

LIB  
328  
.3094  
WES









(3)

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE  
Department of Political and Social Sciences

THE FORMATION OF A 'EUROPEAN POLITICAL ELITE'?;  
THE BRITISH IN THE DIRECTLY-ELECTED EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, 1979-1992

Martin Westlake

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the  
Degree of Doctor the European University Instituté  
Department of Political and Social Sciences

Examining jury:

Prof. Maurizio COTTA (Università di Siena)  
Prof. David MARQUAND (University of Sheffield)  
Prof. Roger MORGAN (European University Institute)  
Prof. Philip NORTON (University of Hull)  
Prof. Rudolf WILDENMANN (Universität Mannheim) (Supervisor)

October 1992

Florence

European University Library



3 0001 0012 3630 8

LIB  
328.3094  
WES



EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE  
Department of Political and Social Sciences

THE FORMATION OF A 'EUROPEAN POLITICAL ELITE'?;  
THE BRITISH IN THE DIRECTLY-ELECTED EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, 1979-1992

Martin Westlake

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the  
Degree of Doctor the European University Institute  
Department of Political and Social Sciences

Examining jury:

Prof. Maurizio COTTA (Università di Siena)  
Prof. David MARQUAND (University of Sheffield)  
Prof. Roger MORGAN (European University Institute)  
Prof. Philip NORTON (University of Hull)  
Prof. Rudolf WILDENMANN (Universität Mannheim) (Supervisor)

October 1992

Florence

3283094



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Long neglected, though never entirely abandoned, this thesis has had a lengthy gestation period, and the list of acknowledgements is correspondingly long. In the first place, I must thank my supervisor, Professor Rudolf Wildenmann (Mannheim University), whose benign patience and considerable powers of faith have finally paid off! Grateful thanks go also to Professor Roger Morgan, who generously agreed to act as my current supervisor within the EUI. I would like to thank Luciano Bardi (Bologna University), who did so much to bring the European University Institute Survey of the European Parliament to fruition, and Bob Danziger and Sieglinde Schreiner-Linford (both of the European University Institute) who, in addition to their crucial roles in the Survey team, have been extraordinarily generous to me with their time and technical expertise. My grateful thanks go to James Hanning, who helped to administer the questionnaire to the United Kingdom MEPs and conducted the pre-tests in London, and to Maureen Lechleitner and Liz Webb, without whom the Survey would never have seen the light of day. I would like to extend my gratitude to all those who were involved in the EUI EP Survey and the members of the EUI Department of Political and Social Sciences, and in particular Peter Mair, who read and commented on an early draft of much of the first part of the thesis; Vincent Wright, who was generous to me, both at the EUI and at Nuffield College, Oxford; Ian Budge,

who clarified several methodological problems and was helpful with Essex University leads; and Philippe Schmitter, particularly in the context of his Winter 1985 Workshop on 'Political Approaches to Regional Integration in Western Europe'.

Thanks must also go to the members of the ECPR Workshop on the future of party government at Aarhus University in 1982, and of the EUI's 1983 Summer School in Political Science, where parts of this thesis were first presented, and particularly to the organiser of the latter, Constance Meldrum.

Two conferences organised by the Trans-European Policy Studies Association have been of great help. The first, on 'The Strategy of the Newly-Elected European Parliament', was held in Strasbourg on 11 & 12 October 1984. The second, 'Beyond Traditional Parliamentarism: The European Parliament in the Community System', was held in Strasbourg on 17 & 18 November 1988.

I would like to extend special thanks to: Professor Emil Kirchner (Essex University), who has been a generous host and intellectual guide, both at Essex University and as a Jean Monnet Fellow at the European University Institute; Roy Pryce (Federal Trust), who read several early drafts of parts of this thesis while a Visiting Fellow at the European University Institute; and David Robertson (St Hughes College, Oxford) who, as a Visiting Professor at the European University Institute, introduced some much-needed intellectual rigour to my labours. I should also thank Derek Hearl



and Professor Ivor Crewe (Essex University), Kevin Featherstone (University of Bradford), Wolfgang Wessels and Otto Schmück (Institut für Europäische Politik, Bonn), David Butler (Nuffield College, Oxford), Paul Jowett (London), Lieven de Winter (Leuven University), Professor Joseph H.H. Weiler (Harvard University) and Professor Jacques Pelkmans (Maastricht), all of whom helped at one stage or another.

Since leaving the European University Institute, I have benefitted from the advice and expertise of a number of learned individuals. Chief among these has been my friend and colleague, John Fitzmaurice (EC Commission and ULB, Brussels). Himself the author of several books and innumerable articles on the European Parliament, he has been a constant and prolific source of ideas, information, and constructive criticism. I owe him a considerable intellectual debt, and count myself lucky and honoured to have worked with him.

I would also like to thank Professor Jacques Vandamme (University of Leuven and TEPSA President) who, without pretending to any specialised knowledge of the European Parliament per se, has been an enthusiastic, critical and generous sounding board for many of the ideas in the thesis, particularly those relating to institutional relations and development.

I have also benefitted from the generously-shared knowledge of a number of friends and acquaintances in and about the European Parliament. I would particularly like to thank (in alphabetical order); Timothy

Bainbridge, John Biesmans, Kieran Bradley, Richard Corbett, Christian Huber, Quintin Huxham, Francis Jacobs, Richard Moore, Dietmar Nickel, Alan Reid, John Hesketh Richards, Michael Shackleton, James Spence, Anthony Teasdale. Thanks are also owed to Vincent Feen and his successor at UKREP, Richard Makepeace.

Richard Balfe, MEP, generously devoted much valuable time to a lengthy and extremely informative further interview, for which I am most grateful. As a Community official on the Commission benches in the Strasbourg hemicycle, I have regularly rubbed shoulders with a number of neighbouring MEPs. In this context, Lord O'Hagan, MEP, Edward Kellett-Bowman, MEP, and Michael Welsh, MEP, have been particularly generous with time and advice.

Librarians are the great unsung heroes of doctoral dissertations. I would particularly like to thank John Linford, together with Emir Lawless, Machteld Nijsten and Peter Kennealy, and all the library staff at the European University Institute, and the staff at the following libraries; the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, the EC Council of Ministers, the EC Commission, the European Parliament, the British Council (all Brussels), the Free University of Brussels, the University of St. Louis (Brussels), the London School of Economics, and the Bodleian Library (Oxford).

I have left till last the person I must thank the most. My wife, Godelieve, has put up with a 'secret sharer' in the house for far too long. Throughout the

lengthy and inevitably dreary process of writing up this dissertation she has foregone much, and yet has never been less than cheerfully selfless, patient, uncomplaining and supportive. Truly, I could not have written this thesis without her.

**DEDICATION**

To my parents, Theresa and  
Bernard Westlake, without  
whose efforts and sacrifices  
none of this would have been  
possible.

## PREFACE

The theory examined in this dissertation is simple and intuitive and has been so often repeated in the literature as to have become a commonplace. The institution of direct elections to the European Parliament, it is argued, led to the creation of a group of individuals whose full time raison d'être was the European Parliament and who would therefore have a vested interest in institutional, and hence in constitutional, reform. Ergo, in serving its self-interest, the Parliament would become a motor of reform. In this dissertation, the theory of a self-interest-driven, integrationist Parliament (or, more accurately, parliamentary membership) has been dubbed 'Cotta's thesis' for the simple reason that Cotta's essay (1984) succinctly and objectively summarises the major assumptions and the logical process that might lead to the establishment of a 'European political elite'.

Many commentators who have observed the European Parliament's activities since 1979, which have included the drafting of two full-blown Treaties for European Union, would argue that the thesis has been incontestably proven. However, many of those commentators, who were first drawn to the European Parliament in 1979<sup>1</sup>, erroneously saw the June 1979 direct elections as a fundamental point of departure. Of

---

<sup>1</sup>Or perhaps in December, 1974, when the Paris European Council finally agreed to the principle of direct elections.

course, in the sense of direct legitimacy, they were. But the European Parliament had always been a militant constitutional reformist. For some of its members, direct elections were part of a process that had begun in 1952, with the ad hoc Assembly, or even, in the case of Altiero Spinelli, part of an intellectual development that had begun in an Italian fascist prison or, in the case of Otto Von Habsburg, with Richard Coudenhove Kalergi's 1930s Pan-European Union.<sup>2</sup> Scalingi (1980) even attributed the 1965 crisis as much to the 'precocious Parliament' as to Hallstein's ambitions and de Gaulle's apprehensions. Writing as early as 1973, Shonfield described the Parliament as 'a lobby for Europe'. (1973: 80) And in 1977, Coombes saw the Parliament as a 'pro-European pressure group, especially vis-à-vis the Council'. (1977: 243-351) Moreover, the beginning of a gradual shift in the institutional balance clearly pre-dated direct elections; for example, the European Council granted Parliament the power (though it did not yet have the political will) to reject the budget in 1975.<sup>3</sup> It is not entirely accurate, therefore, to describe the period before direct elections as 'un quart de siècle d'inexistence'.<sup>4</sup>

Direct elections were nevertheless an institutional departure in two important respects: the increasingly

---

<sup>2</sup> For pre-war integrationist ideas, see Chabod (1978); for the Ventotene draft European constitution and Coudenhove Kalergi's Pan-Europa Union, see Lipgens (1982).

<sup>3</sup> And if it had not been for de Gaulle's opposition this shift in power might even have taken place in 1966.

<sup>4</sup> Philip Lemaitre, Le Monde, 27-28.3.88.



exclusive nature of membership reinforced the institution's sense of self interest; and direct reference to the European people, notwithstanding disastrously low turnout in some Member States, gave it the overall moral, procedural and political muscle to press its case more effectively.<sup>5</sup> Within two years, the Parliament had returned to Spinelli's favourite pastime - drafting European constitutions - and within five years an Intergovernmental Conference was, among other things, considering major extensions to the Parliament's role and powers.

The positions and attitudes of British members of the European Parliament were very different to those of their continental colleagues. It wasn't only the sui generis, non-proportional electoral system and the bizarrely skewed and brazenly exclusive (as far as the British Liberals were concerned) results it produced, nor the abysmal turnout.<sup>6</sup> There were more deep-seated cultural forces at work, much in view again in these uncertain times.

A sizeable minority of the Labour contingent were in favour of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Community, in line with the Labour Party's manifesto commitment that, 'if the fundamental reforms contained in this manifesto are not achieved within a reasonable period of time, then the Labour Party would have to consider very seriously whether continued

---

<sup>5</sup> As Marquand has put it, direct elections simultaneously gave the European Parliament 'weight' and 'appetite'. (1979: 67)

<sup>6</sup> 31.8%. Only Denmark, with 47.1 per cent, came anywhere near.

membership was in the best interests of the British people.' The 1983 general election manifesto went even further, bluntly stating that "British withdrawal from the Community is the right policy for Britain."

The British Conservative grouping (effectively a political group in itself) displayed similarly divergent tendencies. It contained a sizeable minority of hard-line Euro-sceptics (the so-called 'H-block') and a minority of enthusiastic integrationists, but all were initially expected to toe the Downing Street line which was, until the Fontainebleau Council, almost invariably, unmitigatedly, adversarial.

Here, it seems, was less fertile ground for institutional self-interest to take root. Neither the Labour Party nor the Conservative Party's domestic policy countenanced institutional reform. At the same time, the British electoral system tied British MEPs to their parliamentary membership in a way that the more osmotic Continental list systems might not. As this study will show, the UK contingent is now the most experienced national contingent within the Parliament. How, if at all, did their views change?

The dissertation is divided into five sections. The first examines the conceptual terrain, sets out Cotta's thesis, defines some of the key terms, and examines to what extent the United Kingdom and overall membership of the European Parliament has 'stabilised' (an implicit pre-condition of the thesis). The principle perspective of inquiry is that of political careerism, the vested

interest of the individual which is tacitly at the heart of Cotta's thesis about the vested interest of the institution. In the second section, a number of ideal types, or 'stereotypes', as they have here been dubbed, are created, and then tested for 'fit' with what could be known or discovered about the behaviour and ambitions of the 1979 intake of UK MEPs. The steady trickle of MEPs, many of them ambitious achievers, to Westminster is examined, and reasons for this phenomenon adduced.

A third section examines the extent to which distinctly European political careers are possible, and have been followed, by UK members in the European Parliament. The examination includes a study of the European Parliament's internal hierarchy and of its assignment and patronage system. The section concludes with some reflections on the methodological problems the study of parliamentary career pathways creates for empirical studies, and considers some possible institutional reforms that might counter incipient frustration among members of the Parliament.<sup>7</sup>

A fourth section examines the other side of the behavioural coin; attitudes to institutional reform as evinced through voting behaviour. Curiously, in the most open of the Community's institutions, voting records (regularly recorded in the Official Journal), are the most freely available empirical data and yet, with rare exceptions (for example, Woltjers, 1982, Attina, 1990),

---

<sup>7</sup> Though the unequivocal conclusion is that the fundamental problem is constitutional.

few political scientists have so far latched onto their worth.

In addition to secondary sources and the established literature, three types of data have been extensively used in this study. The first is survey data, particularly from the European University Institute 1983 Survey of the European Parliament. This has been occasionally supplemented by insights from other surveys.<sup>8</sup> A second source has been static records, principally the European Parliament's own records of committee, delegation, and group appointments (particularly the 'grey lists'). The third major source has been voting records and verbatim reports of the European Parliament's debates and votes, printed in the Official Journal.

Put briefly, the basic empirical finding and conclusion of this dissertation is that, in a qualified way, Cotta's thesis holds true even for the 1979 UK MEPs. That finding alone could not justify the study's length but, to paraphrase an old adage, half the pleasure of a destination is in the sightseeing on the way there.

One of the attractions of the Community is that it is for ever on the move. As the first final draft of this thesis neared completion, the 1991 Labour Party Conference decided to ban sitting MEPs from attempting to gain Westminster nominations. Shortly thereafter, the

---

<sup>8</sup> For example., Inglehart *et al*, 1980, Kirchner, 1984, and Bowler and Farrell, 1990, 1991.

European Democratic Group dissolved itself, leaving Conservative MEPs to join the EPP (Christian Democrat) Group. Whilst the penultimate draft was nearing completion, two generally unexpected events occurred: in the United Kingdom general election, the Conservatives were returned to power with an outright majority; and in Denmark, the Maastricht Treaty on European Union was rejected by a slight majority. While the ultimate draft was underway, the European Monetary System was beset by a crisis which resulted in the UK government suspending sterling's membership and postponing ratification of the Maastricht Treaty indefinitely. The consequences of all of these changes have, as far as possible, been taken on board in the text, but the question mark currently hanging over the Maastricht Treaty has made some of the analyses more conditional than they might otherwise have been.

Martin Westlake

Brussels, September 1992

## CONTENTS

i. Acknowledgements.....	1
ii. Dedication.....	6
iii. Preface.....	7
iv. Contents.....	14

### **PART ONE: THE CONCEPTUAL TERRAIN AND PARLIAMENTARY COALESCENCE; COTTA'S THESIS, PROFESSIONALISATION, CAREERISM, MEMBERSHIP STABILISATION**

1. Traditional Approaches and the <u>Sui Generis</u> Nature of the European Parliament.....	20
2. Cotta's Thesis: The Normative Importance of the Formation of European Political Elites.....	27
3. Professionalisation and Careerism	
i) Defining political careerism and professionalisation - the US and UK examples and the case of the EP.....	32
a) King's thesis on UK career politicians.....	36
b) Mellor's findings on the House of Commons.....	39
c) Caveats, Definitions, Provisos.....	41
ii) The European Parliament; Professionalisation since 1979.....	47
iii) Previous European and/or Other Parliamentary Experience.....	55



iv) Preliminary Conclusions on Professionalisation and Cotta's Thesis: The Distinction Between Practical, Democratic and Constitutional Professionalisation.....	62
---	----

## **PART TWO: CAREER TYPES, MEMBERSHIP PROFILES, CAREERS, STRASBOURG AND WESTMINSTER**

4. Establishing Motivational and Intentional Stereotypes	
i) Introduction.....	70
ii) Defining stereotype.....	73
iii) An example.....	75
iv) Constructing the Stereotypes - The Basic Westminster/Strasbourg Distinction.....	78
v) Westminster-Oriented Stereotypes	
a) The 'Stepping Stone'.....	81
b) The 'Closed Door'.....	83
c) The 'European Stint'.....	85
d) The 'Frustrated/Disaffected'.....	86
vi) Strasbourg-Oriented Stereotypes	
a) The 'European Political Careerist'.....	87
b) The 'Public Servant/Technician'.....	88
vii) Exceptions?: 'Non-Politicians' and Backbenchers.....	89
5. Constructing a Profile of the 1979-1984 UK Membership	
i) Introduction.....	93
ii) The Four Indicators	
a) Age.....	94
b) Previous Political Experience.....	100
c) Previous Attempts to Gain Political Office.....	101
d) Previous Indications of European Interest.....	102
e) The Possible Significance of Positions Held Within the EP.....	103
iii) The 24 Exceptional Cases	
a) The Three Northern Ireland MEPs.....	105
b) The Scottish Nationalist MEP.....	112

c) The Other Pre-1983 Dual Mandates	
- The Commons.....	115
- The Four Lords and the Peer	
-in-Waiting.....	118
d) Other MEPs with Previous National Political	
Experience.....	123
e) The Eight other Exceptional MEPs.....	130

## 6. Testing the Stereotypes

i) Testing the Westminster-oriented stereotypes.	139
ii) 1979 MEPs and the 1984 European Elections	
- Survey Evidence About Intentions.....	154
iii) 1984; Survey Evidence on MEPs' Motivations...	155
iv) MEPs' Longer-Term Intentions.....	158
v) The Stepping Stone Theory Re-Considered.....	159
vi) The Closed Door Theory and the Local Element.	164
vii) Respondents' General Observations.....	170
viii) European Careerist and 'Non-Careerist'	
Responses.....	170
ix) Some Preliminary Conclusions.....	171
x) Testing the Model; the 1984 and 1989 Intakes	
of UK MEPs.....	172
xi) Overall Links Between Strasbourg and	
Westminster.....	181

## **PART THREE: EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT CAREER PATHWAYS; THE PARLIAMENTARY HIERARCHY, THE ASSIGNMENT PROCESS, THE CONSEQUENCES**

### 7. European Parliament Career Pathways

i) Introduction.....	187
ii) Electoral/Selectoral Evolution of the	
1979 Intake.....	189

## 8. Hierarchical Positions Within the European Parliament

### I. Bureau, Group, and Party Positions

i) Introduction.....	193
ii) Positions Within the Bureau and the Enlarged Bureau	
a) The Presidency - Power and Prestige.....	196
b) The Presidency - Elections 1979-1992; Considerations and Conclusions.....	199
c) The Vice-Presidents - Election and Role..	200
d) The Quaestors.....	207
e) The Other Members of the Enlarged Bureau - The Leaders of the Political Groups....	210
iii) Other Important and/or Hierarchical Positions	
a) The Leaders of the National Party Contingents - Before and Immediately After the First Direct Elections.....	219
- Since 1979.....	227
b) Other Group and Party Positions - Hierarchical Positions.....	234
- Occasional Positions; Spokesmen, Coordinators, Rapporteurs.....	243

### II. Committee and Delegation Assignments

c) Committee Assignments and Leadership Positions	
A. Introduction.....	245
B. Committee Assignment in the European Parliament	
i) Formal and Informal Mechanisms.	249
ii) The Introduction of Substitute Members.....	252
iii) Allowances.....	254
iv) Committee Size and Leadership Strategy.....	256
v) Defining Committee Stratification.....	265
vi) Committee Stratification in the European Parliament and Its Consequences.....	266

a. Committee Assignments, Committee Stratification, and the relative incidence of 'Exceptional' MEPs...	273
b. The 'Freshman' Hypothesis.	278
c. Stratification and Movement	281
d. Committee Specialisation..	286
e. Three Seniority Principles	290
f. The 'Collins/Price' Phenomenon.....	292
C. Appointment to Committee Chairmanships and Vice-Chairmanships	
i) Theory and Practice.....	296
ii) The Appointment Records of the 'Exceptional' MEPs.....	299
iii) The 'Freshman' Hypothesis Again	302
d) Inter-Parliamentary Delegations and Delegation Positions.....	303
e) Other Potentially Career-Related Positions	
i) 'Niche' Politicians.....	304
ii) Budget, and Other, Rapporteurs.....	306
f) Methodological consequences and considerations.....	309
9. The Assignment Process - II. Career Pathways in the European Parliament?.....	312
10. MEPs' Views	
i. Absence.....	318
ii. Protest.....	320
iii. Mr. Buggins and M. d'Hondt.....	322
iv. Exit?.....	327
11. Conclusions and Suggestions.....	328

## **PART FOUR: CHANGING ATTITUDES TO INSTITUTIONAL REFORM**

12. Introduction: Cotta's Thesis Re-Visited.....	346
13. The 1983 Survey Results; Static Indications.....	350
14. Parliament's Constitutional Strategy and Voting Records.....	352
15. 14 Reformist Resolutions.....	354
16. Whipping and Voting.....	362
17. The Results: Changing Attitudes as Seen Through Voting Records	
i. Overall Figures.....	376
ii. The 30 Surviving 1979 MEPs.....	379
iii. The Changing Views of the 1984 Intake of Labour MEPs.....	384
18. Conclusions.....	386

## **PART V: OVERALL CONCLUSIONS**

a. Professionalisation and Membership Stability.....	389
b. 'Westminsterite' and 'Exceptional' MEPs.....	390
c. Group Patronage and the Assignment Process - I.....	393
d. II- Committee, and Committee Leadership, Assignment	395
e. Latent Frustration?.....	397
f. Changing Attitudes to Constitutional Reform.....	398
g. A paradox?.....	399

<b>POSTSCRIPT.....</b>	<b>402</b>
------------------------	------------

<b>BIBLIOGRAPHICAL PREAMBLE.....</b>	<b>407</b>
--------------------------------------	------------

<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>410</b>
--------------------------	------------

PART ONE: THE CONCEPTUAL TERRAIN AND  
PARLIAMENTARY COALESCENCE; COTTA'S THESIS,  
PROFESSIONALISATION, CAREERISM, MEMBERSHIP  
STABILISATION

1. Traditional Approaches and the Sui Generis  
Nature of the European Parliament

Before examining the theory which this dissertation will seek to test, a few comments about the methodological and analytical consequences of the sui generis nature of the Parliament are necessary. It might seem natural to borrow from the traditional methodologies and analytical tools of legislative studies in studying the European Parliament, but two immediate differences between the traditional approach and the specific context of the European Parliament arise. The first is quite simply that the European Parliament is not a legislature<sup>1</sup>, though it does have (still strictly delimited) co-decision making powers in certain areas of budgetary policy and, since the implementation of the Single European Act in 1986, has enjoyed (again, strictly delimited) weak input into certain legislative procedures in certain circumscribed policy areas.<sup>2</sup> The envisaged provisions of the

---

<sup>1</sup> "While the European Parliament participates in law-making it is in no sense a legislative body." (Lasok and Bridge, 1991: 253)

<sup>2</sup> For a powerful, albeit pre-Single European Act, critical polemic of the European Parliament's powers, see Chiti-Batelli, 1981.



