

'Valéry Giscard d'Estaing: "The election will bring Europe closer to its citizens"' from 30 jours d'Europe (March 1976)

Caption: Valéry Giscard d'Estaing gives his opinion on the direct elections to the European Parliament.

Source: 30 jours d'Europe. dir. de publ. FONTAINE, François ; Réd. Chef CHASTENET, Antoine. Mars 1976, n° 212 (numéro spécial). Paris: Bureau d'information des Communautés européennes. "Valéry Giscard d'Estaing: L'élection rapprochera l'Europe de ses citoyens", p. 37.

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Valéry Giscard d'Estaing: 'The election will bring Europe closer to its citizens.'

During an interview with the newspaper *Nice-Matin* on the day before his recent meeting with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, Mr Giscard d'Estaing focused primarily on the future of the European Parliament:

'If the Community has overcome the obstacles arising from enlargement and from the economic crisis, it is, to a significant degree, thanks to the creation of the European Council which was determined in late 1974. That institution, in my view, is the driving force behind European policy.'

The decision to organise the direct elections to the European Parliament was taken during a European Council meeting. That is an innovation, the importance of which must be neither exaggerated nor underestimated. It must not be exaggerated since the present European Parliament is already the result of election by universal suffrage, albeit indirect, and this electoral procedure was envisaged by the Treaty of Rome.

Nor must it be underestimated, since the direct consultation of the people will bring Europe closer to its citizens. The real issue, as I see it, has less to do with the way in which the European Parliament is elected but rather with the way in which it carries out its duties. Of course, in our view, it must do so in accordance with the framework outlined by the Treaty of Rome.'