

Interview with Pierre Pescatore: the Court of Justice of the European Communities, a privileged forum (Luxembourg, 12 November 2003)

Source: L'apport de la PESC à l'action extérieure de l'Union européenne (discours pour l'Université du Luxembourg)/Université du Luxembourg, cycle de conférences, semestre d'hiver 2006-2007 / JIM CLOOS, directeur des questions de politique générale au Secrétariat général du Conseil de l'Union européenne, prise de vue : François Fabert.- Luxembourg: CVCE [Prod.], 30.11.2006. CVCE, Sanem. - VIDEO (00:45:40, Couleur, Son original).

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URL:
http://www.cvce.eu/obj/interview_with_pierre_pescatore_the_court_of_justice_of_the_european_communities_a_privileged_forum_luxembourg_12_november_2003-en-f401bb22-7195-4460-98cc-c8f9347ae0a1.html



Last updated: 05/07/2016

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[Susana Muñoz] Did you have the impression that you were working within a privileged forum when you were at the Court of Justice?

[Pierre Pescatore] Absolutely! An unbelievable privilege — and I do not know whether anyone was more aware of that than I — being there, every day, in a multinational milieu, being able to speak freely with colleagues of the highest intellect. At the Court of Justice, I had colleagues so intellectually gifted that it was hard to keep up with them. I freely acknowledge that several of them were more intelligent than I, and I did my best to keep up with them. Every day, for 18 years, I was able to have these discussions with my colleagues; I could use the facilities of the Library and of the Documentation Centre and enjoy the opportunities for broadening intellectual horizons. I was able to play a very active role in the work of the Court, which was becoming more well known, and enjoy all imaginable facilities available at any time.

I am still able to use the information technology facilities because, when I left the Court, I made a sort of agreement with the then President of the Court, Lord Mackenzie Stuart, and the then Registrar. We agreed that, in terms of the services that the Court could offer me, I would always be considered a member of the Court. So I can use the library, the documentation and research services and the photocopying service, and I am suitably grateful. The documents that I have given you have been produced for me by the Court's photocopying service without restriction. The fact that I can visit the Court in this way enables me to consider myself a member still, not active, of course, but still here at the Court.

When I compare the limited facilities of the national courts with the extraordinary resources of the Court of Justice, I have to say that it is really a privilege to have entered into that kind of legal and intellectual temple. I was able to combine my university and research work with my work at the Court. So it is truly the perfect place. I think that we are even better provided for than the International Court of Justice, which is also very well set up and supported, but I think that we are even better off. It is the most privileged forum in the whole world.