Maastricht Treaty would both greatly extend the Community's competence in many policy areas, and extend the Parliament's role, in some cases granting it new co-decision powers. Nevertheless, these would be similarly circumscribed, so that the European Parliament would still not yet become anything like a full-scale legislature.<sup>3</sup>

A second fundamental difference is that the European Parliament's linkage with government, to the extent that government exists at the European level, is tenuous and, it might be added, will be only slightly less so if and when the Maastricht Treaty has been implemented. This is not to say that there is no process at all of legitimation involved; in particular, the directly-elected European Parliament is said to lend democratic legitimacy to the 'whole European political apparatus'<sup>4</sup>.

A further difference resides in the fact that, unlike the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe or the pre-direct elections (nominated) European Parliament, the directly-elected Parliament exists distinctly apart from, and alongside (or above), national parliamentary assemblies and is no longer an

---

<sup>3</sup> For an early essay on this theme, see Herman and Lodge, 1978a. The fundamental point about the lists of Parliament's powers that have been circulating in Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg since the Maastricht summit, is that their existence (the need to set out what it can do) underlines the Parliament's limitations.

<sup>4</sup> See Herman and Lodge, 1978b: 73-93, for an early discussion on democratic legitimacy and direct elections, and Coombes, 1988, for a critical review of this. Though others would argue that direct elections have provided only a weak legitimacy and then for the Parliament alone. (Weiler: 1988)

extension of them. Membership is not necessarily mutually exclusive<sup>5</sup> and may be considered interchangeable, this being especially the case in those countries using variants of the list system<sup>6</sup>, creating the possibility of one- or two-way flows between the European Parliament and national parliaments.

These flows are potentially significant because, despite its limitations, the European Parliament is seen by both its friends and most of its enemies as a nascent or embryonic supranational legislature.<sup>7</sup> Two-way flows between national parliaments and the young European Parliament might in this context be considered of value, providing the possibility for exchanges of information and experience. A priori, one-way flows, in either direction, might give cause for concern. For example, might national politicians be tempted to use the Parliament as a career transit point, or political parties to use it as a sort of rest home or exile for those at the ends of their domestic careers? On the other hand, might not young and gifted politicians be tempted away from the European Parliament by the attractions of domestic politics? As Marquand put it, "...an EP of aging party warhorses put out to grass

---

<sup>5</sup> Though national parties or parliaments might frown on (the Conservative Party) or even ban (the Labour Party) the practice of dual mandates.

<sup>6</sup> That is, all but the United Kingdom.

<sup>7</sup> Supporters of this view cite the fact that already, in addition to its powers in the budgetary procedure and under the cooperation procedure (which, with the possible and in any case waning exception of the Danish folketing's assent procedure (see Fitzmaurice: 1979), are uniquely applicable), the European Parliament enjoys greater powers in certain areas of external policy (through the assent procedure) than most national legislatures.

would clearly be a different proposition from a Parliament of sharp and ambitious Turks." (1979: 67) In general, these and other similar, empirically verifiable, hypothetical questions might be considered important indicators of the state of 'health' of a Parliament. They might also have more specific normative significance, as will be examined below, in the context of 'professionalisation'.

What factors might create such flows? Matthews points out that "The legal and institutional structure of the political system itself affects the attractiveness of legislative service." (1985: 22) He goes on to observe that, although "the British House of Commons may play an insignificant role in policy-making, ... as the only channel to top executive office it has the special attractiveness of 'the only game in town' for the politically ambitious." In this phrase, he identifies two distinct factors which may affect the 'attractiveness' of a legislature, the potential for policy influence, and the potential for political advancement, and on the basis of these is able to draw up a simple typology of legislatures, as shown in **Typology I.**

He reasons that, where executive and legislative functions are separate, as they are in the United States, multiple career lines, with "much competition for political talent between them" are likely to arise. Might this reasoning apply to the European Parliament and, if so, how?

## Typology I

A TYPOLOGY OF LEGISLATURES, BY  
ATTRACTIVENESS OF SERVICE

		Opportunities for upward mobility	
		High	Low
	High	U.S. Senate	U.S. House of Representatives
Opportunities for policy influence	Low	Typical U.S. State legislature British House of Commons	Typical small-town Councils

Source: Matthews, 1985: 23

The Parliament's legislative functions, to the extent that they exist, are shared with the Council (the Community institution which at the moment is nearest in role, if not in style, to a traditional legislature) and with national parliaments, and its 'supervisory and advisory' functions also overlap significantly. Matthews cites the rise of the United States Senate's role as a stepping stone to the Presidency over the past twenty years as an example of the way in which the upward mobility potential of legislative offices may change over time. (Matthews, 1974, 1985, Peabody et al, 1976) This dynamic - so pertinent to the case of the Community's evolving institutional construction - can be introduced into Matthews' typology, as illustrated in **Typology II**.

## Typology II

A SUGGESTED TYPOLOGY OF LEGISLATURES, BY  
ATTRACTIVENESS OF SERVICE

		Opportunities for upward mobility	
		High	Low
	High		
Opportunities for policy influence	Low	British House of Commons ↓	European Parliament ↑

As Matthews himself admits, "the placement of actual legislatures within that typology is, of course, highly debateable," (1985: 23) but most commentators would probably agree with his assessment that the House of Commons offers little real opportunity for policy influence (See, for example, Bunting, 1992), while offering high opportunities for upward mobility (see, for example, Riddell, 1988). This situation is unlikely to change much in the near future. If anything, policy influence is likely to decrease further. (See Norton: 1991)

The European Parliament, on the other hand, is in a process of constant and incremental accrual of power.

Thus, its opportunities for policy influence may be relatively low, but they have been greater since the 1986 Single European Act than they were immediately after the 1979 direct elections, and will be greater still after implementation of the Maastricht Treaties. In between these incremental changes, the Parliament has proved adept at surreptitiously increasing its de facto powers, transforming exceptions into conventions and institutional favours into obligations. This steady accrual of policy influence is represented in **Typology II** by the rising arrow.

But in another sense, the European Parliament's situation has remained unchanged since 1979; it offers no links to 'external' governmental opportunities for upward mobility. As will be frequently observed in this study, the only way up is out, and the Maastricht Treaty's provisions will not change this stark fact. Indeed, this study will show to what extent British members of the European Parliament have been following the logic of this.

In conclusion, therefore, although the methodological and analytical tools of legislative studies may be adapted to the case of the European Parliament, the ends cannot be the same; the Community's legislative process is largely conducted elsewhere, and the Parliament's legislative influence is slight. Moreover, the Parliament's idiosyncratic nature makes such methodological and analytical adaptation indispensable; in particular, the Parliament can be

distinguished from national legislatures by its supranationality and potentially osmotic membership, together with its evolving constitutional role. Indeed, it is the combination of all of these factors and characteristics which forms the basis of Cotta's thesis about a self-interest-driven, integrationist Parliament.

## 2. Cotta's Thesis: The Normative Importance of the Formation of European Political Elites

There is a potentially powerful constitutional reason for interest in the development of specifically European Parliamentary career pathways. Cotta (1980, 1984) has argued that;

"...if one looks at the history of parliamentary institutions their powers weren't given free, they have been slowly conquered by new political elites that could oppose a stronger legitimation to the old elites. This suggests that the empirical test of institutional build up at the supranational level will be the formation of a European political elite..."

(1984: 124)<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> He goes on to argue in more normative terms that "...unless an institutional embryo of a European system develops, all the opportunities that might materialise ... will not be exploited in the direction of further supranational integration but may even produce a setback in the process and promote a renationalisation ..." (1984: 123)

He concludes that; "...European elections are therefore to be analysed for the impact they may have in fostering the growth of a European political elite." (1984: 124) Cotta regards the formation of such a European political elite as "potentially the single most important feature produced by direct elections" because;

"We have now for the first time a political elite that is not based in national political institutions but in a supranational institution. A political class that has therefore a vested interest in the strengthening of the European Parliament and more broadly in the promotion of European integration."

(1984: 126)<sup>9</sup>

Cotta's thesis posits two basic conditions, a degree of stability through time (which is where the possibility of inward or outward flows is of potential significance), and a certain degree of distinctiveness and autonomy. The absence of one or both would undermine the process of elite formation, and hence diminish reformist zeal.

---

<sup>9</sup> Marquand has described the driving force behind this process in the blunter terms of a former practitioner: "de facto European politicians in search of a role, anxious to prove to themselves and to others that they are doing something useful." (Marquand, 1979: 71) The reverse of this coin had been observed by a German member of the Commission during its 'formative years'; "...politicians and officials have their roots in the nation-state system and only a few of them are prepared to subordinate concern for their own influence and promotion to a speeding-up of the development of the European Community." (von der Groeben, 1985: 257)



Surprisingly, few studies have yet examined the evolving nature of the European Parliament's membership to test for professionalisation.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, little has been published on the whole phenomenon of European elite formation since Reif et al (1980).<sup>11</sup> The empirical studies undertaken in this section should at least reveal to what extent Cotta's two fundamental requirements - stability and distinctiveness - have been met. Indeed, one of the underlying questions this study will seek to answer is to what extent the institution of direct elections has resulted in the formation of a stable and distinct "European political class". But this is only half the equation. The second underlying question the study sets out to answer is whether Cotta's logic holds; in other words, if such a political class has come into existence, has it been in favour of strengthening Parliament's powers and more broadly in favour of promoting European integration?

Some observations should be made about the general applicability of the reasoning underlying Cotta's thesis. In the first place, it is not necessarily exclusively applicable to directly-elected assemblies nor even to composite bodies.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, a

<sup>10</sup> Kirchner (1984) being a rare, and early, exception.

<sup>11</sup> In a weak sense, Reif et al's study of national party middle level elites bore out Cotta's thesis in its finding of increased interest and sensibility, stemming from "...the fact that the national identity of parties, and the positions and expectations of middle-level elites, are potentially endangered." (Reif et al, 1980: 10)

<sup>12</sup> For instance, Roy Jenkins' accounts of his attempts, as President of the Commission, to achieve appropriate representation of the European Commission at Western Economic Summits in the face of Giscard d'Estaing's opposition (Jenkins, 1989: 31, 57, 73-74, 76-77, 81, 92, 152, 372) are a good example of the thesis at work, as is

complicating factor in any analysis is the fact that the European Parliament has always been constitutionally militant.<sup>13</sup> Nor should Cotta's thesis be confused with the related, but conceptually distinct, phenomenon of esprit de corps or institutional solidarity (what is commonly referred to in the scientific literature as 'socialisation'), though it can be strongly argued that the latter is a necessary pre-condition for the former.<sup>14</sup>

On the other hand, it is worth recalling another sui generis characteristic of the European Parliament; as was earlier pointed out, it has as yet had no direct

---

Ludlow's account of how Jacques Delors steadily accrued power as Commission President. (Ludlow, 1991: 116-121)

<sup>13</sup> Marquand provides two convincing explanations for such behaviour. Firstly, "The nominated Parliament...(was) largely composed of self-selected 'good Europeans'. These tend(ed), naturally and instinctively, to side with the Commission against the Council, and to put 'Europe' first, and their national interests second." (Marquand, 1979: 72) Secondly, "Partly because of this structure and partly because it is in any case extraordinarily difficult for a reasonably gregarious and open-minded human being to belong to any institution for any length of time without absorbing at least some of its values and assumptions, the British Labour anti-marketeters who entered the European Parliament in 1975 nearly all ceased to be anti-marketeters in anything but name within a year or two." (Marquand, 1979: 75)

<sup>14</sup> Marquand captures the essence of this phenomenon succinctly: "The old French saying that there is more in common between two Deputies, one of whom is a Communist, than between two Communists, one of whom is a Deputy, can apply to European as well as to national politics. Parliaments are even better at indoctrinating their members with their own norms than are public schools or miners' lodges, as a whole list of angry firebrands who later mellowed into sage and gradualist parliamentary statesmen bears witness. And the norms of the European Parliament are, and will remain, European norms." (Marquand, 1979: 75) In a more recent survey of MEPs, Ionescu and Morgan declared that it was "still surprising how rapidly the Euro-MPs embrace(d) the Communitarian attitude." (1988: 26) A good current example of an entirely Communitarian, and yet anti-integrationist, MEP is the Danish Communist, Jens-Peter Bonde, who accepts much of the current Community construction and is certainly prepared to work within, and to the spirit of, the European Parliament, and has simultaneously played a leading part in the campaign against ratification of the Maastricht Treaty.

link to government, and only a weak (though rapidly growing) relationship to legislative programming. This absence of government and opposition, of the need for working majorities in the traditional parliamentary sense, reinforces the logic of Cotta's thesis. The European Parliament has a potential vested interest in intra-institutional solidarity in a way that occurs only occasionally in other parliaments, generally when their powers are perceived to be under threat.<sup>15</sup> Though modern democratic constitutions provide (heavily hedged) mechanisms for constitutional change, the basic institutional structure and balance of powers are taken as given; such is not the case for the European Community<sup>16</sup>, where the Treaties' emptinesses are frequently fleshed out by custom and convention, and the mechanism for constitutional change has, at least since the 1970s, seemed relatively easy to trigger, and even to ratify.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> As, for example, was the case of the UK Parliament in the wake of the adoption of the 1764 Stamp Act. (See, for example, Brogan, 1990, especially Chapter 8.)

<sup>16</sup> This is not to ignore internal changes that a Parliament might effect in order to enhance or re-capture its powers of scrutiny and control. See, for example, Crick, 1970, Study of Parliament Group, 1978, Johnson, 1977, George and Evans, 1983, Judge, 1983 and 1992, Engelfield, 1984, Hill, 1984, Drewry, 1985, and Norton, 1985, 1986, 1987, and 1991 for the study, implementation and efficacy of the departmentally-related Select Committees introduced to the House of Commons in 1979.

<sup>17</sup> Part of the trauma of the uncertainty over the Maastricht Treaty is precisely that the ratification of Treaty change in the Community (the nearest process it has to constitutional amendment) has seemed automatic, once the process was triggered. The Community has yet to repeal an amendment (as the 21st amendment repealed the 18th), and a case history like that of the Equal Rights Amendment seems unthinkable.

There are two levels at which Cotta's thesis may be tested. In the first place, do the underlying assumptions exist? Have direct elections resulted in stability and distinctiveness of membership? In the second place, does the logic hold? Has such stability and distinctiveness resulted in reformist zeal? These basic questions can be broken down into a number of more specific inquiries. First, to what extent has Parliament's membership 'stabilised', how might this be measured, and what might the theoretical and practical consequences of such measurements be? These questions are addressed in Section 3. Second, to what extent has membership of the Parliament become distinctive? In particular: do osmotic flows with national parliaments exist and how extensive are they?; have distinctive career pathways evolved within the Parliament, and how do these operate? These questions are addressed, with particular reference to UK MEPs, in Sections 4 to 11. Third, have attitudes to institutional reform changed, and how can such changes be measured? These questions are addressed in Sections 12 to 18.

### **3. Professionalisation and Careerism**

#### **i) Defining 'Professionalisation' and 'Political Careerism'- The US and UK Examples, and the Case of the European Parliament**

The term, 'professionalisation' has a long pedigree, stretching back to its origins in studies of

the early US Congress and Senate, where it is closely related to the terms 'political careerism' and 'career politician'. The Articles of Confederation made rotation in legislative service obligatory (members could serve only three of any six years), and local rotation agreements limiting the length of service in Congress to one or two terms were still common in the nineteenth century.<sup>18</sup> The House of Representatives also experienced high 'turnover', mostly attributable to voluntary retirements.<sup>19</sup> Behind these figures lay a strong normative concept about the nature of representation and legislative service. Politics was regarded as being essentially voluntary in nature, and conducted in addition to a representative's real activity.<sup>20</sup> Though some sort of compensatory mechanism always existed, politics was not done for remuneration or material gain; it was not a 'job' or a way of 'making a living', nor was it done, in theory at least, for personal aggrandizement. In short, politics was a quasi-altruistic service rendered to society. More

---

<sup>18</sup> "In the beginning, all American legislative bodies were quite non-professional." (H. Douglas Price, 1975: 3) "Legislative service was a short-term, part-time, and non-recurring commitment." (Matthews, 1985: 38) See also, Kernell: 1977, Struble: 1979-80.

<sup>19</sup> Of 465 departures from the House of Representatives between 1811 and 1820, only 49 were due to electoral defeat. (Price, 1975: 9)

<sup>20</sup> It is interesting to note a resurgence of this originally patrician attitude in the policy of rotating membership and leadership adopted by the German Green Party and, to some extent, by the Green Group in the European Parliament. However, expected rotations of membership in the spring of 1992 were only partly carried out. (Le Monde: 14.12.91) The tourniquet system of the French 1979 DIFE list had a very different logic behind it. See below, Section 4.ii.

pragmatically, short spells in office discouraged the formation of vested interests.

Research on the 'professionalisation' of legislatures has been largely conducted in relation to the US House of Representatives (for example, Black, 1970), and studies outside the US context have been rare (but see Johnson, 1973, and Mellors, 1978). Despite this empirical lacuna, two statements would be regarded as self-evident commonplaces in all modern Western European democracies: 1. politics is a full-time job; 2. politicians hold, or try to hold, office for a significant part of their lives. It follows that, if politics is full-time and long-term, there is no time left to follow any other career.<sup>21</sup> This trend towards full-time and long-term politics is generally referred to in the literature as a trend towards 'professionalisation' or 'political careerism' or, in the case of King (1981) 'the rise of the career politician'.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> Nor, it could be added, much time to earn money elsewhere.

<sup>22</sup> 'Professional' is also used sometimes in its sense as an antonym to 'amateur' (though King would disagree, the generally recognised trend is that politics has become a profession, to which politicians belong, rather than an activity in which they indulge), and also sometimes in its weaker, more modern and vulgar sense, of deriving income. This is not to say that all professional/professionalised politicians live from their political incomes (some would claim this to be impossible, in any case). King identified several sorts of politicians who were not professional in this weaker sense, primarily because they had independent means, either inherited or previously created (sometimes specifically so as to allow the individual to follow a political career - Michael Heseltine being a clear modern day example), but were none the less professional in the stronger sense that they were prepared to devote themselves full-time and long-term to the job. This was the sense in which Max Weber (in Gerth and Wright Mills, 1948: 84)

The precise distinctions between 'careerism' and/or 'professionalism' and their opposites remain unclear, particularly in American research, where they are sometimes used inter-changeably. At some unidentifiable stage, the US literature switched from a primarily normative sense (based on the prejudice against, or suspicion of, professional politicians, coupled with adherence to the principle of altruistic service to the community) to a more empirical sense based solely on quantitative indicators such as increasing length of service.<sup>23</sup>

The fundamental implication of growing professionalisation is greater membership stability, and much of the literature on the subject has been devoted to exploring the observable political consequences of such stability or its absence. Historically, growing stability was seen to have enhanced consensus-building factors such as predictability and familiarity. A lack of stability created conditions of frequent and

---

distinguished between those who lived 'for' politics and people who lived 'off' politics.

