, he would transfer the implementation powers of the Commission over competition policy and over the application of trade instruments such as anti-dumping measures to independent agencies. The Commission's role as implementer of aid policy would be transferred to the European Investment Bank and the EBRD.

Vibert's justification for breaking up the Commission is that: 'These are quite different functions that require different terms of reference and different professional skills' (Vibert, 1994: 13). There is no justification for them being handled by a single authority. At the same time, the reorganisation would allow functions that overlapped to be handled in a more co-ordinated way than they tended to be within a Commission that is divided into 'fiefdoms and functionally organised directorate-generals' (Vibert, 1994: 13).

For Vibert the viability of the single market is the key to the future prosperity of the EU, and he therefore wishes to see a Single Market Commission that would be under the supervision of the Single Market Council and would bring together those DGs that deal with sectoral, environmental, employment and social affairs. Although the membership of the Single Market Council might vary, involving Ministers for Industry, Economics Ministers, or Ministers for Enterprise, depending on the organisation of the individual Member States, the oversight would be by ministers with a general responsibility for competitiveness in the single market, not sectoral ministers who might be tempted to pursue an agenda that would benefit vested interests in their particular sector.

The Treasury Board would take over the work of the Financial DGs, XIX (Budget), XX (Financial Control) and XXI (Customs Union and Indirect Taxation) along with the main spending DGs. This

Board would be overseen by the Council of Finance Ministers, one of the main advantages being that the hands of Finance Ministers would be strengthened against colleagues pressing for more spending. A Trade Commission would take over the functions of DG I relating to external trade, but the negotiation of new trade agreements would be handled by a special trade representative appointed by the Member States, not by a Trade Commissioner.

Competition policy would be administered by a separate free-standing agency, a Competition Authority, which would investigate and adjudicate on all competition, monopoly, and merger cases currently handled by the Commission. This Authority, rather than the Trade Commission, would take over the work of the directorates of DG I dealing with 'trade instruments' and non-tariff barriers. It would not be accountable directly to any Council of Ministers, but Vibert would allow the Council a political over-ride of decisions of the Authority by an 80 per cent majority (Vibert, 1994: 16).

As well as focusing the work of the Commission clearly on its management functions, and ensuring a greater degree of transparency and accountability, Vibert's proposals would professionalise the management of the new structure. Specialists would be appointed to the different agencies. In addition, new pay and personnel practices could be introduced. While the Competition Authority would have to match pay-levels in the private sector to attract those with the relevant experience, pay in the other agencies need not exceed national levels of civil service pay. Further to reduce the power of the staff unions, Vibert would move away from a permanent European civil service and only allow staff to hold five-year contracts, with only one renewal allowed.

While these suggestions are radical, they are only a particularly far-reaching form of the now common idea that in order to perform its implementation functions more adequately the Commission needs to be decentralised. Proposals which stop far short of Vibert's, but which may well point in the direction of breaking up the monolith of the Commission are very likely to be tabled at the forthcoming 1996 IGC. In particular the creation of separate agencies to deal with merger control and some other functions where the Commission acts as sole implementer is very likely to be floated.

Implementation as Governance

Merger control is one of a very few implementation tasks that the Commission handles alone. In most other areas it is dependent on national implementation authorities, which is why Williamson called for closer co-operation with such authorities. Metcalfe (1992) develops a similar line of argument.

While the Commission is dependent on national bureaucracies for effective implementation of EC policies (Metcalfe, 1992: 124), it does not have the resources to ensure effective performance, lacking both staffing levels and information; and it is inhibited from becoming directly involved in implementation by an unwillingness to compromise its right to invoke legal sanctions for non-compliance (Metcalfe, 1992: 126).

Under these circumstances, Metcalfe believes that it is necessary for the Commission to learn to function as the manager of European networks. Government is becoming increasingly interdependent, and the Commission is incapable of managing European integration by itself. What it can do is function as a network organization to prompt the development of organizational capacities and inter-organizational co-ordination. Although he does not use the phrase, what Metcalfe is talking about here is the process of 'governance', or governing in a situation where there is a variety of actors who share responsibility for the implementation of policies rather than a single clearly identifiable unitary authority (Rhodes, 1995).

The problem that remains is how such governance is to be organised. The example of co-operation between the Commission and national agencies given by Metcalfe is also one that was quoted by Williamson: the collection of customs duties. However, according to Ludlow (1991: 108) the annual reports of the Court of Auditors indicate that this cannot be said to be working well. The monthly financial statements on revenue collected had by 1988 become so useless that the Commission ignored them. The Italian government had still not told the Commission how much it had collected on its behalf in 1987 by the start of 1989. This is hardly a convincing example of effective governance, yet there seems to be no other model available.

Conclusion to Part 2.

