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Summary of the address
given by Mr Peter M. Schmidhuber, Member of the European Commission,
at the Rheinland-Pfalz Delegation in Bonn on 21 June 1990

"Federalism and the EC - Should the Basic Law be restructures?"

In Mr Schmidhuber's opinion, the Intergovernmental Conference on Political Union should accord priority to the following areas :

- the distribution of powers between the Community and the Member States; in this context, consideration might be given to Mr Giscard d'Estaing's proposal for granting the Community exclusive legislative competence or the power to pass framework legislation;
- implementation of the principle of subsidiarity; should this principle not be enunciated in the list of attribution of powers, the question would arise of whether to include a specific reference to it in the Treaties - as the European Parliament had unanimously requested - so that it could be interpreted by the European Court of Justice;
- the reduction of the "democratic deficit" at Community level, in particular the granting of more legislative power to the directly-elected European Parliament, greater democratic legitimacy and tighter control of the Commission, the possibility of enhancing the role of national parliaments, including the question of setting up a second chamber, and conferring more rights on "European citizens" (e.g. voting rights);
- defining the role of provinces and regions with their own legislative powers in the process of constructing the Community;
- redefining the financial autonomy of the Community and the further development of its system of finances.