<sup>23</sup> Matthews (1985) describes how the switch probably began with Rice (1929). He (Rice) was more concerned with persuading political scientists of the usefulness of statistical methods, but one of his chosen examples was a time series on the age and length of service of members of the House of Representatives. The implications of his work were apparently not realised until the growth of university-based political science in the 1960s and 1970s, when a rash of empirical studies of the US Congress and Senate appeared. (Inter alia, Price, 1971, 1975, 1977; Young, 1966; Rothman, 1966; Witmer, 1964; Polsby, 1968; Polsby, Gallagher, and Runquist, 1969; Fiorina, Rohde, and Wissel, 1975; Kernell, 1977; Bullock, 1972; Matthews, 1960: especially 241; Hinckley, 1970: especially 839-40; Kostroski, 1978)

unpredictable changes in the internal distribution of power.<sup>24</sup>

The historical study of the consequences of membership stability (e.g., Ray, 1974) and apparent links with policy outcomes led to a fresh prescriptive element in theories, the best-known being Polsby's theory of 'institutionalisation' (1968)<sup>25</sup> which, though later much criticised, provided a number of insights into the basic process. There has been a relative dearth of empirical studies of "professionalisation" in European legislatures.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, two analyses of professionalisation and careerism in the UK context raise issues germane to this study.

**a) King's Thesis on UK 'Career Politicians'**

---

<sup>24</sup> Viz. both the House and the Senate during the pre-Civil War years: Price, 1971, 1975, 1977.

<sup>25</sup> He argued that, to be successful, modern organisations had to be 'institutionalised'. Institutionalised organisations shared three major characteristics; clearly defined boundaries, internal complexity, and a commitment to universalism and automatic means of conducting business. For Polsby, the growing number of what he termed 'careerists' in the House represented a 'hardening' of boundaries between the House of Representatives and other parts of the system. Matthews (1985: 39) dismisses Polsby's theory as being too teleological, and Huntington (1973) demonstrated how the developments which Polsby saw as a successful adaptation to environmental change could also be interpreted as indications of institutional decay. Nevertheless, the descriptive part of Polsby's work (1968, 1969) remains valid as "a powerful historical explanation of how long and continuous service in the House became both possible and highly desirable." (Matthews, 1985: 39)

<sup>26</sup> Pedersen (1976, 1977) applied Polsby's concept of 'institutionalisation' to the case of the Danish folketing; Eliassen and Pedersen (1978) conducted a comparative study, again using Polsby's theory, between the Norwegian storting and the Danish folketing; Graham (1982) compared careers in the French Chamber of Deputies and the US House of Representatives; Buck (1963), Mellors (1978), and King (1981) examined the particular case of the House of Commons.



King describes the sort of person he is interested in as; "...a person committed to politics. He regards politics as his vocation, he seeks fulfilment in politics, he would be deeply upset if circumstances forced him to retire from politics. In short, he is hooked." (1981: 250) This, surely, is Weber's individual living for politics.<sup>27</sup> It is clear that "What matters is not the individual's source of income but his degree of psychological commitment" (*Ibid.*), rather than length of service or other directly measurable phenomena.

King, too, has first to contend with the terminological forest. He considers using the term 'professional'<sup>28</sup>, but identifies two problems. "In the first place, a professional man or woman is normally thought of as someone who belongs to a profession - and politics is not a profession in any ordinary sense." (1981: 256) More importantly, "...the terms 'professional' and 'amateur' politician have already been co-opted by James Q. Wilson, who uses them in quite a different sense..." (*Ibid.*: 257)<sup>29</sup> In Wilson's terms, an 'amateur' is someone "who finds politics intrinsically interesting because it expresses a

---

<sup>27</sup> See footnote 22 *supra*.

<sup>28</sup> "The temptation is to call them 'professional politicians'. The term is often used and has certain advantages. To describe someone as a professional is to imply that he takes his work seriously, that he works hard at it and that in all probability he wants to advance himself in whichever profession he happens to be in." (1981: 256)

<sup>29</sup> "For Wilson, the professional is not someone deeply committed to the calling of politics. Rather, he is someone preoccupied with winning and losing in the political game. The professional seeks to gain power for himself and his party; he is not especially concerned with the substance of whatever political issues happen to be at stake." (*Ibid.*)

conception of the political interest." (1962: 3) Although objective, these definitions veer towards the normative. In any case, King discards them as parti pris, and settles for the term 'career politician', though with hesitations about potentially negative connotations.<sup>30</sup>

In line with his micro-cosmic, more individual-based approach, King sifts through a large number of political biographies, autobiographies, diaries and memoirs, standard reference works, newspapers and periodicals, and concludes that "in the 1980s career politicians (as he defines them - MW) are almost the only politicians left in the upper echelons of British politics and government". (1981: 259) He identifies a number of consequences flowing from this phenomenon<sup>31</sup>, and all of these have now been well documented.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> "The best available alternative is probably 'career politician'. 'Committed politician' is attractive in some ways but sounds too morally earnest...The only major disadvantage of 'career politician' is the obvious one that it carries with it connotations of careerism - of men and women on the make." (Ibid.) Indeed, both terms, 'professional' and 'careerist', have negative connotations when applied to politicians. For example, the Concise Oxford Dictionary defines a 'professional politician' as someone who is 'making a trade of politics', and a 'careerist' as someone 'intent mainly on personal advancement and success in life'. There is, King argues, disparagement in both definitions, but it is an implicit disparagement, and is not necessarily always intended in the use of the terms, particularly in the American literature.

<sup>31</sup> 1. "The rise of the career politician means that it is even harder than it used to be for someone completely without political experience to reach high office." (276) 2. Because "the serious politician cannot combine politics with a demanding job outside", and because "it seems reasonable to hypothesize that men and women committed to a political career are most likely to be found in the group ... in their early 30s or 40s", the "professionalization of politics in Britain ... means increasingly that politicians without a great deal of first-hand experience of the world outside politics are running the country." (262, 263, 277 & 278) 3. "The rise of the career politician has probably also had the effect of intensifying ... what a perceptive Frenchman has

King's conclusions are of great relevance to several of the subsidiary findings that will be examined later on in this study, but one finding, that the career politician is likely to be a force making for change, is already clearly relevant to Cotta's thesis. If this finding is of general applicability, it would suggest that the expected enhanced institutional militancy of the European Parliament should flow from the fact that directly-elected MEPs are predominantly career politicians; these would be the members of Cotta's political class with a vested interest in institutional reform.

#### **b) Mellors' Findings**

---

called *la politique politicienne*." (Hurd, 1979: 148, cited in King, 1981: 278) Concomitantly, "nowadays the aspiring member of Parliament is expected to stand for one or more marginal seats, or seats that are safe for the other side, before being finally adopted for a seat that is safe for his own party." (265) 4. "With the rise of the career politician, there has also occurred a rise in the incidence of political ambition" and "a legislature containing a high proportion of career politicians is likely to be a restless, assertive institution", so that frustrated MPs "seek other outlets for their energies and self-assertiveness". (279 & 280) 5. King identifies three consequences of this. First, MPs "have become much more assiduous than they used to be in attending to the needs and wants of their constituents." Secondly, the new select committees which are, "needless to say, largely manned by career politicians", have been "far more assertive than anyone expected." Thirdly, King claims that the rise of the career politician "has undoubtedly been responsible in large part for the sharp decline in party cohesion." (279 & 280) 6. Since the career politician is likely "to be a force making for change - of whatever form", both major parties have become more radical. (281 & 282) 7. Lastly, "The desire to get ahead in politics, the desire to remain in politics, have undoubtedly served to increase the power of those in the political system with the capacity to punish or reward." (283)

<sup>32</sup> On constituency emphasis see, e.g., Cain et al, 1983 and Marsh, 1985. On MPs' use of the new committees see, e.g., Drewry, 1985, Norton, 1987, and Jogerst, 1991. On dissension, see Norton, 1975, 1980 and 1986. And on party politics see for example Epstein, 1980 and Berrington, 1987.

What indicators might be used to measure the process of professionalisation? Buck (1963) argued that an appropriate distinction was the number of elections won.<sup>33</sup> In his study of American Senators, Matthews preferred measuring the length of service, the difference between amateur and professional being ten or more years in public office. (Matthews, 1960: 58-61) Mellors plumps for this definition (1978: 82-89), arguing that Buck's method would lead to misleading conclusions in the UK case, given the proximity of some General Elections (1950 and 1951, 1964 and 1966, February and October 1974). Because both methods rely on the ratchet effect of number of elections or years' service, they provide a measurement of what is referred to in the American literature as 'legislative turnover'.<sup>34</sup> It is useful to consider Mellors' findings briefly.

First, his study of MPs (between 1945 and October 1974) reveals that approximately two-thirds of (Westminster) MPs do become professionals (i.e., spend more than a decade in the Commons)<sup>35</sup>; that this

---

<sup>33</sup> He proposed that "...on the occasion of his third election a contestant loses amateur standing and becomes a professional." (1963: 78)

<sup>34</sup> 'Turnover' is a useful concept because it introduces a triple dynamic: the number of members leaving; the number of members staying on; and the number of new members. This in turn is useful for determining whether a legislature is 'ageing' or becoming more youthful (though in terms of experience, rather than age).

<sup>35</sup> This statistic will surely have since been reinforced by twelve years of uninterrupted Conservative government, four electoral victories, and the steady socio-political division of the UK, in geo-political terms - see for example the 'new electoral map of Britain', The Sunday Times, 12.4.92).

proportion is the same in both the Labour and Conservative parties, and that minor parties, with less safe constituencies, have had fewer career politicians and more amateurs. He points out that "...the most important factor in determining who will become a career politician is the allocation of safe seats." (1978: 83)<sup>36</sup>

Mellors points out that his data are grossly skewed and distorted by the 'massive influx' of newly-elected MPs in 1945. Nevertheless, he is able to draw two important conclusions. The first, confirming Buck's earlier finding, is that 'professionals' comprise the vast majority of office holders. The second is that, since party whips unofficially apply a seniority principle for select committee appointments, professional MPs frequently occupy key positions in the committee structure of the House.<sup>37</sup>

### c) Caveats. Definitions. Provisos

How might all of what has gone before apply in the case of the European Parliament and its UK members? Membership of the pre-direct elections Parliament was clearly a part-time and relatively short-term affair

---

<sup>36</sup> This brings us to the 'secret garden' of British politics; the constituency selection procedures first singled out for critical study by Patterson (1967) and later examined in less prescriptive fashion by Ranney (1965), Rush (1969, 1987), and Holland (1981, 1986).

<sup>37</sup> Polsby, Gallagher, and Rundquist (1969) saw the increasing utilisation of seniority for the appointment of committee chairmanships as a further indication of the 'institutionalisation' of the House of Representatives.

and, because of its voluntarist nature and the enthusiasms shown by most delegates, could be loosely compared with the descriptive concept of 'amateur' politicians.<sup>38</sup> Direct elections did away with delegates in one fell swoop; did they do away with amateurs? The answer would appear to be 'mostly, yes'. The EUI survey identified a handful of UK MEPs who still corresponded broadly to the old, patrician-style, part-time amateur concept. The implication, clearly borne out by spontaneous responses from several interviewees, was that the job had almost immediately become full-time.<sup>39</sup>

To what extent the job has become long-term, and therefore the extent of 'professionalisation' or the proportion of 'careerists' among MEPs are matters studied in this chapter. Mellors rejected Buck's yardstick of electoral victories because the proximity of some UK general elections could distort the impression given. At first sight, it might be thought that such an objection could not apply to the European Parliament, with its fixed terms of office provided for by the Treaties. But the picture is clouded by the consequences of the list system; because representatives can 'switch' from one list, and one political context, to another, inward and outward flows are not restricted to elections. Moreover, in addition to the automatic proviso about the skewed nature of Labour and

---

<sup>38</sup> 'Amateur' being here used in its antonymous sense of neither full-time nor long-term (nor for remuneration).

<sup>39</sup> This was a direct consequence of the new Parliament's reorganisation of its working months into a week's plenary sitting, two weeks of committee meetings, and a last week of political group meetings.

Conservative membership in 1979, an additional proviso is necessary. Since the 1979 elections were the very first such elections, there were necessarily 81 'new' British (and new French, and new German, and so on) members. Evidently, this was a unique situation, but in terms of studies of 'professionalisation', it is clear that the 1979 elections will create a 'wave' of distorting data similar to that observed by Mellors in relation to MPs elected in 1945.

As we have seen, in the American literature the difference between 'professional' and 'careerist' is blurred, and frequently to such an extent that the two terms are used inter-changeably. This is a pity, for while 'professional' says something about the nature of an individual's occupation, 'careerist' says something about his or her intentions. Indeed, to use 'careerist' as a synonym of 'professional' is to ignore the most commonly understood meaning of the word: 'a person who is keen to advance in his or her career' (Oxford Paperback Dictionary); in other words, to progress rather than simply to continue.<sup>40</sup>

The distinction is an important one in the context of this study because the EUI survey garnered a considerable amount of information about intentions and

---

<sup>40</sup> This can lead to confusion. For example, Mellors declares that "...there are two types of MPs - those who win an isolated election and those who become career politicians. The terms amateur and professionals have been used to distinguish these two breeds of politician." (1978: 82) Even accepting a new definition of profession as length of service (or quantity of electoral success), can a professional politician be considered to be the same as a careerist politician?

ambitions, and these findings can be reinforced by examining the careers of MEPs as illustrated by the positions of power or authority they have occupied. Both tendencies, to professionalisation and to careerism, are of interest, and lead to the construction of the typology shown in **Typology III**.

Cotta's thesis about the establishment of a European political elite bears certain resemblances to Polsby's theory of 'institutionalisation'. But Cotta's theory contains a more compelling logic, and is altogether less teleological. Cotta does not take the process of 'institutionalisation' for granted, as if it were an inevitable effect but, rather, argues that the European elections should be "analysed for the impact they may have in fostering the growth of a European political elite." (My emphasis) Should that growth take place then, Cotta reasons, a political class will have been created with, he would argue, a vested interest in institutional change.



TYPOLOGY III  
 A TYPOLOGY OF PROFESSIONALISATION  
 AND CAREERISM

	Characterisation	Measurement
Professionalisation	Stabilisation of membership over time	Duration of parliamentary service and/or number of electoral victories (electoral durability)
Careerism	Desire for achievement and/or advancement, as demonstrated by hierarchical progress	Positions of power and authority held; survey data on intentions

For the purposes of this study, 'professionalisation' will be taken to mean the process of stabilisation of membership. 'Careerism' and 'careerist' will be used in their everyday intentional senses, implying ambition, and will be deduced chiefly from external data (leadership positions held, etc) and from survey evidence. The supposed negative connotations of the two words, 'professional' and 'careerist' are clearly not intended to apply.

A partly semantic problem arises. Not all career politicians can be identified from the positions they hold; in particular, some politicians make a career out of the backbenches, and at Westminster, as elsewhere, this is frequently the result of a conscious decision. In this case, given the indicators mentioned so far, it becomes difficult to distinguish between an ambitious but frustrated professional (measured by number of

elections won/length of service) and a comparatively unambitious career backbencher (not necessarily any hierarchical positions occupied). There is no simple solution to this problem, which will thus have limiting consequences on this study.

A second problem arises with those politicians who, for whatever reason, combine electoral durability with a lack of political ambition.<sup>41</sup> Such individuals may, for example, feel they have a particular expertise or service to offer, thus overlapping with the old-style, 'patrician' image of altruistic service. For the purposes of this study, 'amateur' will be used in this sense, and not in Mellors' sense of short-term service, which itself gives rise to ambiguity.<sup>42</sup> Thus, 'amateur' should be taken as referring to intentions rather than electoral performance and, to overcome the other ambiguities explained above, where necessary separate categories will be used both for the amateur and for the career backbencher. Both terms will be used sparingly.

The specific context of the European Parliament necessitates a further adjustment to the definition of 'careerism', because of the potential dynamic element of possible movement between the Parliament and other parliamentary assemblies or political instances examined above. As was pointed out, these are relatively uncharted waters. Studies of elite flows between

---

<sup>41</sup> Several of the 1979 Conservative intake had simply not expected to be elected, though they were happy to continue in office.

<sup>42</sup> Since careerists, as opposed to professionals, do not necessarily represent safe seats, they can and do lose elections, just as 'amateurs' frequently win.

different political instances are few and, where they do exist<sup>43</sup>, are always in a national context. Moreover, there is invariably a general consensus about the 'pecking order' among the different instances concerned (for example, a US Senator is seen as being higher in rank than a US Congressman). By its very nature, the European Parliament transcends the national context, nor is there a hard and fast pecking order between it and other, national, political instances. The nearest European parallel is that of bi- or multi-cameral arrangements, but in the specific UK context there has been no need to imagine such an order as between chambers, since the Lords is part hereditary and part appointed and, as was seen above, the only other important political instances, government and the premiership, issue from Parliament and as such are not separate from it. The methodological problems posed by this sui generis dynamic will be considered in **Parts II and III**.

## **ii) The European Parliament:**

### **Professionalisation Since 1979**

In the previous section it was suggested that the European Parliament's fixed five year terms might make it easier to measure professionalisation in terms of electoral durability rather than length of service, but

---

<sup>43</sup> For example, studies of the rise of the US Senate as a stepping stone to the Presidency - Matthews, 1974; Peabody, Ornstein, and Rohde, 1976.

the example of French membership of the Parliament between the date of the first direct elections, 10 June 1979, and November, 1981<sup>44</sup> demonstrates graphically why, in practice, other indicators are more appropriate. Although France's entitlement amounted to 81 seats, by that early date no less than 107 French members had served. Within the space of 28 months there had been 26 resignations, and hence 26 replacements by other names off the party lists. Why?

At the outset, there was a flurry of resignations from what might be termed the 'list leaders'. These were the prestige politicians (for example, Chirac, Debré, Faure, Mauroy) whose names were placed at the top of party lists in order to strengthen and 'sell' their parties, and who from the outset probably had little intention of serving in the Parliament; they waited a 'decent' amount of time, and then resigned, ceding their places to other candidates placed lower on the lists.<sup>45</sup> Other sudden flurries of resignations and replacements corresponded to the 1981 domestic elections and change of government.<sup>46</sup> In addition, there was a steady trickle of resignations throughout the period, probably due to

---

<sup>44</sup> The second date was chosen by default because of the cut-off date in the source used.

<sup>45</sup> For example, François Mitterand ostensibly resigned in protest over the reallocation of a seat, initially allocated to the Socialists, after a recount. It is a moot point as to whether, in institutional terms, the French practice of resigning list leaders is preferable to the Italian practice of absentee list leaders; that is, similarly prestigious names - for example, Berlinguer and Craxi - who did not resign, but who rarely, if ever, attended or participated. Craxi, first elected in 1979, only finally resigned in 1992.

<sup>46</sup> Since Article 6 of the 20 September 1976 Act expressly rules membership of a national government as being incompatible with membership of the European Parliament. For example, Jacques Delors left to become Minister of Finance.

waning interest, or alienation (realisation, for example, that the job was full-time), or disenchantment (for example, lack of possibilities for advancement).<sup>47</sup>

There was another reason. The fifteen candidates elected from the DIFE (Défense des intérêts de la France en Europe) list had stood on a manifesto that promised that the first candidates elected would stand down after one year, that they would be replaced by other names from the list, and that the same process would be undertaken every year thereafter.<sup>48</sup> This system of continuous replacement was known as the tourniquet system. It was "a deliberate policy by the Gaullist party to consider MEPs not as European deputies, but as representatives of each country at the EP". (Pridham, 1981: 222)<sup>49</sup>

Admittedly, the French membership has been the most extreme case, but other Member State contingents have displayed similar, if lesser, turnover. Kirchner (1984: 6) calculates an average of 5.52 per cent of all MEPs being replaced annually over the first four years. Thöne (1982: 160) had earlier put this figure at 7.5 per cent.

---

<sup>47</sup> Some of these are identified by Kirchner (1984: 12), who dubs them collectively as 'personal reasons'.

<sup>48</sup> See Bibes et al, 1980: 61-63, Menke and Gordon, 1980: 73-74, and Reif, 1985: 85-104, for accounts of the 1979 European election in France.

<sup>49</sup> British members were particularly incensed about the tourniquet system. The matter was referred to the Committee on the Verification of Credentials and a report - the Sieglerschmidt report - drawn up and debated. See OJ C - Annex - Debates of the European Parliament, N° 1-287, 5.7.82, 7-9, and 7.7.82, 135-136.

"...it cannot be said that all the elected members of the DIFE list strictly adhered to it. Of the fifteen candidates elected in June 1979 (not counting the chairman of the group) only four resigned within a year, six complied belatedly with the undertaking which they had given and four refused to go through the turnstile." (Kirchner, 1984: 11)

Such 'osmosis' with, or 'seepage' back, into domestic politics and parliaments might be considered advantageous, although in terms of membership stability and turnover it must surely be potentially deleterious for a young Parliament. However, what is important to point out in the present context is that to measure professionalisation by electoral durability would be to miss completely these flows and changes which, although particularly pronounced in the case of the French membership, to some extent characterised all contingents elected under variants of the list system. In addition, it should be noted that, although rare, deaths also created inward and outward flows.<sup>50</sup> Because of these inter-election flows, the measurement employed in this study will be length of service in the European Parliament, expressed in years. Another reason why turnover in the Parliament's membership has not been as regular as the fixed dates of elections might have suggested is the fact that there have been two enlargements since 1979, with new members arriving in 1981 (following Greek elections) and 1987 (following Spanish and Portuguese elections).

