

Interview with Pierre Pescatore: the organisation of the intergovernmental negotiations (Luxembourg, 10 September 2003)

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[Étienne Deschamps] How, precisely, were the intergovernmental negotiations of the Six organised at Val Duchesse?

[Pierre Pescatore] Yes, that is an important question. These were actually diplomatic negotiations, since our task was to create a framework that was new compared to the already existing ECSC. From the diplomatic point of view, this conference was organised at three or four levels. Thus, in the middle, there were the Heads of Delegation and then, above them, the Foreign Ministers and the Prime Ministers. Below the Heads of Delegation, three groups responsible for the substance of the negotiations had been set up: the ‘Common Market Group’, which dealt with everything that was later to become the Treaty of Rome, the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community; the Atomic Group, which enjoyed particular importance at that time, since it was thought that that was the future — it interested above all the French Delegation, which had committed itself utterly to these specific negotiations, much more than to those concerning the Common Market; then there was the group lacking a precise name, sometimes called the ‘Drafting Group’ or also the ‘Legal Group’, which, as a rule, consisted of six lawyers, each representing a Member State, or rather, the States that were taking part in the negotiations. Germany had three representatives: one delegate from the Federal Foreign Office, one delegate from the Ministry of Justice and one delegate from the Ministry of the Interior who was there as an observer on behalf of the *Länder*. This was the structure within which the negotiations took place, so the entire substance of the negotiations was dealt with within the three groups. After that, the result went up to the Heads of Delegation, and it was only when it was necessary that the Foreign Ministers, and once or twice the Prime Ministers, were called upon. That was the moment when the custom of also holding Prime Ministers’ meetings was adopted — actually, it was about the Overseas Territories, if I remember correctly, perhaps also the agricultural policy — but everything else was negotiated at the lowest level and then sent up to the Heads of Delegation. Another important point was the Secretariat of this Intergovernmental Conference. To run the Secretariat, they chose the Secretary, or Secretary-General, of the ECSC Council of Ministers, my compatriot and former colleague Christian Calmes, with whom I had a very good working relationship. Fundamentally, this was the key to the effectiveness of my work within the Legal Group.