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BIOGRAPHY

THE EARL OF BESSBOROUGH, D.L.

Lord Bessborough, the first British Vice-President of the old European Parliament, now a member of the House of Lords Select Committee on the European Communities, is a man of many interests and activities. In his earlier years he was more interested in the arts and humanities, but later concerned himself more with science and technology, its organisation, and what is called "science of science". As a member of the Conservative Government from October 1963 he was concerned with it as Parliamentary Secretary with Lord Hailsham; in 1964 as Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education and Science and from 1964-70 as Conservative Opposition spokesman for science and technology. He initiated major debates in the Lords on the governmental organisation of scientific research, European technological cooperation and Aerospace. At the same time he was also an Opposition Spokesman on Foreign and Commonwealth affairs and Overseas Aid.

On the return of the Conservatives to office in 1970 he became Minister of State (Aviation) at the Ministry of Technology, and from 1971-73 was Chairman of the Committee of Enquiry into the Research Associations which produced the report on cooperative industrial research, generally endorsing the conclusions of the Rothschild report and the Customer-contractor principle.

In December 1972 Lord Bessborough was designated by the House of Lords a member of the British delegation to the European Parliament and appointed Joint Deputy Leader of the European Conservative Group to Sir Peter Kirk. He was elected the first British Vice-President early in 1973

and continued as an active member of the Parliament's Committees on Budgets, Energy and Research, and as rapporteur on a wide range of European technological questions including Aerospace, Shipbuilding, Coal promotion and Data processing.

As a member of the Bureau of the Parliament he was much involved with the organisation of its debates and was Chairman of the Committee concerned with problems arising from the dual mandate - the difficulties inherent in belonging to both a national and the European Parliament. He was also Deputy Chairman of the Behrendt Committee which drew up a draft statute for directly elected members of that Parliament.

As a member of the Government, the Opposition and the European Parliament, Lord Bessborough has travelled widely and lectured in many parts of the world on Britain's scientific and industrial achievements. As a member of the Budgets Committee of the Parliament he was concerned with Community aid to the Friuli earthquake area in North East Italy, and on energy and trade questions visited the U.S., the People's Republic of China, Roumania and Saudi Arabia. He has taken an especial interest in the conclusion of the Trade Agreement between the Community and the People's Republic.

Lord Bessborough has been a member of the House of Lords since 1956, when he succeeded his father to become the 10th Earl. Before that, he was well known as Viscount Duncannon, and prominent in many international movements such as the British Society for International Understanding and the Atlantic Treaty Association, having been Chairman of the body from which that Association was formed - the Internatio:

Atlantic Committee - a rival of the Cominform.

Born in March 1913, Lord Bessborough was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, and spent some time in Canada where his father was Governor-General. He stood for West Islington in the General Elections in 1935, and from 1936 to 1939 was Secretary to the League of Nations High Commission for Refugees helping to set up camps for Jewish and non-aryan emigrants from Nazi Germany and arranging for their settlement overseas. He served in the Army throughout the Second World War, in France and Flanders, on tank gunnery research, and as a Liaison Officer in West and North Africa with the staffs of Generals Giraud and de Gaulle. After the liberation of France he joined the Foreign Service, and for five years was 2nd and then 1st Secretary in the British Embassy in Paris, serving with both Sir Duff Cooper and Sir Oliver Harvey.

During the 1950s Lord Bessborough worked with a firm of merchant bankers, and was director of various companies connected with music, television and broadcasting, including Associated Television. He advised the Pye Group of Companies on overseas television and communications and played an important part in establishing the Bagdad television station - the first in the Middle East - as well as the London-Moscow television link. In the 1960s he made several visits to the USSR, including Eastern Siberia.

Deeply interested in the arts, he is President of the Chichester Festival Trust, which he helped to form, and an author of plays and memoirs.

He married in 1948 and has a daughter. His mother is a member of a distinguished French Protestant banking family and his wife an American, born in Philadelphia. He is a Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur, an Officer of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and a member of the Royal Institution. He is also

a Deputy Lieutenant for West Sussex, and President of the
Conservative Association of the Chichester Division.