---

<sup>50</sup>In the UK case, following the deaths of Terence Pitt and Basil de Ferranti, leading to two by-elections.

Table 1

## PROFESSIONALISATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, 1979-1989

(years of service)

	BELGIUM		DENMARK		FRG		FRANCE		IRELAND		ITALY		LUX		NL		UK	
	1984	1989	1984	1989	1984	1989	1984	1989	1984	1989	1984	1989	1984	1989	1984	1989	1984	1989
C.5+		41.53		37.50		50.50		24.75		52.25		28.50		16.50		60.00		71.50
B.10		8.25		12.50		33.25		8.75		20.00		7.50		16.50		24.00		37.00
B.9		4.25				2.50												
B.8		12.50		6.25		1.25						1.25				4.00		
B.7		8.25						2.50										
B.6																		1.25
B.5	29.00	8.25	68.75	18.75	59.25	13.50	35.75	13.50	46.50	32.25	41.00	19.75	33.25		44.00	32.00	51.0	33.25
B.4	8.25			6.25	3.75			1.25				1.25	16.50					
B.3	8.25				3.75	1.25	6.25	3.75			1.25							
B.2	8.25			6.25		3.75	1.25	2.50		6.50	1.25		16.50			8.00		1.25
B.1		8.25					5.00	1.25			2.50	1.25	16.50					
A.0	45.75	45.75	31.25	50.00	27.00	44.50	51.75	63.00	53.50	40.00	53.00	69.25	33.25	66.50	56.00	32.00	30.0	27.25

Sources: Wood and Wood, 1979, Wood, 1984, Wood, 1989

Table 1 summarises the process of professionalisation for the Parliament and for the memberships of each of the nine pre-1979 Member States.<sup>51</sup> Three rows (Rows A, B, and C) have been

<sup>51</sup> The data from which this table was synthesised are too bulky to be annexed to this study. They nevertheless reveal fascinating and very different patterns of membership for Member State contingents, and these clearly deserve further attention. Unfortunately, this section will have to confine itself to a few limited aspects of those patterns, and these have been summarised in Table 1.

highlighted. With the exception of the row representing 5 years' of European Parliament experience (which corresponds to the 1984 European elections entry), all the rows between Rows A and B (that is, between 1 and 9 years' service) are indications of the generalised phenomenon of 'seepage' or 'osmosis' examined in the particular case of France above; members with one, two, etc., years of service manifestly could not have entered the Parliament as a result of election.<sup>52</sup>

It will be seen that a high rate of such inter-election turnover is particularly apparent in the case of certain Member State contingents; among the French contingent, for example, the process identified above continued apace, but high turnover has also been a characteristic of the Belgian and Italian contingents and, to a lesser extent, the Danish and FRG contingents. There has been no survey evidence, early or recent, from which the effects of such inter-election turnover might be gleaned, but it could be supposed that such high levels as have consistently existed among the French contingent would interfere with the process of political socialisation<sup>53</sup> and particularly with the formation of such stability-enhancing qualities as esprit de corps. Among the national contingent per se, this interference may be of little consequence (because of political divisions), although it may have greater consequences for the interests of French contingents within

---

<sup>52</sup> With the exception of the two UK by-elections: the Greek, Spanish and Portuguese 1981 and 1987 intakes are not shown.

<sup>53</sup> Or 'legislative socialisation' - see, for example, Bell, 1975.



particular political groups. As will be seen below, the indicators for overall professionalisation may give additional cause for concern.

The three highlighted rows in Table 1 represent, respectively: Row A: the percentages of members elected in 1984 and 1989 with no previous experience of the European Parliament; Row B: the percentages of members elected in 1984 and 1989 with, respectively, 5 and 10 years of European Parliament experience; Row C: the percentage of members elected in 1989 with 5 or more years experience of the European Parliament. Taken together, these three indicators give a good overall picture, quantitatively and qualitatively, of the process of professionalisation since direct elections.

The first finding apparent from the Table is that, as Row A reveals, members without any previous European Parliament experience represent a relatively, and perhaps surprisingly, large proportion of each electoral intake.<sup>54</sup> In 1984, over 50 per cent of the French, Irish, Italian and Netherlands' intakes had no previous experience of the European Parliament. 45 per cent of the Belgian intake was similarly inexperienced, together with 30 per cent or over of the Danish, Luxembourg and United Kingdom's contingents.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> The term 'relatively' is perhaps inappropriate, since there is no obvious basis for comparison; a point which will be returned to below.

<sup>55</sup> It should perhaps be stressed that 'inexperience' refers here solely to lack of European Parliament experience. A sizeable proportion of each term's membership had significant previous domestic political experience, certain Member State contingents being particularly richly endowed.

A second finding revealed by Row A is that, with the exception of the Belgian, Irish, Netherlands' and United Kingdom's contingents, the proportion of inexperienced members actually increased in 1989, in some cases by large amounts. Put another way, the Parliament was less experienced in 1989 than it had been in 1984.<sup>56</sup> The figures in Row B reinforce this impression, for very few of the members elected in 1979 now remain. Less than 10 per cent of the original Belgian, French and Italian 1979 members exist, and only in the case of the FRG and the United Kingdom does more than a third of the 1979 membership survive.<sup>57</sup>

The figures in Row C reinforce the impression of a relatively inexperienced Parliamentary membership. With the exception of the FRG, Ireland, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom memberships, less than 50 per cent in any Member State contingent had more than 5 years' experience of the European Parliament. The figures in Row C also reveal a great irony, but to highlight it the

---

<sup>56</sup> Those Parliament watchers who remarked upon the lengthy period it took for the 1989 Parliament to decide, with at least one Inter-Governmental Conference (in the end two) in the offing, on its constitutional strategy may see in these figures an at least partial explanation of that delay.

<sup>57</sup> The 1979-1984 intake was, to coin a phrase, the 'Dankert-Spinelli' generation; a self-styled quasi-constituent assembly that first flexed its new democratic muscles by throwing out the Community budget, and then decided on its constitutional strategy of big (that is, its Draft Treaty on European Union) and little (for example, its insistence on the institutional equivalent of customary law) steps. (See Section 14 for a detailed account of this strategy.) Since very few of these members remained after the 1989 elections, it is perhaps not surprising that it took Parliament's Institutional Affairs Committee an exceptionally long period of reflection and debate before re-adopting 'big and little steps' as the most appropriate and potentially fruitful strategy since, in effect, everything had to be thought through again.

extra-European Parliament experience of members must first be briefly considered.

iii) Previous European and/or Other Parliamentary Experience

In a sense, it could be argued that, at least in terms of professionalisation, only post-July 1979 experience of the European Parliament is relevant. Other national and international parliamentary bodies might exist, but the introduction of direct elections made the European Parliament into a unique institution. In procedural terms, too, the Parliament is becoming increasingly idiosyncratic and distinctive.<sup>58</sup> On the other hand, it would be patently ridiculous to assume that no other political experience could be of any relevance to the process of professionalisation in its implicit sense of growing know-how. One of the most

---

<sup>58</sup> The budgetary procedure (and Parliament's budgetary powers) were always unique, and the 1986 Single European Act introduced two more procedures, assent and cooperation, that are equally unique to the Parliament. The exact mechanics of the traditional consultation procedure (and the power of delay), arcane but fundamental matters such as legal bases and 'comitology', recourse to the Court of Justice, the motion of censure against the Commission (rarely threatened, never used, but nevertheless at the heart of Parliament-Commission relations), the committee structure, the hierarchy of reports, the art of assembling majorities within and between political groups; these and many other matters are particular to the Parliament and, it might be reasoned, could only be truly learned from direct experience.

obvious examples of other relevant experience is previous membership of the pre-direct elections European Parliament. Almost 20 per cent of the 1979 intake had had previous experience of the old European Parliament. By 1984, this figure had been halved to just over 10 per cent, and by 1989 it had been halved again, to just over 5 per cent. 20 per cent (fairly evenly spread among the national contingents) is a sizeable proportion, and an even more impressive figure if it is recalled that this represented more than 10 per cent of the total pre-1979 (i.e., 1952-1979) membership.<sup>59</sup>

The consequences of such a high proportion can be imagined, especially since there was no other sizeable group with any similar degree of common and coherent experience. In effect, the fifth of the 1979 intake with previous experience of the old European Parliament would have ensured continuity between it and its usurper; there were to be no revolutions in 1979, and the proof of this is that the rules, procedures, committee and leadership structures, and administrative arrangements remained largely the same. This 'old guard' has now dwindled to around 5 per cent of total membership (of the original nine Member States), but the decline has taken place in synchronisation with the dwindling relevance, in an organisational sense, of pre-1979 experience.

Other relevant international parliamentary experience was also represented among the new intake,

---

<sup>59</sup> 739 members spread over 27 years.

although in much lesser quantities. In addition to the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly<sup>60</sup>, other international parliamentary bodies represented included the Parliamentary Assembly of the Western European Union, the North Atlantic Assembly, the Nordic Council (Danish members), the Benelux Inter-Parliamentary Consultative Council and, although it is formally speaking not a parliamentary body, the European Community's Economic and Social Committee.

The quantities of such previous experience involved were small and not particularly significant except in so much as they added to the large body of members who had previous international parliamentary experience. Altogether, there were 100 such members; just under one quarter of total membership. With the exception of the Irish membership, these numbers have been steadily dwindling.<sup>61</sup> National parliamentary experience is a further factor relevant to the process of professionalisation. The initial proportion of former or current members of national parliamentary bodies was very high; 146 (about 45 per cent) in 1979. Some diminution in this figure was to be expected, as the full-time nature of European Parliamentary duties discouraged potential dual mandates, and yet former or current members of national parliaments still

---

<sup>60</sup> After all, the differences in powers between the nominated Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe were not yet so great.

<sup>61</sup> The Irish exception can be at least partly explained by the high number of former national MPs among its membership since, the Economic and Social Committee excluded, all other parliamentary positions are by nomination or delegation from national parliaments.

represented over 35 per cent of the 1984 membership. By 1989, the figure had dropped to just over a quarter, so that, once again, the overall trend revealed is of a shrinking pool of experience, a trend which holds true for all but the Italian, Belgian, and Luxembourg memberships. The small number of members involved in the case of the two smaller Member States makes it difficult to know whether an identifiable trend is involved. In the case of the Italian membership, on the other hand, the proportion of members with previous national parliamentary experience appears to have levelled off at just over 30 per cent of total membership, which is still very high. Among the other larger Member States, France and Germany both returned very high proportions in 1979 (37 per cent and 43 per cent respectively). Moreover, if other traditional domestic political positions (such as French Mayorships and Landtag posts) are included in the analysis, the French and German contingents can be seen to have represented an impressively rich pool of elective (with the exception of some former French ministers) political experience.<sup>62</sup>

The only indicator which would appear to have bucked the trend of steady diminution is that of previous ministerial experience. After a drop in 1984 to

---

<sup>62</sup> 23.5% of the 1979 French contingent were former mayors, 37% were current or former deputies, and 18.5% were former ministers. In addition, there were 5 former Prime Ministers. 43% of the 1979 German contingent were former or current Bundestag members, 33% were former Landtag members, 8% were former federal ministers, 8% were former Landtag ministers. Moreover, there were three former Landtag Prime Ministers and one former Chancellor.

just over 12 per cent of overall membership, the figure went back up in 1989 to 13.5 per cent.<sup>63</sup>

It will be recalled from the consideration of **Table 1** above, that the French membership since 1979 had been characterised by exceptionally high turnover, and that the Belgian and Italian memberships had experienced similar turnover, though to a lesser extent, yet these three contingents have been among the richest in terms of ministerial and parliamentary endowment. It might be supposed that in the juxtaposition of these two factors lies a possible explanation for and cause of turnover; in the case of these Member States the European Parliament has become both a refuge for former ministers and a pool from which they may be drawn. The high 'quality' of these contingents in terms of domestic political experience might also be supposed to compensate for the low 'quantity' of substantial in-house experience.

To recapitulate on the analysis so far, study of the European Parliament's membership since 1979 has revealed declining quantities of intra- and extra-European Parliament experience, particularly pronounced levels of turnover in the case of some Member State contingents, and a general decline in membership stability. This decline can be illustrated by a simple statistic; there were more members from the pre-direct elections European Parliament among the July 1979 intake

---

<sup>63</sup> Some Member State contingents, particularly the French and Italian, have been extraordinarily richly endowed.

than there are now members of that 1979 intake among the 1989 membership.<sup>64</sup>

A possible explanatory factor for declining experience might be connected with relative age. If members were joining the Parliament at a younger age, then it would follow that they would be less experienced in other political fora, for the simple reason that they would have had less time to pursue such activities.<sup>65</sup> Analysis of the distribution of age groups of the three European Parliament intakes would seem to support this thesis. The overall distribution has remained relatively stable. Each Parliament has returned a sprinkling of very young and very old members (the 1984 Parliament was particularly venerable), and the bulk of each membership was to be found between the ages of 30 and 70. The proportions of those in the 30-40 and 60-70 age groups has also remained relatively stable.

But a significant change has been occurring in the composition of the two middle-aged groups. In 1979, a quarter of the membership was aged between 40 and 50, and just under 40 per cent were aged between 50 and 60. In 1984, both figures were about the 30 per cent mark, and in 1989, they were reversed; just over a quarter of the membership was aged between 50 and 60, and nearly 40 per cent were aged between 40 and 50. This might be seen as an encouraging trend; more people seem to be coming

---

<sup>64</sup> Bowler and Farrell (1992: 4) have pointed out that almost half of the 1989 European Parliament's membership was only elected to the Parliament for the first time in 1989.

<sup>65</sup> This ties in with King's argument about lesser-experienced MPs in the Commons (1981: 262-263).



younger to the Parliament, and are therefore less likely to have spent time in other political fora. On the other hand, our analysis has also shown that people are decreasingly likely to stay in the Parliament.<sup>66</sup> It is not clear whether these figures reveal cause or effect but an identifiable trend does exist.

We can now return to the case of the UK membership. The 1979 UK intake was the least experienced in terms of all the indicators examined here; number of pre-1979 members, previous or current membership of national chambers (including the Lords), and previous ministerial experience. That the UK contingent was relatively so inexperienced was a fact widely remarked upon at the time, and was seen by some commentators as a clear illustration of the two major parties' indifference to the elections. (Butler and Marquand, 1981, especially Chapters 4 and 5) However, Row B of **Table 1** shows that members of the 1979 UK intake were (perhaps because of this, but surely also because of the more rigid electoral system used) relatively more likely to stay on in the Parliament; 37 per cent were still there in 1989, as opposed to an average of about 20 per cent, and this was in spite of the large-scale reversals of fortune (measured in terms of seats won and lost) of the two major parties represented in the Parliament. In terms of 5 or more years' experience (Row C), the 1989 UK intake far outstrips all other contingents; a hefty

---

<sup>66</sup> And perhaps these 'leavers' are going back into national fora - a proposition we will be examining in some detail in the case of the UK members.

71.5 per cent, with only the Dutch contingent's 60 per cent coming anywhere near the same level. It is an irony that what was in 1979 considered to be among the least experienced and distinguished contingent returned by a Member State has now become, in terms of intra-institutional knowledge, by far and away the most experienced (in in-house terms) of Member State contingents; in other words, the process of professionalisation has occurred to the greatest degree among the UK membership!

This finding has to be seen against the backdrop of generally decreasing membership stability. In general, Parliament is becoming less experienced and less professional.<sup>67</sup> But, in terms of testing Cotta's thesis, it suggests that one of the two basic conditions (membership stability) is satisfied at least in the case of the UK membership.<sup>68</sup>

#### iv) Preliminary Conclusions on

#### Professionalisation and Cotta's Thesis: The Distinction Between Practical, Democratic and Constitutional Professionalisation

---

<sup>67</sup> The Greek, Spanish and Portuguese enlargements have not been considered in this analysis. In all three cases, the memberships have shown relatively little sign of stabilisation - the rates and levels of professionalisation have been slow and low. If anything, therefore, the new accessions have reinforced the general trend - the chief finding in this section - towards higher levels of turnover.

<sup>68</sup> More correctly, since we cannot know the degree of stabilisation necessary, the UK membership is more likely to have satisfied the condition than any other national contingent in the Parliament. See below, Section iv.

How might this overall finding sit with Cotta's thesis? From the (chiefly American) literature on professionalisation, it is known that low levels of membership stabilisation<sup>69</sup> tend to lead to higher levels of inconsistency and incoherence and lower levels of continuity, and hence of predictability; parliaments become less reasonable and harder to manage and deal with, and their efficiency as institutions suffers. In the context of Cotta's thesis (and his assumption of stability), we might expect that low levels of membership stability in the European Parliament would erode or undermine its ability to press its case for institutional reform.

But at what stage do these effects begin to take place? Some turnover in membership is not only a logical consequence of effective democracy and the laws of nature, it must also be a practical necessity. Intuitively, some sort of sliding scale could be envisaged. At one end of this scale would be found the impossible quality of total membership stability; that is, every member returned at every election. At the other end of the scale would be total instability; that is, every member replaced at every election (or through inter-election turnover).

In purely practical terms, firstly, it is clear that neither of these extremes would be desirable. Total stability would be tantamount to stagnation, and total instability would be tantamount to chaos. In between

---

<sup>69</sup> That is, high levels of turnover.

these two extremes, three further ratios could be envisaged. In the first case, there would be too much instability. In the second, there would be too little turnover. And in the third case, a 'correct' balance of turnover and stability would be found; an ideal ratio. Taken together, these five cases describe a practical typology of professionalisation, as set out in **Typology IV**. In normative institutional terms, the ideal state would be located somewhere in the middle of the scale.

### **Typology IV**

#### **A PRACTICAL TYPOLOGY OF PROFESSIONALISATION**

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP  
STABILITY

BALANCE OF  
STABILITY AND  
TURNOVER

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP  
INSTABILITY

STAGNATION <-----> CHAOS

In democratic terms, secondly, a similar sliding scale could be envisaged. In this case, total instability would be tantamount to parliamentary anarchy, and total stability to parliamentary dictatorship.<sup>70</sup> Again, the ideal state would be located somewhere in between these two extremes, with enough turnover to ensure electoral choice, and enough stability to ensure an appropriate minimum of continuity

---

<sup>70</sup> Although, since he was talking about built-in large parliamentary majorities, the comment is not entirely apt, this extreme is reminiscent of Lord Hailsham's concept of 'elective dictatorship'.

and know-how (a parliament with high levels of instability would be easily exploited and unable to assert itself coherently). This democratic typology of professionalisation has been set out in Typology V.

### Typology V

#### A DEMOCRATIC TYPOLOGY OF PROFESSIONALISATION

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP  
STABILITY

BALANCE OF  
STABILITY AND  
TURNOVER

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP  
INSTABILITY

PARLIAMENTARY  
DICTATORSHIP

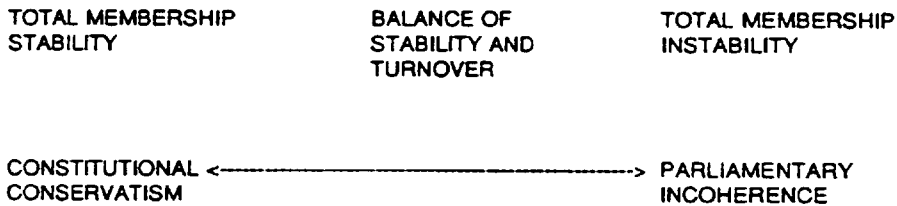
PARLIAMENTARY  
ANARCHY

If the terms employed are changed slightly, Cotta's thesis can also be located on a similar scale. Total instability would be undesirable because it would ensure institutional incoherence. In the medium- to longer-term, total stability would be equally undesirable, since it would deny the Parliament youth and fresh blood - presumably indispensable qualities if a reformist esprit de corps is to be maintained. Once again, the ideal state would be found somewhere in between these two extremes and, once again, a typology - of

constitutional professionalisation - can be constructed, as shown in Typology VI.

### Typology VI

#### A TYPOLOGY OF CONSTITUTIONAL PROFESSIONALISATION



Thus, three different prescriptive scales of professionalisation may be constructed; the institutional, the constitutional, and the democratic. Within each, there is an ideal ratio of turnover and stability.<sup>71</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup> It is beyond the scope of this section to consider whether the three ideal ratios coincide, although the question is surely worthy of study. In particular, it might be argued that the democratic and the constitutional scales are one and the same, but it should be recalled that the constitutional scale has to be located within a context of change, a dynamic element which is not necessarily present in the case of the democratic scale.

It has been seen there are several accepted ways of measuring professionalisation (and hence stability) in absolute, objective and descriptive terms, but how might such measurements relate to the prescriptive scales set out in Typologies IV to VI? Clearly, there cannot be a hard and fast, direct, empirical link; we could not point to a particular figure or percentage and judge that it was the ideal state from, say, a democratic point of view (in any case, the ideal state is more likely to be a fluctuating ratio within flexible margins). On the other hand, it is possible to point to a particular situation and gauge whether there is, grosso modo, too much stability, or too little turnover.<sup>72</sup> Moreover, in a healthy and well-established parliamentary democracy, with high levels of political awareness and party competition, we would not expect a transition towards anarchy or stagnation to occur unremarked.

