

Mauro Ferri, The Ad Hoc Committee on Institutional Affairs and its activities

Caption: In March 1985, Mauro Ferri, representative of Bettino Craxi, Italian Prime Minister, on the Dooge Committee, summarises the work done by the Ad Hoc Committee from the time when it was established by the Fontainebleau European Council (June 1984) until the submission of its final report on institutional affairs.

Source: Archives historiques des Communautés européennes, Florence, Villa Il Poggiolo. Dépôts, DEP. Emanuele Gazzo, EG. EG 139.

Copyright: (c) Translation CVCE.EU by UNI.LU

All rights of reproduction, of public communication, of adaptation, of distribution or of dissemination via Internet, internal network or any other means are strictly reserved in all countries.

Consult the legal notice and the terms and conditions of use regarding this site.

URL:

http://www.cvce.eu/obj/mauro_ferri_the_ad_hoc_committee_on_institutional_affairs_and_its_activities-en-516a52f3-0c3f-4621-9e11-2fff2933a03c.html



Last updated: 05/07/2016

The Ad Hoc Committee on Institutional Affairs and its activities

As you know, the European Council decided at its meeting in Fontainebleau at the end of June last year to set up a special committee to produce proposals for improving European integration and political cooperation. This was clearly an extremely broad mandate, open to various interpretations, and the Committee's first problem was consequently to interpret it. Fortunately, the political interpretation vigorously advocated by Maurice Faure and myself won the day, that is to say the Committee decided not to get bogged down in a series of specialised documents, more technical than political, on various Community problems. The political interpretation meant that the Committee had to produce general indications and, above all, political options to put to the European Council. It set about doing so and it was decided to present what was already a politically significant provisional report setting out the main options at the European Council meeting in Dublin in December. The European Parliament has taken note of this report and has welcomed it, confirming that it is substantially in harmony with the broad outlines and with the spirit of the Parliament's own draft Treaty. Representatives of seven of the ten countries are agreed on the main options contained in the report, which naturally also have the support of the successive representatives of the President of the Commission, Frans Andriessen in the interim report phase and Carlo Ripa di Meana in the following phase.

The Committee is now putting the finishing touches to the final report, which should be approved before 15 March so that it can be examined briefly by the European Council in Brussels and more fully at the European Council meeting to be held in Milan on 29–30 June, where the necessary decisions can be taken. We are therefore in the home stretch and the final report will naturally maintain the political options already set out. The Greeks, the Danes and the British, however, will probably still have reservations and it is to be feared that they will take steps — indeed, the British in particular are already making a very persuasive case — to ensure that the terms of the European Council's mandate to the Intergovernmental Conference are as vague and as little binding as possible, and this is a danger we must avoid. Strictly speaking, the Dooge Committee's task will be completed once the final report has been approved, but there are some who now think the Brussels European Council should extend the Committee's mandate and expressly instruct it to prepare the definition of the Conference itself.

This is how matters stand at present. The course of events in the next few months will depend on political factors largely outside the Committee's control. All the available political forces must therefore be mobilised by June, because the European Council, as a political body, is bound to feel the weight of public opinion, of the political forces that have been marshalled, parliaments, parties and so on. I have the impression that this action is already under way. The local authorities, the Association of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, are already doing a splendid job. It is simply a matter of carrying on the good work and perhaps working even harder.

Mauro Ferri

Representative of the President of the Italian Council of Ministers on the Dooge Committee