There is a wide consensus, and considerable evidence, that the Commission is less adept at performing its implementation functions than it is at proposing new measures. At the same time there is sometimes a failure on the part of observers to note the limitations on the implementation powers of the Commission. It only has independent powers of implementation in a limited range of issues. It is true that there is room for considerable improvement in its performance of these functions, and although the Santer Commission appears to be addressing this problem, remains a problem that is unresolved, so it is likely that proposals for decentralisation of the Commission will be tabled at the 1996 IGC.

However, over most of the range of implementation issues, the Commission is dependent on national agencies. This means that one central problem to be addressed is how to achieve co-operation between the Commission on the one hand and national agencies on the other. Simply leaving implementation to national agencies is insufficient to achieve uniformity across the territory of the EU, and the level playing field of competition which it is the objective of the single market programme to achieve. It is in essence a problem of how to achieve effective 'governance' in a situation where there is no single recognised authority with sovereign jurisdiction over the implementation of policy in a particular territory: it is also a problem that remains unresolved.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

In the mid-1990s the future agenda of the EU remains crowded. There are still many issues connected with social and environmental protection which need to be addressed. Monetary union looms large on the horizon, as does further enlargement. At the same time, more has been agreed in the preceding decade than anyone would have predicted in 1984. The framework for the single market has been negotiated, and largely incorporated into national law where necessary. What remains is to ensure that the new rules and procedures are implemented evenly and effectively across the EU. This poses a task for the Commission as guardian of the treaties which it is ill-equipped to perform. Suggestions such as that of Metcalfe (1992) that the Commission should emerge as the co-ordinator of implementation networks are too imprecise to form more than a starting point for an agenda of reform. As the 1996 IGC approaches this is one of the most important issues that governments, and the Commission itself, need to address.

REFERENCES

Cecchini, P. with Catinet, M. and Jacquemin, A. (1988) The European Challenge: 1992. The Benefits of a Single Market (Aldershot: Wildwood House).

Coombes, D. (1970) Politics and Bureaucracy in the European Community (London: George Allen & Unwin).

Dang-Nguyen G., Schneider V., and Werle, R. (1993) 'Networks in European Policy-Making: Europeification of Telecommunications Policy' in S.S. Andersen and K.A. Eliassen (eds), Making Policy in Europe: The Europeification of National Policy-making (London: Sage) pp. 93-114.

Fuchs, G. (1994) 'Policy-making in a System of Multi-level Governance - the Commission of the European Community and the Restructuring of the Telecommunications Sector' Journal of European Public Policy 1: 177-94.

George, S. (1994) 'Supranational Actors and Domestic Politics: Integration Theory Reconsidered in the Light of the Single European Act and Maastricht' Sheffield Papers in International Studies No. 22 (Sheffield: Department of Politics, University of Sheffield).

George, S. and Nugent N. (forthcoming) The European Commission (Macmillan)

Grant, C. (1994) Delors: Inside the House that Jacques Built (London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing).

Hennessy, P. (1991) 'Public servant of a new world order' Independent 14 Oct.

Ludlow, P. (1991) 'The European Commission' in R. O. Keohane and S. Hoffmann (eds) The New European Community: Decisionmaking and Institutional Change (Oxford: Westview) pp. 85-132.

Majone, G. (ed) (1990) Deregulation or Re-regulation? Regulatory Reform in Europe and the United States (London and New York: Pinter).

Matlary, J. H. (1993) Towards Understanding Integration: An Analysis of the Role of the State in EC Energy Policy, 1985-1992 (Oslo: PhD Thesis, University of Oslo)

Metcalfe, L. (1992) 'After 1992: Can the Commission Manage Europe?' Australian Journal of Public Administration 51:

Moravcsik, A. (1991) 'Negotiating the Single European Act: National Interests and Conventional Statecraft in the European Community', International Organization 45: 19-56.

Moravcsik, Andrew (1993) 'Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach', Journal of Common Market Studies 31: 473-524.

Peterson, J. (1991) 'Technology Policy in Europe: Explaining the Framework Programme and Eureka in Theory and Practice', Journal of Common Market Studies, 29: 269-290.

Rhodes. R.A.W. (1995) The New Governance: governing without government (London: ESRC/RSA).

Sandholtz, W. and Zysman, J. (1989) '1992: Recasting the European Bargain', World Politics, 42: 95-128.

Sharp, M. (1989) 'The Community and the New Technologies' in J. Lodge (ed) The European Community and the Challenge of the Future (London, Pinter Publishers), pp. 202-220.

Sharp, M. and Shearman, C. (1987) European Technological Collaboration (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul)

Tranholm-Mikkelsen, J. (1991) 'Neofunctionalism: Obstinate or Obsolete? A Reappraisal in the Light of the New Dynamism of the EC' Millennium, 20: 1-22.

Vibert, F. 'The Future Role of the European Commission' European Policy Forum Discussion Paper (London and Brussels: European Policy Forum).