In the case of the European Parliament, however, there are neither high levels of political awareness nor of party competition, and even its best friends would admit that the Community's evolving constitutional system is still far from being a healthy and well-established parliamentary democracy. Under these circumstances, transitions may well occur unremarked. In

---

<sup>72</sup> As one writer has put it; "Don't forget what Edmund Burke said about twilight: its existence does not prevent our drawing a tolerably clear distinction between night and day. I surely don't want to get us into the 'when is a man bald' argument, which fortunately we needn't settle in order to decide that a man with four hairs on his scalp is bald." (Meehl, 1977: 18)

this section a clear trend towards lesser levels of stabilisation and higher levels of turnover has been identified. We cannot yet know whether the trend has gone beyond the ideal states envisaged in the typologies towards too much instability, or whether, in fact, the trend began from a point of too much stability and is moving towards the ideal state.

On the other hand, we can already point to certain Member State contingents and their inordinately high levels of turnover as worrying omens; a Parliament whose members are increasingly less likely to remain for more than five years (as is already the case with the French contingent) will clearly be unlikely to have an increasingly vigorous interest in constitutional reform.

In terms of Cotta's normative constitutional theory, it could be argued that the European Parliament would need to reach and maintain a sort of critical mass of membership stability in order to enable the process of institutional ambition to take place, and the same must therefore hold true for each Member State contingent and, more importantly perhaps, for each political group membership, and particularly the two largest (the Socialist and European Peoples' Party, or Christian Democrats). Although the exact location of that critical mass of membership stability cannot be known, the statistics revealed in **Table 1** enable us to suppose with a degree of confidence that, in all probability, the Parliament's UK contingent is near to or has gone



beyond that critical mass and that, by the same standards, the French contingent is further away.<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup> In effect, avoiding such a critical mass was the logic that led the French DIFE list to apply the tourniquet system.

PART TWO: CAREER TYPES, MEMBERSHIP PROFILES,  
CAREERS, STRASBOURG AND WESTMINSTER

4. Establishing motivational and intentional  
stereotypes

i) Introduction

We shall now turn to the second underlying condition of Cotta's thesis; distinctiveness. In particular, have direct elections led to distinctively European career pathways?

From 16 January 1973, when a British delegation first entered the European Parliament, until 7 June 1979, when the first UK direct elections to the European Parliament were held, no readily apparent European political career pathway existed for an ambitious, European-minded British politician to follow. A career in Europe meant, essentially, a bureaucratic one. The 'twin mandate'<sup>1</sup> ensured that European parliamentary politics retained a secondary, part-time and peripheral nature, since appointments to these organisations remained entirely within the realm of party and government patronage.

In the British case the secondary nature of European parliamentary politics was partly due to the low level of popular familiarity with the Community

---

<sup>1</sup> That is, the delegation of selected members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords for additional duties in the pre-June 1979 European Parliament or the Parliamentary Assemblies of the Council of Europe, Western European Union and the North Atlantic Assembly.

institutions and the then prevailing majority attitudes (ranging from hostility to mistrust) towards the European Community within the British political establishment and among the British electorate at large. Nevertheless, there was also a fundamental, objective and mechanical reason for the failure of any British politicians to follow a European political career; simply, such career possibilities did not exist (and it is a moot point as to whether they yet do). Positions within the Parliament were filled by delegation, and those within the Commission by appointment. British politicians in the Parliament and the Council were decidedly not directly elected for the positions they filled and the duties they undertook when wearing their European 'hats'. Twelve years on, it remains axiomatic that the only way to accede to the top power positions within the European Community is to follow a successful domestic political career and, outside the UK Presidencies, many UK ministers still see their Brussels activities as frequently awkward adjuncts to their domestic responsibilities.

Throughout the 1970s, the British popular press portrayed European Community politics as a distraction from the 'main game' at Westminster. Items about the European Community were more often than not to be found on the foreign news pages, and the general impression

given of the Community institutions was of havens for enthusiasts, bureaucrats, and retiring politicians.<sup>2</sup>

With the advent of direct elections, a new breed of British but also at least nominally European politician came into being. Although tied to their national parties by selection procedures (see Holland, 1986) and, in theory, to their constituencies by their constituency associations<sup>3</sup>, MEPs possessed a new independence from domestic politics and had the chance to create and embark upon distinctly European political activities, if not careers. However, extra-parliamentary debate in the UK focussed not so much on the status, role and activities of MEPs per se, as on the advantages that the position could bring in other contexts. Suspicions were voiced that the as yet unknown UK MEPs would be motivated by base considerations of personal gain, or that they would use their membership of the European Parliament as a 'stepping stone' to Westminster. The logic behind this suspicion is embodied in the 'Westminster careerist' stereotype established below. A later part of this study will test the 'stepping stone' theory and its opposite, here termed the 'closed door' theory. But first, though, we need to elaborate a theoretical model that will enable us to examine

---

<sup>2</sup> This last was enhanced by Roy Jenkins' June 1976 decision, following his poor showing in that year's Labour Party leadership contest, to accept Callaghan's offer of nomination for the position of President of the European Commission, it being generally understood at that time that his domestic political career was at an end. (Jenkins, 1989: 5-7)

<sup>3</sup> See Butler and Marquand, 1981, and Butler and Jowett, 1985, for anecdotal evidence of the nature of the MEP-constituency relationship, and Westlake, 1991, and Bowler and Farrell, 1990, 1991, for some survey evidence on the same subject.

'careerism' in the specific context of members, particularly UK members, of the European parliament, both with regard to possible career pathways within the Parliament and outwith it.

## ii) Defining 'Stereotype'

In turning from professionalisation to careerism, we must return from the general level of the Parliament and its membership to the more specific context of the UK membership within it. Because we are descending from one level of aggregation to another, we must also formulate another, more appropriate, methodological approach. A number of methodological devices have been elaborated to enable generalised inductive theories to be built over or from specific case studies, ranging from Weber's 'ideal type' to economic modelling.<sup>4</sup> The device chosen for this section is that of the stereotype, a variation of Weber's 'ideal type', but one that allows for both intuitive and some guarded inductive reasoning.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> As Holland puts it, "A model is not a replica but a simplification of reality; it can only consider a limited number of variables as crucial, ignoring others that may be relevant to some degree. The more heuristic and powerful a model is, the more severely it will cut away unnecessary aspects of reality in order to highlight basic features that could otherwise be obscured. Simplicity need not imply superficiality: however, sophistication may need to be sacrificed for starkness, reality for comprehensibility." (1986: 17)

<sup>5</sup> 'Ideal type' has been defined as a; "...mental construct derived from observable reality although not conforming to it in detail because of deliberate simplification and exaggeration. It is not ideal in the sense that it is excellent, nor is it an average; it is, rather, a logical ideal used to order reality by selecting and accentuating certain elements." (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1982: V 286)

Stereotype is defined as "an idea or character etc. that is standardised in a conventional form without individuality".<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of this study, a stereotype is taken to mean a formalised image of a hypothetical individual whose behaviour and motivations are simplified and reduced and then, by intuitive reasoning, examined in relation to three specific matters related to political career: firstly, the individual's primary motivation - why did he or she become an MEP per se?<sup>7</sup>; secondly, that individual's ambitions - what does that individual want to do as an MEP, or otherwise?<sup>8</sup>; lastly, the individual's short- or medium-term intentions - how will the individual set about realising those ambitions?<sup>9</sup> The combination of these three factors should result in different, and to some extent empirically verifiable, theoretical behavioural patterns. These can then be compared with electoral behaviour and EUI Survey data to see how closely they 'fit', or correspond, with the observable reality.

There is an evident danger with all inductive reasoning; drawing general rules from specific cases and then deductively applying those general rules to specific cases is at best tautological and at worst misleading. 'Ideal types', models, and stereotypes all

---

<sup>6</sup> The Oxford Pocket Dictionary.

<sup>7</sup> That is, was the individual specifically attracted to the European Parliament per se, or more generally by national elective office?

<sup>8</sup> For example, is the individual specifically interested in a European political career, or simply an elective political career?

<sup>9</sup> For example, will the individual aim for hierarchical office?

sacrifice elements of reality in order to gain explanatory power, but they cannot then be applied to the particular case of any one real individual from a particular class. This is why the term 'stereotype', with its express exclusion of individuality, has been preferred here.<sup>10</sup>

### iii) An Example

An early example of a simple stereotypical view of MEPs' motivations enjoyed much popularity in the UK press between 1976 and 1978.<sup>11</sup> The view was based on the assumption that MEPs would receive generous salaries. It was suspected that many of those who had got their names on the candidates' lists were motivated by pecuniary considerations; "...the assumption was that they would have to be paid at a common level which could hardly be much less than the Bundestag members' £30,000. In Westminster and outside this caused much resentment at a time when MPs were paid £6,270." (Butler and Marquand, 1981: 34)<sup>12</sup> As negotiations on direct elections

---

<sup>10</sup> Some of the data used cannot in any case be attributed to individuals since the EUI Survey team promised absolute confidentiality to all respondents. On the other hand, there is nothing confidential about a particular individual's observable behaviour; by its nature, a politician's career lies largely in the public domain. Thus, it is no error to impute to an MEP's ambitions that, for example, he or she wished to get to Westminster if it is known that he or she allowed his or her nomination to go forward to a Westminster constituency association and, of course, there is even less of a problem if the MEP actually became a Westminster MP. Since both sorts of information are used, they will be clearly flagged to avoid any possible confusion.

<sup>11</sup> The survey here is restricted to The Economist magazine.

<sup>12</sup> And as one editorial put it; "A European MP will probably be paid three times as much as a Westminster one, plus allowances for

proceeded in the Council, guesses about MEPs' remuneration and prejudices based on them continued apace.<sup>13</sup>

The matter of MEPs' pay was scheduled for discussion at the December 1977 European Council (i.e., well in advance of the candidate selection procedures). In the event it slipped (or was slipped) off the agenda, but it was known that several delegations, particularly the French and British, were opposed to the idea of leaving the Parliament to decide alone.<sup>14</sup> The issue reappeared in May of the next year, when a leading anti-Market Tory asked the Labour Government to delay the ratification of direct elections until MEPs' salary levels had been fixed.<sup>15</sup> A 'non paper' circulated in Brussels proposed a high basic rate subject to national income tax, topped up with generous allowances. In October, European Parliament party leaders sent a new

---

staff, research, and travel. His constituency will be eight times bigger than a Westminster seat. The work of the European Parliament, including time on committees, will take up only 150 days a year, with no all night sittings. Volunteers, then?" (The Economist, 17.7.76: 11)

<sup>13</sup> "The Tories are keenly aware that people will be attracted to the European Parliament for less-than-altruistic reasons: the job will (at present exchange rates) probably be worth £20,000 in salary (plus expenses of up to £10,000), with a personal staff of research assistant and secretary." (The Economist, 11.12.76: 28) And, later still, when the first concrete pay proposals emerged, The Economist recorded under the headline 'The Lure of Europay': "If direct elections go ahead, there will be a rumpus in Britain over the salaries that Euro-MPs are likely to get. Britain's Conservative leader, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, is appalled at the proposed scales leaked from the Behrendt Committee, which was set up by the European Parliament to review salaries. The Committee wants to pay £35,000 to the new full-time elected MPs..." (The Economist, 4.6.77: 67)

<sup>14</sup> The Economist, 3.12.77: 73.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 13.5.78: 64.



proposal to the European Council,<sup>16</sup> but it was not until the December 1978 Brussels European Council, just six months before the elections themselves, that the matter was finally settled. It was left to Member State governments to decide their MEPs' remuneration levels. The UK government then decided that UK MEPs would receive the same as their Westminster counterparts.<sup>17</sup>

By this late date, both the major UK parties had drawn up their candidate short lists.<sup>18</sup> The 'stereotypical' view explained above held that a primary, or strong secondary, motivation among the UK's European Parliament candidates was the potentially high salary; as late as December 1978, UK candidates could have expected to receive twice as much as an MP. If this portrayal were accurate, then we could have expected large numbers of candidates to withdraw their names once the true figure was known. In fact, only six candidates (all Conservative) did this. (Sir) Marcus Fox, at that time Conservative Party Vice-Chairman with responsibility for the Euro-candidates' list, described the six withdrawals as "not bad out of a list of 200".<sup>19</sup> Although he would not release the names of the 6, he strongly implied that, had they opted to remain, they would have been accepting very substantial cuts in salary.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 21.10.78: 70.

<sup>17</sup> Butler and Marquand, 1981: 34.

<sup>18</sup> Butler and Marquand, ibid., Holland, 1981, 1986.

<sup>19</sup> Daily Telegraph, 2.1.79.

<sup>20</sup> One of the 6 later re-applied.

A stereotypical view of the UK MEPs could have been built up, based on the supposed motivations of those individuals who had applied to be on the short lists. If these were pecuniary, then we would have expected large numbers of individuals on the short lists to have withdrawn their names. Evidently, there would have been an element of embarrassment in so clearly manifesting their motivation but it could be pointed out, in a refinement of the stereotype, that several of the Conservative candidates stood to suffer harsh pay cuts in becoming MEPs. It would have been perfectly possible for them to withdraw apologetically, citing this fact. Indeed, several real individuals on the Conservative short list did in fact do just that. Nevertheless, the vast majority of all candidates of all political hues did not withdraw from their parties' short lists, thus empirically rebutting the stereotypical view of an individual primarily motivated by pecuniary gain<sup>21</sup>; if these individuals hoped to gain something from becoming MEPs, it was not, in the first place, a large salary.

iv) Constructing the Stereotypes - The Basic  
Westminster/ Strasbourg Distinction

A cursory glance at the curriculum vitae of the UK MEPs elected in 1979 reveals that many of them had formerly contested or been nominated to contest

---

<sup>21</sup> Though the prejudice still remains!

Westminster seats<sup>22</sup>. It would seem reasonable to surmise therefore that, since a number of MEPs had demonstrated a previous interest in Westminster, some of them might have retained such an interest. Soon after the 1979 European elections, stories abounded in the Strasbourg and Brussels corridors of UK MEPs being invited to put forward their names for Westminster seats within their Euro-constituencies. Again, it would seem reasonable to suppose that some of those approached in this way might have been tempted to accept the offer. In much the same vein, it could be envisaged that some individuals might later have become disillusioned with their role or duties as MEPs (for example, too much work, or too little, or too much travel, or too little policy influence), and that, still politically ambitious, they began to look to Westminster as a way of pursuing their political careers more comfortably or effectively.

On the other hand, it is easy to imagine individuals who were attracted specifically by the idea of being an MEP and would not have thought of looking elsewhere, even if frustrated, or of individuals with a particular expertise or interest that they felt would be better represented at the Strasbourg level.

These examples establish a basic intuitive distinction between those hypothetical individuals who would have been Strasbourg-oriented, and those who would have been, or might have become, Westminster-oriented.

---

<sup>22</sup> This recalls King's essay about the rise of the career politician, since he regards previous attempts to gain office as an indicator. This phenomenon will be considered in detail below.

In fact, this distinction corresponds to the general dynamic identified as being specific, if not unique, to the case of the European Parliament; that is, the possibility for individuals to switch from their domestic parliaments to the European Parliament, and vice versa.

Both primary survey evidence and secondary sources have been used to build up a composite picture of the political careers over the past eleven years of those 81 UK MEPs first elected in 1979. Those years have seen the discrete rigidities of two further European (1984 and 1989) and three national (1983, 1987 and 1992) elections, mandatory re-selection introduced by the Labour Party, numerous Westminster and three Strasbourg by-elections, together with more contingent processes such as re-selection procedures, the implementation of Boundary Commission recommendations, European Parliament Presidential elections and, in the domestic context, government and opposition re-shuffles.

Using all of this information and the conceptual device of motivational and intentional stereotypes, a number of tentative hypotheses will be elaborated and tested. The remainder of this section will be devoted to the construction of a series of stereotypes. **Section 5** will build up a profile of the 1979 intake, distinguishing a number of potentially important indicators, and considering separately the cases of 24 MEPs from the 1979 UK intake considered for various reasons to have been 'exceptional' and meriting more

detailed and separate attention. Section 6 will test the stereotypes and, with the aid of further survey evidence, will examine longer-term trends and intentions. Section 6 will also test the 'stepping stone' theory and its counterpart, 'the closed door' theory.

v) Westminster-oriented Stereotypes

a) The 'Stepping Stone'

Four variations on the basic Westminster-oriented stereotype might be envisaged. The first would have tended to view or use membership of the European Parliament as a 'stepping stone' to a seat at Westminster. This is not necessarily to imply that such individuals came to Strasbourg with the express intention of using the advantages of the position to move on to what they considered to be greener pastures.<sup>23</sup> Rather, we could imagine individuals who became aware of, and were tempted by, opportunities that only gradually became apparent. This basic stereotype may be embellished by a number of additional considerations.

In the first place, it might be supposed that 'Stepping Stone' individuals would have tended to be relatively younger, since they felt they disposed of sufficient time, energy, and political capital to be

---

<sup>23</sup> Certainly this author would not agree with the statement that "most MEPs cherish national political ambitions, and regard their European mandate as a 'waiting position'". (de Winter, 1991:46)

able to envisage moving on from one political forum to another (by the same logic, it might be supposed that relatively older individuals would have been more likely to stay on in the Parliament). Secondly, since we are implicitly assuming both that 'Stepping Stone' individuals had (or came to have) only a passing interest in Strasbourg and that some at least of them had an abiding interest in Westminster, we would expect them to have been more likely to have made previous attempts to get to Westminster.<sup>24</sup> Put another way, we would expect a higher incidence of 'Stepping Stone' individuals among those who had previously contested a Westminster seat. Thirdly, similar reasoning (in particular, the search for teeth-cutting, spur-winning political experience) would lead us to hypothesise that 'Stepping Stone' individuals would have been more likely to have had previous political experience, whether at the local, regional or national level or, putting this conversely, that they would have been less likely not to have had such experience. Fourthly, since the individual soon became, or had always been, predominantly interested in getting to Westminster, we could imagine that his or her activity in the Strasbourg Parliament would have tended to be relatively low, and office-holding restricted to those sorts of positions perceived as being likely to enhance the individual's career

---

<sup>24</sup> We could also imagine, particularly among Conservative MEPs, individuals who had not expected to be elected in 1979 and who had, in effect, been using the European elections as a substitute for the more typical political teeth-cutting and spur-winning opportunities of contesting a 'hopeless' Westminster seat in a General Election or in a by-election.

prospects. Fifthly, and self-evidently, we would expect to find evidence that such individuals had been actively looking for nomination to a Westminster seat.

For the hypothetical 'Stepping Stone' MEP, European elections might have been seen as an additional possibility to advance the general cause of a political career, and not as an end in themselves. We could imagine that some of the individuals holding this view might have been encouraged by the knowledge that the UK Boundary Commissions were expected to recommend changes to Westminster constituency boundaries within the lifetime of the 1979 UK parliament. Since the Commissions had not reported for a considerable period, a large number of recommended changes were expected, which were expected to lead in turn to a number of selection procedures in 'new' Westminster constituencies. In addition, the 'Stepping Stone' MEP would have kept a weather-eye open to any by-elections, or general elections close to European elections (there have been many of the former and two of the latter).

**b) The 'Closed Door'**

The second Westminster-oriented stereotype would have come to Strasbourg on a similar basis to that of the 'Stepping Stone' individual. The only difference would have lain in the degree of success in that strategy. For example, we could imagine that, once elected, some individuals might have found membership of

the European Parliament disadvantageous and hence the way to Westminster barred, perhaps because membership of the European Parliament or the general reputation of the EC failed to impress or even gave a bad impression in constituency associations and selection committees. On the other hand, the individual might simply have been unsuccessful in the search for a plausibly winnable seat. For whatever reason, because this individual found the way barred, the stereotype is herein dubbed the 'Closed Door' individual. The 'Closed Door' stereotype would have had most if not all of the attributes of the 'Stepping Stone' individual; that is, likely to have been relatively young, to have previously manifested an interest in Westminster, and to have been relatively uninterested in activity in the European Parliament unless it could have been perceived as enhancing Westminster career chances in some way. In survey evidence, where available, we would expect such an individual to voice frustration or disaffection.

In the longer term, two variants of this stereotype could be envisaged. In the first case, an individual might since have come to terms with his or her failure to gain access to a domestic political career, and thereafter manifested more interest in activities and hierarchical advancement within the European Parliament. In the second, the individual might have become disillusioned or frustrated to such an extent that he or



she withdrew from politics altogether, whether temporarily or permanently.<sup>25</sup>

c) The 'European Stint'

The third Westminster-oriented stereotype that might be envisaged would have had more mixed intentions. Again, two variations might be intuited. The first would have been an individual who, from the outset, planned to remain in the European Parliament for a limited period of time only, followed by entry, or re-entry, into domestic politics.<sup>26</sup> The second variation differs from the first only inasmuch as that the decision to leave, or retire, came later.<sup>27</sup> This stereotype, herein dubbed 'European Stint', would have been likely to have shared some characteristics with the previous two stereotypes, in particular being relatively young and having possibly previously manifested interest in pursuing a Westminster career. However, we might expect the chief distinguishing aspects of the 'European Stint' stereotype to have been the manifestation of more interest in European Parliament activities on the one hand, and of little immediate interest in finding a Westminster nomination, on the other. Behind this

---

<sup>25</sup> This second variant is subsumed in the 'Frustrated/Disaffected' stereotype.

