

Interview with Hubert Ehring: the atmosphere at the Château de Val Duchesse (Uccle, 25 October 2006)

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[Étienne Deschamps] Was it a stimulating experience? Was there a feeling that you were participating in something new, something that was original and full of promise? Have you retained a clear memory of a particular atmosphere?

[Hubert Ehring] Not in every delegate's case. There were delegates who were conservative, you know. There were also delegates, in certain delegations, who loathed the idea that the State could surrender part of its sovereignty to a supranational institution. You could feel this. It existed. I cannot say that the atmosphere, which was an extremely good one, was the result of any lack of difference in viewpoints among the delegations. Of course, it is self-evident that the German delegation was more favourable. When a firm collapses and it receives an offer to merge with other firms, it is not going to lament any loss of independence incurred.

In other delegations, however, there were elements from both camps, but they carried out the task allotted them by their Government with total commitment and the atmosphere was, I should say, almost cordial. I have only the fondest memories of the atmosphere there, including the walks that we took in the splendid grounds of Val Duchesse in order to think about the proposals, the proposed texts.