<sup>26</sup> Or alternatively retirement from politics, in which case the individual is subsumed in the 'European Political Careerist' stereotype.

<sup>27</sup> For example, perhaps following the offer of a Westminster nomination from a Westminster constituency association within the MEP's Euro-constituency.

stereotype's behaviour might have lain a belief either that he or she had some quality or experience of particular use or value to the new Parliament, or alternatively that experience of the new Parliament might be of use to that individual. We would expect these sorts of sentiments to surface in the survey evidence.

d) The 'Frustrated/Disaffected'

Like the third, the fourth Westminster-oriented stereotype would not necessarily have been clear about his or her ultimate intended destination at the outset. Such an individual, it might be intuited, was originally enthusiastic about pursuing a career in the European Parliament, but later became disillusioned or disaffected. This could have been, for example, because the Parliament's role or performance failed to live up to initial expectations, or perhaps because of insufficient possibilities for advancement through a lack of career structures. Several possibilities would have been open to this 'Frustrated/Disaffected' stereotype. Frustrated in Strasbourg, he or she might have turned to Westminster. In this case, on the basis of external characteristics alone, it would be difficult to distinguish between this stereotype and both the 'Stepping Stone/Closed Door' and the 'European Stint' stereotypes. On the other hand, the individual might have decided to retire from politics altogether. Again,

on the basis of external indicators alone, it would be difficult to distinguish between this and the 'Public Servant/Technician' stereotype elucidated below. To the extent that they could be made, such distinctions would, therefore, have to be based on survey evidence.

**vi) Strasbourg-Oriented Stereotypes**

**a) The 'European Political Careerist'**

At the other end of the intuitive scale are those individuals who would probably have had no interest in Westminster from the outset and who would have remained uninterested in moving on from the Parliament. Two chief categories might be envisaged. The first, herein dubbed the 'European Political Careerist', would, as the title suggests, have been attracted specifically by the idea of making a political career in a European context. Perhaps intent on making a name within the European Parliament, such an individual would clearly have been more concerned about how the Parliament should evolve, both internally and in relation to the other institutions, since the evolution of his or her own career would depend upon it. This hypothetical individual would correspond most closely to the professionalised European political elite envisaged in Cotta's thesis. The existence of such individuals in sufficient<sup>28</sup> numbers will therefore be crucial to the

---

<sup>28</sup> Again, the quantitative definition of 'sufficient' can only be roughly gauged.

logic of the thesis, since it is primarily, if not solely, those individuals who will militate in favour of constitutional reform.

Intuitively, we might expect this sort of European Political Careerist to have been relatively young, to have been less likely to have manifested previous interest in openings to a Westminster career, to have been far more active in the context of the European Parliament, to have been more likely to have occupied hierarchical positions within the European Parliament, and to have been more likely to have manifested previous interest in matters European or international.

But another variant suggests itself. This individual might already have an accomplished career behind him or her and might have wished to continue it, or begin another, in the European context. By the simple fact of already having an accomplished career, we would expect this individual to be relatively older. In all other respects, we would expect him or her to share similar characteristics to those of the younger 'European Political Careerist' variant.

#### **b) The 'Public Servant/Technician'**

The second stereotype would not have considered him- or herself to be a careerist at all. Herein dubbed the 'Public Servant/Technician', this stereotype would, as the title suggests, have been strongly motivated by a spirit, or tradition, of public service or,

alternatively (though the two are not necessarily mutually incompatible), by the idea of bringing a specific expertise, or representation of a specific interest, to the Parliament. Both variants would have seen themselves as performing their duties in the interests of a particular group, such as nation, region, party, constituency, trade union, profession, industry, and so on. Intuitively, we would expect this stereotype to have been older, perhaps having already enjoyed a successful career, and to have occupied less career-related positions within the Parliament, although far more likely to have developed a specialised role, which may have involved the occupation of a series of hierarchical positions. The 'Public Servant/Technician' stereotype thus displays several characteristics of the old-style concept of the patrician 'amateur' politician.

vii) Exceptions?: 'Non-Politicians' and  
Backbenchers

Table 2 summarises the main characteristics and indicators of the six stereotypical individuals elaborated above, together with their possible variants. A number of general comments are in order. Firstly, and as has already been remarked upon, the stereotypes are not necessarily mutually exclusive; when it comes to seeking correspondences between the model and the reality it is designed to help us understand it would be misleadingly restrictive to try placing individuals into

these various 'pigeonholes' as though they could only belong to one. On the other hand, the stereotypes have been developed as explanatory devices and, primarily, as aids to understanding; it is therefore legitimate to note, where apparent, how individuals correspond closer to some stereotypes and less closely to others.

Secondly, a potential objection to the stereotypical classification outlined in **Table 2** is that the classification is less than comprehensive. In

Table 2

## Summary of MEP Stereotypes and Characteristics

I. Westminster-oriented

## 1. STEPPING STONE:

- relatively young
- previous interest in Westminster
- previous political experience
- relatively low EP activity
- office-holding limited to areas perceived as likely to enhance Westminster career prospects
- searched for Westminster nomination
- now at Westminster (or nominated to Westminster seat)

## 2. CLOSED DOOR:

- relatively young
- previous interest in Westminster
- previous political experience
- (previously) relatively low EP activity
- office-holding limited (or previously limited) to areas perceived as likely to enhance Westminster career prospects
- searched for Westminster nomination
- still at Strasbourg
- voices frustration/disaffection

Two variants: a) becomes resigned to Strasbourg and pursues career there  
 b) disillusionment or frustration leads to retirement (this variant subsumed in the frustrated/disaffected category)

## 3. EUROPEAN STINT:

- individual planned or came to serve in the EP for a limited period of time only, followed by:

Two variants: a) retirement (this variant subsumed in the European Political Careerist category)

- individual likely to be relatively old
- b) entry, or re-entry, into Westminster
- relatively young (if entry)
- previous interest in Westminster
- more interest in EP activities
- (possibly) less immediate interest in finding a Westminster nomination
- some particular quality of experience perceived as being of use to the new EP
- and/or some experience of the new EP perceived to be of use to the individual

## 4. FRUSTRATED/DISAFECTED:

- formerly, to pursue a career in the EP, latterly:
  - a) stepping stone/closed door
  - b) stays put/becomes resigned to staying on (similar to 2.a)
  - c) retires
- originally active in the EP
- later searches for Westminster nomination
- voices frustration/disaffection

II. Strasbourg-oriented

## 5. EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST:

- to make or finish career in the EP

Two variants: a) relatively young

- no previous interest in Westminster
- active in EP context
- EP positions
- previous interest in European affairs
- b) already accomplished career and/or technical expertise
- relatively old

## 6. PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN:

- to put special skill/knowledge at disposal of EP group/party/interest group
- spirit of public/party/interest group service
- specific expertise
- and/or representation of specific interest(s)
- relatively older
- perhaps EP positions, but less career related
- perhaps specialised role

particular, two other potential categories of individual could be considered. The first corresponds to those "figures who would never have sought election to Westminster".<sup>29</sup> They are, in one commentator's words, "amateurs, not politicians at all".<sup>30</sup> In any case, the distinction is more pertinent to the debate about professionalisation outlined earlier. This author takes the view that elected MEPs are by definition politicians, and that the debate must then move on to what sort of politician they may be.<sup>31</sup>

The second category apparently excluded is the 'backbencher'. The traditional Westminster understanding of a backbencher is defined in relation to the front benches. Nothing remotely corresponding to government or opposition exists within the European Parliament, but the term is nowadays more loosely used to refer to those who do not occupy government-related hierarchical positions within the Parliament. On the other hand, backbenchers can and do occupy other positions, notably in committee. It was earlier pointed out that, for the purposes of this study, a backbencher is considered to be a sort of political careerist. But the backbencher is frequently characterised by a lack of progressive

---

<sup>29</sup> Butler and Marquand, 1981: 3.

<sup>30</sup> A pronounced implication is that, in comparison with national politics, European politics is amateurish, rather than simply different. This is an implicitly qualitative approach, and corresponds to another use of the word 'amateur', as referring to an individual who is perhaps not good enough but who in any case does not wish to be a professional. As is known from the world of sport, tennis or athletics being particular examples, the distinction between 'amateur' and 'professional' can become so blurred as to become otiose.

<sup>31</sup> That is, a matter of representational style. On this see Bardi, 1989.



hierarchical ambition (or, if not of ambition, then of achievement), and this absence of external indicators might make it difficult, in empirical terms, to distinguish between a careerist backbencher and, say, an individual corresponding to the 'Public Servant/Technician' stereotype. Even if, in purely theoretical terms, the distinction remains easy enough to make, the practical organisation of the Parliament<sup>32</sup> means that there are few objective, externalised indicators of the European Parliament's equivalent of backbencher status.

## **5. Constructing a Profile of the 1979-1984 UK**

### **Membership**

#### **i) Introduction**

Several categories of UK MEP sit uneasily with the characterisation of stereotypical individuals set out in **Section 5**. These would include MEPs with dual mandates, whether of the Commons or the Lords, and the three MEPs representing the constituency of Northern Ireland. These and other seemingly exceptional cases are listed below and will be considered separately and in more detail. The rest of this section is devoted to the construction of a detailed profile of the 1979 UK membership of the European Parliament. Information for this section has been drawn chiefly from the EUI European Parliament

---

<sup>32</sup> In particular, the absence of front bench teams and rotational, consensual, assignment mechanisms; see **Sections 8, 9, 10**.

Survey, together with data from secondary sources, including reference works and newspaper reports.<sup>33</sup>

ii) The Four Indicators

a) Age

**Table 3** displays an age profile of the 1979-1984 cohort of UK MEPs in 1979, the year of their election. There was a fairly even spread from the early forties through to the early sixties, but with concentrations about the late thirties/early forties, the mid-forties and fifties, and the early sixties and, in particular, about the ages of 35 (7), 42 (7), 50 (6), 55 (4) and 57 (5). Such precise concentrations of direct contemporaries would surely have enhanced the consciousness of peer group, and these concentrations can be traced through the profiles of the 1984 (40, 47, 55, 60, and 62) and 1989 (45, 52, 60, and 64/5) UK memberships, as set out in **Table 3**. These steadily aging groups of contemporaries, by definition electoral

---

<sup>33</sup> Two points should be mentioned in relation to the Survey data. First, at the beginning of May, 1983, the first, 1979-1983 Conservative Government announced that it had opted for a June General Election. Most of the UK MEPs had already been interviewed by this stage. It is possible that their responses to the questions on political careers might have been couched in slightly different terms had the election date been known. However, constituency selection processes had been proceeding since, and in some cases even before the Labour Party lost its High Court case against the Boundary Commission's proposals in December, 1982. (See Butler and Jowett, 1985: 38.) In other words, most respondents were in any case already in an 'election mood', so that it is doubtful whether any major change in responses would have occurred. The second point is that full confidentiality was guaranteed to respondents. Where there was a risk of breaching this guarantee secondary sources, chiefly newspaper reports, have been relied on.

survivors, embody the equivalent of Mellors' wave of 1945 MPs.<sup>34</sup>

Only two MEPs were already in their seventies, and the Table shows that no other MEP was to reach his or her seventies before the 1984 European elections. The bulk of the cohort were middle- to late middle-aged although perhaps, in UK parliamentary terms, (Mellors, 1978) relatively slightly younger. This fact does not in itself reveal anything but may lead us to suppose that the cohort might also have been relatively slightly less experienced as a consequence. The connection between these findings and King's theory will be considered below.

Notwithstanding the fact that few MEPs were already in their seventies, and that only five MEPs would have been over the normal age of retirement (taking this to be 65) by the time of the 1984 European elections, a further 12 MEPs would, if they were to complete a further five-year term, by then have been at the age of retirement. Intuitively, we might expect to find a higher concentration of individuals corresponding to either the 'Public Servant/Technician' or the older variant of the 'European Political Careerist' among this sub-set of the cohort.<sup>35</sup>

**Table 3** compares the age profiles of the 1979, 1984, and 1989 UK intakes. The existence of shifting

---

<sup>34</sup> See Section 3.1.b.

<sup>35</sup> This cannot be a strong expectation; politics is one of the few professions where age (and certainly not the age arbitrarily set for retirement) is not considered a barrier. Indeed, age as a venerable quality can be a considerable political advantage.

Table 3

Age Profiles

### AGE PROFILE OF THE 1979 UK EP MEMBERSHIP IN 1979

[illegible]

### AGE PROFILE OF 1979 MEMBERSHIP IN 1979

[illegible]

**Average age = 45.4**

### AGE PROFILE OF 1984 MEMBERSHIP IN 1984

28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67...	73	
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X
											X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X						X
											X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X						X

**Average age = 48.1**

### AGE PROFILE OF 1989 MEMBERSHIP IN 1989

[illegible]

**Average age = 48.3**

AGE PROFILES OF THE 24 AND THE 57 COMPARED

### AGE PROFILE OF THE 24

28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68		
						X							X	X							X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X							X	X

**Average age = 52.8**

Average age excluding two hereditary peers (\*) = 54.25

### AGE PROFILE OF THE 57

	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
X				X	X	X		X X X X X X	X X X X X	X X X X X	X X X X X	X X X X X	X X	X	X X X X X	X	X X X X X	X X X X X	X X X X X	X X X X X			X X X X X		X		X X	X	X X X				

**Average age = 42.3**

concentrations of 1979 MEPs has already been considered. In 1979, these peaks stood out far more clearly than they did in 1984 or 1989. This was partly because some MEPs from the 'peaks' lost their seats, and these losses had a levelling effect, but also because the 'troughs' in between the peaks were 'filled in' by new arrivals. Although there remained some discernible concentrations about the mid-thirties and forties and early and late fifties, the overall trend was towards a far more heterogenous membership in terms of age.

Further aspects of **Table 3** worthy of comment are the slight aging of successive intakes<sup>36</sup>, and the large intake of relatively young MEPs in both 1979 and 1984.<sup>37</sup> These findings have to be considered in the light of King's argument<sup>38</sup> that relative youth simultaneously implies relative inexperience and professionalisation.<sup>39</sup> King (1981) sees this as a worrying development, a form of political inbreeding, and a similar argument could be advanced in regard to the British membership of the European Parliament. If we take King's cut-off age of 45, 54 per cent of the 1979 intake was of that age or under; the figure for 1984 was 40 per cent, and for 1989 41 per cent. The 54 per cent figure for 1979 is offset

---

<sup>36</sup> Average age in 1979 = 45.4, 1984 = 48.1, 1989 = 48.3.

<sup>37</sup> Fourteen MEPs elected to the European Parliament in 1979 and eleven MEPs elected to the Parliament in 1984 were 35 or under.

<sup>38</sup> Section 3.1.a

<sup>39</sup> As King puts it, "a man or woman who enters politics at the age of between 30 and 45 is unlikely to have had time to become managing director of a large industrial firm or general secretary of an important trade union." (1981: 277) King goes on to argue that politicians "without a great deal of first-hand experience of the world outside politics are running the country".

and compensated for by the knowledge, gleaned in Section.3.iii that, as a consequence of the conscious intentions of the parties' candidate selection procedures, quite a high proportion of the 1979 intake brought considerable prior experience with them to the Parliament.<sup>40</sup> This was far less the case for later intakes.<sup>41</sup> Following King's logic, the existence of such large proportions of relatively inexperienced members could weaken the Parliament (especially its scrutiny functions), and render it inward-looking and self-obsessed. However, following Cotta's logic, a self-obsessed Parliament would not necessarily be a bad thing.<sup>42</sup> But the potential cuts both ways. In particular, if, as will be examined below, a link is established between youth and Westminster ambitions, then the existence of a large proportion of relatively youthful MEPs may have a debilitating effect on the workings of Cotta's thesis.

A later section will consider the cases of those MEPs who, for various reasons, may be considered exceptional.<sup>43</sup> The fact that a special section is

---

<sup>40</sup> Many of these were the 'exceptional' MEPs shortly to be considered.

<sup>41</sup> The downward course may be exacerbated by the trend, identified below, for people working in or about the Parliament and its members to be elected to it.

<sup>42</sup> Indeed, the trade-off between relative youth and relative experience brings us back to the calculation embodied in Typology V.

<sup>43</sup> Section 5.iii. These consist of: the pre-1983 dual mandates ((now Dame) Elaine Kellett-Bowman, Tom Normanton, the Rev. Ian Paisley, the late Sir Brandon Rhys-Williams, (now Sir) James Spicer and, from the Lords, Baroness Elles, and the Lords Bethell, Harmar-Nichols, and O'Hagan); the 'Lord-in-waiting', the Marquess of Douro; the Northern Ireland MEPs (in addition to Paisley, Ian Hume and John David Taylor); and nine others ((now Baroness) Barbara Castle, Sir Frederick Catherwood, the late Basil De

devoted to these MEPs does not mean that they are excluded from this analysis. Rather, by merit of their distinctive qualities, they already seem to correspond closely to one or more of the hypothetical stereotypes. One finding is immediately apparent from Table 3: the 'exceptional' MEPs were markedly older than the other 57 (with average ages of 53 and 42 respectively). We would therefore expect to find a higher incidence of correspondence with the 'older' stereotypes<sup>44</sup> among this group. Their temporary exclusion leaves a group of 57 MEPs. These have been analysed with respect to the following indicators: previous political experience; previous attempts to gain parliamentary office; and previous indications of European interest.<sup>45</sup>

---

Ferranti, Winnifred Ewing, Sir David Nicholson, (now Lord) Henry Plumb, the late Dame Shelagh Roberts, Sir James Scott-Hopkins, Madron Seligman, Sir Peter Vanneck, and Sir Frederick Warner).

<sup>44</sup> These are: the European Stint (variant A), the European Political Careerist (variant B), and the Public Servant/Technician.

<sup>45</sup> For space reasons, the analyses are not shown. The sources for the analyses were the Times Guides to the European Parliament, 1979, 1984, and 1989, and the European Parliament's own 1979-1984 Vade Mecum, cross-checked, where possible, with Who's Who (like MPs, all MEPs are automatically entered in Who's Who). Individual entries in these sources differ greatly in the amount of detail they present, and it should be stressed that since omissions are likely the analysis can lay no claim to absolute comprehensiveness. Moreover, it could be argued that, since MEPs probably at least checked, and perhaps even drafted, their own entries for all of these sources, any theory based on them may well be flawed and potentially self-fulfilling. This author holds the view that, while particular individuals might attempt to put a particular gloss on their curriculum vitae by omitting certain details or emphasising others, the essential details remain unchanged and verifiable, and it is only that essence (for example, did an individual previously stand for a Westminster seat?) which is of interest here.

## b) Previous Political Experience

An immediately striking feature is that 17 of the 1979-1984 MEPs (30 per cent of the 57, 21 per cent of the 81) had no previous sustained<sup>46</sup> political experience at all. Seven of this number<sup>47</sup> had previously gained nominations to Westminster seats and contested them in General Elections. Nevertheless, the experience of fighting for a political position is clearly not the same as the experience of occupying one. All 17 inexperienced MEPs were Conservative; Labour members were fewer, but relatively more experienced at the local government level. 23 MEPs<sup>48</sup>, 14 of them Labour, had substantial local government experience. This distinction between the two contingents had already been discernible in studies of the candidates for the 1979 elections.<sup>49</sup>

A second striking feature is that none of the 57 MEPs (together representing 70 per cent of UK membership) had had any previous national parliamentary experience, although this wasn't necessarily for lack of trying.<sup>50</sup> The low degree of national parliamentary

---

<sup>46</sup> For the purposes of this study, 'sustained political experience' might be loosely defined as occupation of a political or elected position for more than one year. It is thus likely to exclude ad hoc activity such as voluntary canvassing for a candidate.

<sup>47</sup> Balfour, Brookes, Curry, Christopher Jackson, Moorhouse, Moreland and Sir Jack Stewart Clark.

<sup>48</sup> 40 per cent of the 57, 28 per cent of the 81.

<sup>49</sup> See, eg, Butler, Marquand, and Gosschalk, 1979.

<sup>50</sup> This is not to say that there was no such experience at all; rather, such experienced individuals are all to be found among the 'exceptional cases' siphoned off for separate study.



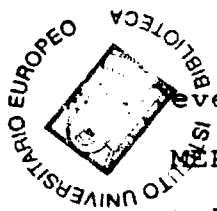
experience contrasts strikingly with other Member State contingents.

c) Previous Attempts to Gain Political Office

The most striking feature is the large number of MEPs (27; 47 per cent of the 57, 33 per cent of the 81) who had previously attempted to gain a Westminster seat. 16 of these (28 per cent of the 58, 20 per cent of the 81) had tried more than once, although seven of these cases were accounted for by the close proximity of the two 1974 General Elections. In the case of ten of the MEPs, their last attempt was in 1970 or before. In the case of 12, their first attempt was made in 1974. In other words, some of these MEPs had apparently long since given up their Westminster pretensions, while others had only just begun to put one foot on the Westminster ladder. Some of these had been unable to find a safe seat in the run-up to the 1979 General Election. (Butler and Marquand, 1981: 3) No less than 18 MEPs had unsuccessfully contested a Westminster seat in 1974.<sup>51</sup> On the basis of these statistics, it seems safe to suppose that, had there been no European Elections in 1979, many of these individuals would have surfaced sooner or later in Westminster elections, and some

---

<sup>51</sup> It will be remembered that contesting an unwinnable seat for the party is becoming a traditional way of winning one's political spurs. (King, 1981: 265)



eventually at Westminster.<sup>52</sup> Thus, for many, being an MEP was not so much "an outlet for their frustrated talents" (Butler and Marquand, 1981: 3) as a conscious step up the political career ladder.

There is another interesting aspect to these findings. King regards the decline in the number of MPs elected at the first attempt as an indicator of the rise of professionalisation in the House of Commons. (1981: 265 & 266) For obvious reasons, MEPs elected in 1979 would have had no previous opportunities to contest European elections. Following King, though, the high number of MEPs who had previously contested a Westminster seat may be taken as an indication of the proportion of 'professional' (in King's sense) politicians among the 1979 UK intake. The 1984 and 1989 intakes revealed a similar tendency, as will be considered in Section 6.x.

#### **d) Previous Indications of European Interest**

Surprisingly few UK MEPs (28; 49 per cent of the 57, 34 per cent of the 81) had recorded any previous interest in Europe and/or in European affairs.<sup>53</sup> Unenthusiastic or hostile Labour constituency associations and indifferent or sceptical Conservative ones may have numbered among the explanatory factors for

---

<sup>52</sup> In fact, as will be seen below, many of these individuals did eventually surface at Westminster.

<sup>53</sup> And this notwithstanding the possibilities, remarked elsewhere, of personal gloss.

this paucity; others might have included a simple lack of candidates with European enthusiasms or experience, or perhaps a conscious limitation of European enthusiasts on the party lists.<sup>54</sup> This paucity has been exaggerated by the exclusion of the 24 exceptional MEPs, but remains striking nonetheless.

e) The Possible Significance of Positions held within the European Parliament

One other significant set of indicators will be recalled from the stereotypical categories set out in Table 2; this is MEPs' activities after election, particularly in relation to hierarchical positions within the Parliament. Sections 8 and 9 contain a detailed study and analysis of the hierarchical structure of the Parliament, including consideration of the perceived relative importance, or 'pecking order', of its formal and informal positions of power and authority. They also describe the processes by which such positions are shared out among the various political groups, and the national contingents within those groups. What is important to note in the present context is that, with the partial exceptions of the Presidency and of the five positions of Quaestor, a strictly-respected convention has it that all political

---

<sup>54</sup> Holland (1986a: 70) found that, contrary to the impressions given by less empirical studies, "a pro/anti-EEC dichotomy existed and had a considerable impact upon the selection process", and that "this was more to the detriment of the pro-Marketeers than is realised". See also Holland, 1986b.

groups have a 'right' to a certain number of Parliamentary Vice-Presidencies, and Committee and Delegation Chairmanships and Vice-Chairmanships.<sup>55</sup> Sections 8 and 9 will describe how some hierarchical positions are important focusses of power and influence, and how others are largely titular. Some of these positions would seem irrelevant to an investigation into political careerism, while others might be potentially significant indicators.

Several problems over interpretation arise. A first is the impossibility of distinguishing between significant and unimportant appointments.<sup>56</sup> A second derives from the practical impossibility of distinguishing explicitly between ambition and ability. Individuals do not occupy positions simply on the basis of their own volition; the assigning authorities<sup>57</sup> must theoretically be convinced of their qualities. However, there is no obvious way of objectively quantifying or qualifying ability nor its rewards, and certainly no convenient external indicators. Moreover, the analysis in Sections 8 and 9 underlines the automacity, independent of ability, inherent in the assignment process.

A third problem is that there is no intrinsic quality in any of the positions listed which might,

---

<sup>55</sup> The groups' 'shares' are pre-determined, through the workings of the d'Hondt system of calculating proportional representation, by their relative size.

<sup>56</sup> Moreover, the significance of an appointment may depend on the individual occupying it, rather than the other way round.

<sup>57</sup> In theory, the electorates of the committee or group or party contingent membership; in practice, the group and party hierarchy.

particularly in the Westminster/Strasbourg context, indicate the direction of an individual's ambition. Again, there is no easy way around this problem, and it is difficult to find other information sources from which the probable direction of an individual's ambition might be deduced.

A fourth problem is that any list of potential indicators would be significantly incomplete. Again, as the analyses in Sections 8 and 9 will make clear, the Parliament's hierarchy includes a complex web of other positions, formal and informal, which it is practically impossible to quantify and analytically impossible to qualify. For all of these reasons, this section<sup>58</sup> has reluctantly excluded from empirical analysis positions occupied after election to the Parliament, although the more significant of these assignments will be taken into account in a more descriptive fashion.

### iii) The 24 'Exceptional' Cases

#### a) The Three Northern Ireland MEPs

The three Northern Ireland MEPs elected to the European Parliament in 1979 were already professional politicians in the sense of the definition given above. All had been deeply involved in local politics. All had been members of the ill-fated Northern Irish Parliament, of its successor, the Northern Irish Assembly (1973-75), and of the 1975-76 Northern Irish Constitution

---

<sup>58</sup> Though not later sections of the study.

Convention. Paisley had been a Westminster MP since 1974. Hume and Taylor were to become Westminster MPs in 1983. All were well advanced in their careers; Paisley was party leader; Hume and Taylor were deputy party leaders, and both of the latter had been Northern Ireland ministers. In order to see whether, and to what extent, there might be correspondence between these individuals and one or more of the six intuitive stereotypes, we must first consider why they became MEPs, and in order to answer this question we must first consider the particular circumstances of the European elections in Northern Ireland.

Throughout the 1970s, there had been "a bipartisan Westminster and Whitehall policy of reconciling the differences between the dominant Protestants and the minority Catholics<sup>59</sup>, and between the Unionists of various brands who relied on the British connection and politicians who looked to union with the Republic of Ireland". (Wood, D & A, 1979: 38) Because of Northern Ireland's particularly delicate political circumstances, it was broadly agreed in the UK political establishment that the Westminster-style, first-past-the-post system would be inappropriate to the six counties, and the legislation therefore provided for the "province" to be treated as one multi-member constituency, with three members elected by the single transferable vote (STV) system. It was hoped (rightly, though the results were

---

<sup>59</sup> As one commentary put it, Northern Ireland's electorate of about 1 million voters was "divided by 300 years of history and religion."

not exactly as expected) that this electoral device would ensure that the Catholic part of the population, outnumbered two to one by the Protestant part, would be able to return one of the three allotted positions of MEP.<sup>60</sup>

Some saw in the relatively high, and certainly more respectable, Northern Ireland turnout figures<sup>61</sup> an implicit criticism of the Westminster system, and even proof that systems of proportional representation enhanced electoral participation. The truth is probably more pragmatic; "...because the choice of STV enabled the election in Northern Ireland to be fought on a province-wide basis, it did provide a unique opportunity for some of the province's leading politicians to be pitted directly against each other." (Curtice, 1981: 180)<sup>62</sup>

In Curtice's explanation lies an indication of the three MEPs' probable motivations in standing for the European Parliament. Because of the distinct system (and, therefore, the disjunction from Westminster politics), the 1979 European elections were considered by the parties both as a region-wide test case, and as a

---

<sup>60</sup> Paradoxically, the STV system meant that, whereas at Westminster Northern Ireland had 12 seats and, on a comparison of national electoral quotas, was under-represented, the +/- 1 million voters had three members in the European Parliament, as opposed to an average of about 500,000 electors per representative in Britain.

<sup>61</sup> 57.8 per cent as opposed to an average of 31.8 per cent in Britain.

<sup>62</sup> Another explanation advanced at the time was that, because both Ireland and the UK were members of the European Community, the elections could be seen as having imminent implications for their common border. The implications of the Common Agricultural Policy for the region's large agricultural sector, a theme explored by Ian Paisley, were also thought to have encouraged a large turnout.

confirmation of the trends revealed by the 1979 UK General Election.<sup>63</sup> Since it was perceived as a region-wide contest, the leadership of the major parties took the European elections very seriously; the leaders of both the Official Ulster Unionist Party (Harry West) and the Democratic Unionist Party (Ian Paisley) stood, together with the Deputy Leader of the SDLP (John Hume).<sup>64</sup>

Further indications of the three MEPs' intentions can be gleaned from their post-electoral behaviour. John Hume (SDLP) joined the then nine-nation Socialist Group, where he rubbed shoulders with Britain's 17 Labour MEPs.<sup>65</sup> Together with three Danes (two from the Konservative Folkpartei, one from the Centrum Demokraterne), John Taylor (OUUP) joined the 60 British Conservatives in the European Democratic Group. Ian Paisley joined a new and innovatory political group in the Parliament, the 'Non-Aligned'.<sup>66</sup> Besides the Italian

---

<sup>63</sup> This held particularly true for the Official Ulster Unionist Party, which had seen its appeal to loyalist voters diminish in the May elections.

<sup>64</sup> That Harry West should have been beaten out of the running for a seat by his second-in-command, John Taylor, was one of the chief surprises of the results. West resigned the leadership as a result of this disappointment. Other surprises were the strong showing and second placing for John Hume, and the ease, despite loud misgivings beforehand, with which both electorate and electoral authorities handled the Single Transferable Vote system - spoiled votes amounted to just 2.4 per cent of the poll, and the six counts at Belfast City Hall proceeded smoothly, rapidly, and without any major hitches.

<sup>65</sup> As the leader (and sole representative) of his party within the Parliament, Hume was entitled to a position on the Group's decision-making Bureau, a position he has held uninterruptedly up until the present day.

<sup>66</sup> "Minor parties and independents with strong national or even nationalist interests had combined to win the marked parliamentary benefits of recognition as a group, with consequent facilities, finance, and membership of the Parliament's managerial bureau. They made it their first task to obstruct any attempt by the



Radicals, Paisley shared group membership with the Democratic Front of French-Speaking Belgians, the Flemish Belgian Volksunie, the Italian MSI and Proletarian Democracy, and the Dutch Democrats' 66.

With the exception of John Hume's (automatic) membership of the Socialist Group Bureau, none of the three Northern Ireland MEPs has ever occupied any hierarchical position of power or authority within the Parliament, nor has any ever acted as rapporteur on a major topic. Hume and Taylor both immediately joined the Parliament's Committee on Regional Policy and Planning. At least one commentary supposed that Hume's previous experience as an advisor to an Irish Commission member, Mr. Richard Burke, might lead to a European role (Wood, A & D, 79: 38), but this expectation was not borne out.<sup>67</sup>

On the other hand, Hume's European experience has certainly been brought to bear in the domestic context. In May 1992, a leaked document revealed an SDLP proposal to 'build both the Irish dimension and the European dimension into the administration of Northern Ireland.'<sup>68</sup> Under the plan, Northern Ireland would be run 'by a group of six commissioners - three elected

---

larger groups to raise the membership qualification for the recognition of a parliamentary group ... and under the leadership of Sgr. Marco Pannella, a lawyer and journalist who founded the Italian Radical Party, they gave early warning ... that they were masters of the rule book and parliamentary filibustering ... Some of the old parliamentary hands ... foresaw that Sgr. Pannella and his friends would be the awkward squad that every democratic forum needs, or at any rate gets." (Wood, A & D, 79: 78)

<sup>67</sup> Although in 1992, some British Labour MEPs suggested that he should run as Presidential candidate against the favourite, Egon Klepsch.

<sup>68</sup> The Independent, 13.5.92.

from the province alongside three others to be appointed by London, Dublin and Brussels.<sup>69</sup> In similar vein, earlier in the year in a letter to The Independent, John D. Taylor, now a Westminster MP, had implied that the level of knowledge at Strasbourg about Northern Ireland had been greater than at Westminster.<sup>70</sup> And a 3.6.91 Guardian profile described how, in Europe, the Rev. Ian Paisley "works harmoniously with his rival, John Hume," and also that "he has established a reputation as a skilled Euro-MP when it comes to getting pig grants for his Antrim voters. He was notably successful on issues of soil erosion and in extracting grants for coastal defences after the Northern Antrim floods..." An Independent profile of Hume pointed out that in the 1984 European elections 1,200 people voted Paisley first, Hume second.<sup>71</sup>

From all of the foregoing, it clearly makes little sense to talk about these individuals in the context of Westminster-oriented political careerism, even if all of them were, or were to become, Westminster MPs. Nor, as

---

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. See also an interview with the Irish Taoiseach, The Guardian, 6.6.92.

<sup>70</sup> The Independent, 12.2.92.

<sup>71</sup> The Independent, 3.12.88. A commentary on the 1984 European elections put it thus; "There is no evidence to suggest that being an MEP is rated as a secondary job to Westminster or a low-key role in Northern Ireland. On the contrary, senior politicians from their respective parties have contested the 1979 and 1984 European elections. Europe provides a wider stage for both Unionists and nationalists to lobby for their cause in Europe. It is the propaganda value of the European Parliament that attracts. In this respect, the SDLP has utilised the European Parliament (and the European Community) as a useful dimension to 'the Irish problem'...For some parties (Sinn Fein and the Workers' Party), the European election presented the rare opportunity to field candidates both sides of the Irish border, thus capitalising on the wider horizon provided by the European dimension." (Hainsworth, 1984: 458; see also Hainsworth, 1979)

we have seen, could any of them have been said to have been pursuing a Strasbourg career. If European elections were perceived as providing a regular and distinct three-way contest between the three major Northern Ireland parties, then Strasbourg would appear to have been perceived as providing another, far broader, and potentially more neutral forum and audience. This is certainly what these three individuals' European parliamentary activity (relative inactivity, no career-related activity, and only occasional interventions in plenary and committee on subjects having some bearing on their common constituency) would seem to imply.

One possibly applicable stereotype remains; that of the "Public Servant/Technician". This was defined, it will be recalled, as an individual "who puts a special skill/knowledge at the disposal of European Parliament group/party/interest group and/or vice versa."<sup>72</sup> The three Northern Ireland MEPs correspond to this description in almost every way.<sup>73</sup> It therefore seems clear both that the only stereotype to which these three MEPs correspond in any way is that of the 'Public Servant/Technician' (even if they might be considered as

---

<sup>72</sup> It was intuited that possible indicators might include:

- a spirit of public/party/interest group service;
  - and/or specific expertise;
  - and/or representation of a specific interest or interest group;
  - relatively older age;
  - less career-related EP positions;
  - perhaps a specialised role.
- (See Table 2)

<sup>73</sup> However, with regard to the one indicator, relative age, only Paisley fits the description, being 53 years old, 7.5 years older than the average age of 45.5; both Hume and Taylor were 3.5 years younger than the average age.

'political careerists' in another, domestic context), and that the correspondence is fairly close.

**b) The Scottish Nationalist MEP**

In several fundamental respects, Winifred Ewing's experience and position were, and remain, similar to that of the three Northern Ireland MEPs: she represents a peripheral area (both of the Community and of the United Kingdom) with a strong regional identity, severe economic problems, and competing centrifugal/centripetal forces vis-à-vis Westminster; she belongs to a small, non-mainstream (in British terms, though not in Scotland itself) political party; she is her party's only representative in the European Parliament; her party held ambivalent views about the European Community<sup>74</sup>; lastly, she had had considerable Westminster experience.

Curtice noted a further similarity: "Within Great Britain itself, the highest turnout, in the Highlands and Islands, occurred in a constituency which was distinctive in having two well-known candidates of substantial local repute." (Curtice, 1981: 180) Turnout was 39.4 per cent, as opposed to the British average of 31.8 per cent. The other well-known candidate was the Liberal, (Sir) Russell Johnston, MP for the Westminster

---

<sup>74</sup> The SNP had recommended a 'No' vote in the 1975 referendum on continued UK membership of the European Community, although Mrs. Ewing had previously been a member of the delegated European Parliament. By 1978, the SNP had opened a Brussels office, and its 1979 election manifesto, referring to Scotland's right "to join the international community as a free and equal nation", called for a new referendum, but also supported greater powers of scrutiny and control for the Parliament.

seat of the same name. In the 1979 European elections, he achieved a swing of + 12.5 per cent. Winifred Ewing achieved a swing of + 4.7 per cent. She contested the Westminster seat again in the 1983 General Election, but Russell Johnston held it. Her age, 4.5 years above the average age of all UK MEPs, suggests a further correspondence with the 'Public Servant/Technician' stereotype, as does her (then) membership of the European Democrats for Progress (EDP) group (she now belongs to the Rainbow Group).<sup>75</sup>

However, other information confuses the picture. The fact that she should have contested a Westminster seat in 1983 is perfectly understandable in the context of the rivalry between the two big fish of the two big parties in the region. It also suggests a continuing interest in Westminster which in turn suggests some possible correspondence with two other Westminster-oriented stereotypes; the 'Stepping Stone', and the 'European Stint'. On the other hand, Mrs. Ewing's 1983 General Election defeat suggests some possible correspondence with the 'Closed Door' stereotype. Finally, her hierarchical activity in the European Parliament since 1979 (Chairman of the Youth Committee, 1984-86), together with the fact that she did not contest the 1987 UK General Election, suggests correspondence with the first of the two 'Closed Door' variants; that is, the individual who becomes "resigned

---

<sup>75</sup> Like Hume, as the sole representative of her party and its leader in the Parliament, she was entitled to a position on the group's bureau.

to Strasbourg and pursues his/her career there". However, confounding these impressions is Mrs. Ewing's avowed original intention in 1979 to serve a dual mandate, a factor that puts her beyond the career dynamics inherent in five of the six intuitive stereotypes. Again, there would appear to be some correspondence with the "Public Servant/Technician" stereotype.

The analysis so far does not give a complete picture. In particular, it is important to remember that the most an SNP MP could have hoped for, in career terms, at Westminster would have been a distinguished career as a backbencher; the party was too small to have much power of patronage, and it certainly had no possibility of access to government. Moreover, since the Highlands and Islands region of Scotland was a major recipient of Community regional aid and houses other major interest groups (the fishing industry, above all) more affected by policy emanating from Brussels than from Westminster, Strasbourg may clearly have appeared more, or as, 'attractive' to the SNP as Westminster in the sense of the typology of legislatures developed above (**Typology II**). In this specific case, there is no one good 'fit' and several loose correspondences, and there the matter must stand.<sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>76</sup> There is clearly scope for studies into the way the European Parliament is increasingly seen by regional parties and political groupings as an additional, broader forum, going over and beyond domestic politics. For example, in addition to the cases of the SNP, SDLP, OUV and DU examined above, The Guardian reported that, if he had not been elevated to the House of Lords in the June 1992 dissolution honours list, the former President of Plaid Cymru, Dafydd Ellis Thomas, had planned to stand for election to the

c) The Other Pre-1983 Dual Mandates

- The Commons

Apart from Ian Paisley, four other sitting Westminster MPs were elected to the European Parliament in 1979.<sup>77</sup> These were; Mrs.(now Dame) Elaine Kellett-Bowman, Mr.(now Sir) Tom Normanton, (the late) Sir Brandon Rhys Williams, and Mr. (now Sir) Jim Spicer. In the run-up to the 1979 elections the Labour Party decided to forbid dual candidatures, insisting that sitting MPs should resign their seats before seeking nominations for European seats. As a result, of those Labour MEPs elected, only Barbara Castle had previously been a Labour MP. The Conservative Party was content to frown upon the practice. Although Mrs. Thatcher was known to be personally against dual mandates, no ban was enforced by the Conservatives because it was felt that, especially (it was said) in the light of the Labour Party's decision, the new Parliament was in danger of having no overlapping experience with the old one. In the end, a few enthusiastic, formerly delegated MEPs were allowed onto the Conservative Party's approved list, and it was left to those individuals to convince Euro- and Westminster constituency organisations that

---

European Parliament in the 1994 elections. This role might be diminished by the Maastricht Treaty's provisions for a Committee of the Regions.

<sup>77</sup> All were re-elected to Westminster in June 1983.

they would be equal to both jobs. Four of these MPs (and four peers, considered below) were elected.

Here, at least, was the sort of expertise and experience that had been absent from the previous analysis (of the 57 other MEPs) concerning previous political experience and previous indications of European interest, since all had had a considerable amount of experience of domestic politics, and all had served for some time in the delegated Parliament.

Again, the fact that they already held Westminster seats makes it impossible to analyse these individuals in the straightforward terms of the Westminster/Strasbourg orientation dichotomy. Nevertheless, three of them could still be seen to correspond closely to one of the six stereotypes. For example, Mrs. Kellett-Bowman declared "I am standing only for the first five-year session" (Daily Telegraph, 2.6.1979)<sup>78</sup>, and it was similarly reported that Sir Brandon Rhys Williams did not wish to stand again in 1984<sup>79</sup>. Although we have no express declaration of his motives, we know that Jim Spicer also stood down in 1984 (having been re-elected to Westminster in 1983). The behaviour of these individuals suggests a close

---

<sup>78</sup> "I am standing because I think it is crucial that the two parliaments do not get off at a tangent - we need to cog them in together. But I also believe that over the years the job will build up, so I am standing only for this first five year session." (Daily Telegraph, 2.6.1979)

<sup>79</sup> "Old Etonian Sir Brandon Rhys Williams does not wish to stand again at the direct elections to the European Parliament next June (1984). After ten years as an MEP, representing 556,000 voters in his London South East constituency, Williams says he wants more time to concentrate on writing and on the affairs of his Westminster constituency, Kensington and Chelsea." (The Times, 18.10.1983)



correspondence with the 'European Stint' stereotype, and of the second variant in particular; that is, "the individual planned, or came to serve in the European Parliament for a limited period of time only, followed by: ... entry or re-entry into Westminster." Among corresponding qualities are: "more interest in EP activities", and "some particular quality or experience perceived as being of use to the new Parliament"; in this case, membership of the Commons and previous membership of the old, appointed, European Parliament.

The odd-man out among the four was Tom Normanton. He decided to continue both his mandates until 1987, when he stood down from Westminster, with the intention of carrying on in Strasbourg, but fell foul of a three-way electoral squeeze.<sup>80</sup> In a sense, since he had served in the delegated European Parliament continuously since 1973, Normanton already corresponded loosely to the 'European Political Careerist' stereotype, and his decision to quit Westminster for a full-time career at Strasbourg seemed to confirm this. On the other hand, Normanton's age - 72 by 1989 - would seem to suggest that a further term at Strasbourg might have heralded the end of his career, rather than its continuation.

---

<sup>80</sup> He had had a 39,000 majority over the Labour candidate in the 1979 European elections. By 1983, projecting from the General Election results, his 56.1 per cent share of the vote had slipped to 47.2 per cent and, by the 1984 European elections, to 45.8 per cent (with the SDP/Liberal Alliance taking 20.2 per cent), though he still had an 18,000 majority. The Conservative share of the vote turned up in the 1987 General Election, back to 47.2 per cent, but in 1989 a simultaneous surge in the Green (11.8 per cent) and Labour (41.2 per cent) votes, together with a rump SDP vote (6.8 per cent), deprived Normanton of re-election by just 1,864 votes, which amounted to just 1 per cent of the total vote (181,378), in a constituency of over half a million.

This fact, together with his long and distinguished business and domestic political careers, suggests a closer correspondence with the 'Public Servant/Technician' stereotype. But again, as with the case of Winifred Ewing, there is no simple, single, close correspondence.

- The Four Lords and the Peer-in-Waiting

In accordance with its policy towards the House of Commons and dual mandates, the Labour Party banned candidatures to the European Parliament from members of the House of Lords. As has been seen, with considerations of political experience, particularly over-lapping European political experience, in mind, the Conservative Party did not entirely discourage such candidatures. In terms of political careerism, membership of the European Parliament could be seen as giving peers a sort of 'new lease' of political life.<sup>81</sup>

Of the four members of the Lords duly elected to the European Parliament, two were life peers (the Baroness Elles, elevated in 1972, and Lord Harmor-Nicholls, elevated in 1974), and two were hereditary peers (the Lords Bethell, and O'Hagan). Although two Liberal peers also stood (Lord Gladwyn in Suffolk, and Lord Mackie of Banshie in Scotland North East), neither

---

<sup>81</sup> For the simple reason that, although ministerial appointments for peers are not constitutionally precluded, they are by convention rare, whilst a peerage does not in any way preclude a (Strasbourg-based) elective political career.

was elected, so that all four peers elected to the Parliament were Conservatives.

In a sort of accidental symmetry, two of the four had substantial political experience (Elles had been a Lords front-bench spokesman on foreign affairs, and Harmar-Nicholls had been a backbench MP for 24 years and, briefly, a junior minister). The two relatively junior hereditary peers were less experienced, although both had been front-bench spokesmen.

At first sight, three factors combine to suggest a seemingly close possible correspondence between Lord Harmar-Nicholls' career and the 'European Stint' stereotype, variant (a). These are: his relatively advanced age at the time of election (67); his great experience, both as a politician and as a businessman; and the apparent nature of his departure at the 1984 elections (he was said to have 'stepped down').<sup>82</sup> In fact, Harmar Nicholls fell victim to the Boundary Commission's recommendations.<sup>83</sup> Harmar-Nicholls failed to re-appear in the 1984 Parliament for the simple

---

<sup>82</sup> Without further explicit survey evidence of some sort, we could not know the precise reason for his decision to retire, and hence we could not know whether the closest 'fit' would be with the 'European Political Careerist' stereotype, variant (b) (i.e. older, with previous political experience), or with the 'Frustrated/Disaffected' stereotype, variant (c) (for example, Harmar Nicholls was known to have been unhappy with the Tory MEPs' decision to change the group's name from 'The British Conservative Group' to 'The European Democratic Group' (Wood, A & D, 79: 77), and he was an enthusiastic member of the so-called 'H-block' of anti-integration Tory MEPs), or with the 'Public Servant/Technician' stereotype (that is, older, with a special skill or knowledge and/or particular interest).

<sup>83</sup> He had been 'injected' into the selection process (together with Paul Channon, who failed to get nominated) at a late stage during the selection process (Butler and Marquand, 1981: 71) and successfully negotiated selection and election in 1979, only to see his seat re-distributed out of existence in 1984.

reason that he failed to gain a nomination. Had he been successful, he would surely have re-joined that group of higher-ranking Tories<sup>84</sup> with distinguished careers behind them and distinguished positions in the Parliament ahead of them. A high-ranking EDG official said of Harmar-Nicholls that "he was a consummate political animal; if he saw an election, he had to fight it." This description corresponds closely to King's description of a career politician as someone who is "hooked". (1981: 250) It also indicates strongly that, despite his untimely departure, Harmar-Nicholls corresponded fairly closely to the stereotype of the 'European Political Careerist'.

Another of those higher-ranking Tories, Lady Elles, clearly and closely corresponds to the 'European Political Careerist' stereotype, both variants (a) and (b). She was relatively older (58 in 1979), had previous political experience, had previously shown interest in European affairs, and had previously held positions within the delegated European Parliament. Her case falls between variants (a) and (b) because, although she ended her career with the European Parliament<sup>85</sup>, she also successfully made a career there over a decade of membership. Her relative seniority within group and Parliament enabled her to launch a bid for the Presidency of the Parliament. At one stage or another, she held most other significant positions, having been

---

<sup>84</sup>For example, Catherwood, Elles, Plumb, Scott-Hopkins.

<sup>85</sup>In a manner of speaking; she is still an active member of the Lords.

Vice-Chairman of her group and a Vice-President of the Parliament, and Chairman of one of the Parliament's more important and powerful legislative committees. In short, the correspondence is strong.

Although he had demonstrated some previous interest in a Lords political career, Lord Bethell had also shown previous interest in the European Parliament, having been a delegated member for four years prior to his election. Since then, his activities have suggested a close correspondence with the 'Public Servant/Technician' stereotype. He has not occupied any important hierarchical positions (with the exception of a brief, two-year spell as a Committee Vice-Chairman) but, rather, has enjoyed an unbroken spell as a member of the Political Affairs Committee, where he has consistently pursued human rights issues, particularly in the East European context. Indeed, Lord Bethell's career in the European Parliament, which began with a high-publicity crusade for cheaper European air fares, has been characterised by the pursuit of single issues; an indicator of close correspondence with the 'Public Servant/Technician' stereotype.

Lord O'Hagan's case also corresponds closely to the 'European Political Careerist' stereotype. The youngest of the four (34 in 1979), he was an independent member of the delegated Parliament, and from 1976 to 1978 a member of the House of Lords Select Committee on Legislation for Direct Elections to the European Parliament. Throughout this period, he made known his

strong desire to become a member of the elected Parliament. With the exception of a brief spell on the EDG bureau, he has not yet occupied any hierarchical position, which fact would seem to suggest that he is happy to pursue his career in the Parliament from the backbenches.

Although not yet a peer, one other member of the 1979 intake should be included in this sub-category. The Marquess of Douro, heir to the Duke of Wellington, shared the quality of relative youth (44 in 1979) with Bethell and O'Hagan but, unlike them, had not been a member of the delegated European Parliament and had shown no other previous interest in Europe. However, he had contested a Westminster seat (Islington North, in October 1974), and had also served on a local council (Basingstoke Borough). Despite sitting on a 52,588 (32.2 per cent of the poll) majority in his Surrey West constituency in 1984, Douro stood down in 1989.<sup>86</sup> During his time there, the Marquess of Douro occupied no hierarchical positions within the Parliament, nor did he hold any important rapporteurships, although he was his group's spokesman on the budget for a while. At the same time, Douro kept up a busy and apparently burgeoning business career, together with his agricultural pursuits on the Wellington family estates.<sup>87</sup> This mixture of

---

<sup>86</sup> His seat was taken over by another member of the 1979 intake, Tom Spencer, who was re-elected with a slightly reduced majority of 49,342.

<sup>87</sup> In the 1979 Times Guide to the European Parliament, he was described as an executive director of an American investment company and deputy chairman of a commercial radio station; by the 1984 edition, he had become chairman of the radio station, and

indicators makes it difficult to discern any close correspondence with any of the six established stereotypes, though his relative youth and resignation from a safe seat would suggest that the closest possible 'fit', whatever the reasons for his departure, might be with the 'European Stint' stereotype.

d) Other MEPs with Previous National Political Experience

Of the three other MEPs with previous national political experience elected to the European Parliament in 1979, one stood head and shoulders above the others in terms of both quantity and quality of experience. Barbara Castle was "the only person of any national reputation among the candidates". (Butler and Marquand, 1981: 66) She had been a Westminster MP for 44 years, a Vice-Chairman, and then Chairman, of the Labour Party, a member of the Party's National Executive Committee for 29 years, and a minister of national repute for eight years, spread over three governments. Already, in the otherwise disastrous (for Labour) 1979 European elections, she had won one of only two swings to Labour.<sup>88</sup>

---

non-executive director of "an investment company, a forest pulp-manufacturing company, and a paper company".

<sup>88</sup> Albeit slight. A more eloquent indication of her electoral pulling power came in the 1984 elections. Displaced from her 1979 seat by the Boundary Commission's recommendations, and having struggled hard to frustrate a challenge for the nomination in the re-drawn and theoretically marginal Greater Manchester seat, the 72 year-old Castle went on to win the seat with a huge 37,698 majority, the second highest increase on the 1983 Labour Party General Election vote.

In terms of this analysis, Castle was rich in all indicators, save one, previous indications of European interest, for she came to the Parliament as a staunch anti-marketeer<sup>89</sup>, and only gradually demonstrated a gentle conversion. Despite the initial anti-marketeer label, Castle's case corresponds closely to the 'European Political Careerist' stereotype. She was relatively old, had a distinguished career behind her, a specific experience to bring to the Parliament, and a specific interest and viewpoint to represent and, despite her age, energetically pursued her career in the Parliament as leader of the British Labour Group, and as Vice-Chairman and Senior Vice-Chairman of the Socialist Group. Those who witnessed her swansong in May 1989, a fiery speech on the evils of animal trapping, could still see the epitome of King's description of a career politician; "They eat, breathe and sleep politics." (King, 1991: 39)

The late Basil De Ferranti's career path was less clear-cut and, ultimately, brought sadly to a premature close. On the face of it, there was some similarity between his political career and that of Lord Harmar-Nicholls; both had promising parliamentary and ministerial careers relatively early on in their political lives, and both cut them short, apparently in order to concentrate on business interests. But whereas Harmar-Nicholls continued as an MP in the House of

---

<sup>89</sup> Her husband, Lord Castle, himself, a former member of the old delegated European Parliament, had also been a vehement anti-marketeer.



Commons until 1974, De Ferranti resigned from political life altogether. He served as the Conservative MP for Morecambe and Lonsdale from 1958 to 1964, becoming a parliamentary secretary to the Ministry of Aviation in 1962. At this stage it seemed his business and political career interests began to overlap substantially. In 1963 he became Deputy Managing Director of International Computers and Tabulators, becoming Managing Director the following year, when he stepped down from Parliament. For the next decade he concentrated exclusively on his business interests.<sup>90</sup> Signs of political activity re-appeared in 1973 (just one year after the UK signed the Treaty of Rome), when he became a member of the European Community's Economic and Social Committee (ECOSOC). This was a nominated, non-elective, low profile and relatively undemanding position, but De Ferranti's old political proclivities soon began to reassert themselves; he was elected President of ECOSOC in 1976, and served in that position until his election to the Parliament in 1979.<sup>91</sup>

De Ferranti was clearly regarded as one of the larger 'fish' in what was considered to be a small and relatively undistinguished pool, and was promptly appointed to a number of prominent and prestigious positions within the parliamentary hierarchy; thus, he

---

<sup>90</sup> Being a Director of International Computers Ltd. and a Joint Vice-Chairman of the family firm, Ferranti.

<sup>91</sup> His chef de cabinet at ECOSOC, Robert Jackson, was a former member of Commissioner Sir Christopher Soames' cabinet. Jackson was himself elected to the European Parliament in 1979, and later went on to become an MP (1983) and a junior minister (a position he currently holds).

became joint Vice-Chairman of the European Democratic Group, a Vice-President of the Parliament, and Vice-Chairman of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee. In 1983, he launched a parliamentary Inter-Group, campaigning for the abolition of frontier controls and all non-tariff barriers to trade between Member States. The 'Movement for Free Movement' rapidly became one of the most popular of Parliament's Inter-Groups. Its aims received a tremendous fillip from the Commission's White Paper on the Internal Market, and the absorption of the White Paper's legislative programme into the Single European Act, and it has since remained among the most influential of cross-party pressure groups. De Ferranti's commitment to the cause extended to the seed financing of the Inter-Group's newsletter, quaintly entitled 'The Kangaroo News', which now enjoys a broad circulation throughout the European business community. It seemed that, as had been the case in the early sixties, De Ferranti's business and political career interests were again beginning to overlap substantially. Again, he seemed to lose interest in his political career. By 1984, he no longer occupied any formal position within the Parliament or his political group. Nevertheless, he remained one of the Conservative 'big guns'.<sup>92</sup> He was also still relatively young, being 58 in

---

<sup>92</sup> After 1984, he was one of only four Conservative MEPs with previous Commons experience, and in the elections had been "the only Conservative candidate in the area of relative Alliance success in central Southern England and the South Midlands to record an improvement on the 1983 Conservative vote (+0.4), while the Alliance recorded its worst result in the area." (Curtice, 1985: 153)

1988, when he was diagnosed as suffering from cancer. The disease was far advanced, and his decline rapid. He died in late 1988.

It would be pointless to speculate too much on what De Ferranti might have done in the Parliament. He was clearly not interested in a return to Westminster, but what appeared to have been a potentially burgeoning career in the European Parliament seemed to have been distracted by business/inter-group activities. On the other hand, as has already been intimated, it would be a mistake to concentrate only on formal positions of power and prestige within the Parliament, and it could be argued that De Ferranti had created a significant cross-Group power base from which to further the interests of what he clearly saw as his primary 'constituency'; the European business community. In terms of the stereotypical categories elaborated in Table 2, all of these characteristics point towards a Strasbourg-oriented individual with aspects corresponding closely to both the 'European Political Careerist' and 'Public Servant/Technician' stereotypes.

Sir James Scott-Hopkins was MP for North Cornwall from 1959 to 1966, and for West Derbyshire from 1967 to 1979. He was Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food from 1962 to 1964. He was an Opposition spokesman on agriculture from 1964 to 1966, and on Europe from 1974 to 1979. Thus, he missed out on ministerial preferment during Heath's 1970-1974 tenure, and much of the rest of his parliamentary career

was spent in the relative barrenness of opposition. Although he had been a member of the appointed European Parliament from the outset of British membership until the 1979 direct elections, during which time he served as Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group (1974-1979) and as a Vice President of the Parliament (1976-1979), his route to the 1979 Parliament was anything but straightforward. Together with two other Tory 'grandees' (the then Sir Henry Plumb and Baroness Elles), he suffered rejection by two nomination committees before winning nomination relatively late on in the selection process at Hereford and Worcester.<sup>93</sup> He duly took up the cudgels of Group leadership after the elections, but his nomination to the position was reported at the time as having been 'an awkward affair'.<sup>94</sup> Under such

---

<sup>93</sup> And only then on the explicit understanding that he would not continue in Westminster. The fact that he had by then become the Conservative Party's preferred candidate for the leadership of the Conservative Group within the Parliament seems to have been little, if any help.

<sup>94</sup> The story of the first Conservative Group leadership nomination is recounted in some detail in Butler and Marquand (1981: 72-74). After the popular Sir Peter Kirk's death in April 1977, Mrs. Thatcher passed over the obvious candidate-in-waiting, Scott-Hopkins, in favour of Geoffrey Rippon, a senior ex-cabinet minister who had managed the UK's entry negotiations in 1972-73. Rippon had constituency problems, and doubts about the dual mandate, together with difficulties in finding a 'tame' Euro-constituency to select him, led him to stand down from the leadership and the Parliament in 1979. The new preferred candidate was Paul Channon, previously a junior minister and later to become a long-serving Transport minister. Conservative Party headquarters tried to insert Channon as a late candidate in the selection process for the seat of Essex North East, but the candidature was rebuffed (in favour of David Curry, who was elected to Westminster in 1983 and shortly thereafter became a junior minister). Mrs Thatcher finally nominated Scott-Hopkins to the leadership on 28 March 1979; the eleventh hour.

circumstances, Scott-Hopkins could hardly have got off to an auspicious start.<sup>95</sup>

Latent rancour re-surfaced in 1982 when Scott-Hopkins unsuccessfully ran for the Presidency of the Parliament against Egon Klepsch and Pieter Dankert.<sup>96</sup> It was held that his premature candidature had split the right and allowed Dankert in.<sup>97</sup> Thereafter, Scott-Hopkins' star waned.<sup>98</sup>

Scott-Hopkins' case corresponds very closely to the 'European Political Careerist' stereotype. In 1979, he was relatively older (born in 1921), had had previous political experience and previous European political experience, and clearly manifested European political ambition. Last and not least, the nature of his selection effectively meant that his Westminster career was definitively behind him.

---

<sup>95</sup> On the one hand, he was to a certain extent the butt of those who resented the high-handedness of Conservative Party headquarters in imposing candidates and its own choice of leader. On the other hand, he suffered from the impression of having been 'second best', and was clearly not the preferred candidate of a Prime Minister who was to find herself increasingly at odds with the Community, the Parliament, and the British Conservative delegation within it.

<sup>96</sup> "Some of his colleagues were very critical of his performance and took the chance to oust him in July 1982 after he had put his name forward for the Presidency of the Parliament against the advice of some of his Group..." (Butler and Jowett, 1985: 24)

<sup>97</sup> Though it is known many Conservatives voted for the glamorous Dankert in preference to the blander Klepsch.

<sup>98</sup> Though, as a former minister and leader of the Group, his prestige and influence entitled him (such mechanisms will be examined later in this study) to a series of higher-ranking appointments, including Vice-Chairman, Political Affairs Committee, 1984-1985, Budgets Committee, 1985-1989, Environment, 1989-1991, though not a committee chairmanship. He has since served briefly on the EDG bureau (1985-1986, 1989-1991), and has chaired the Parliament's delegations to Canada (1983-1984) and to Cyprus (continuously since 1985).

e) The Eight Other Exceptional MEPs

Contrary to all the other exceptional cases considered so far, none of the eight other exceptional MEPs had had any previous national political experience.<sup>99</sup> Indeed, what distinguished these eight from their fellows was the fact that each came to the Parliament with a distinguished career outside politics behind them.<sup>100</sup> This fact alone narrows the range of possible correspondence to the older European Stint, the older Frustrated/Disaffected, the older European Political Careerist, and/or the Public Servant/Technician.

With the benefit of the hindsight of the past twelve years, a period which has taken most of the eight from a prime political age to relative old age, it is possible to see just how closely they did, or did not, correspond to the stereotypical categories listed above. Two, Nicholson and Warner, stood down in 1984. Despite their relative seniority, both in terms of age and

---

<sup>99</sup> Although Sir 'Jack' Stewart-Clark made an early attempt to get into the Commons, having contested Aberdeen North in the 1959 General Election, and some of the others had previously manifested some, if passing, interest in politics; Madron Seligman was President of the Oxford Union (where he became good friends with Sir Edward Heath); Sir Peter Vanneck was Lord Mayor of London (a largely symbolic but elective position); Dame Shelagh Roberts had been Chairman of the National Union of the Conservative Party, Chairman of the National Women's Advisory Committee to the Conservative Party, and had sat on the Greater London Council; the then Sir Henry Plumb had been President of the National Farmers' Union from 1970 to 1979.

<sup>100</sup> Hence the profusion of titles and honours. Hence also the fact that the eight fell within the same age range, all having been born within the decade immediately following the First World War: Seligman and Warner, 1918; Nicholson and Vanneck, 1922; Roberts, 1924; Catherwood and Plumb, 1925; Stewart-Clark, 1929.

experience, neither seemed to benefit from the initial share-out of 'spoils' immediately after the elections, and both seemed to have kept a low profile thereafter.<sup>101</sup> Warner made no secret of the fact that he had allowed his name to go forward for election to the Parliament under the misapprehension that the job would be part-time and relatively undemanding, and complained about the demanding nature of the large amounts of travel involved.<sup>102</sup> At the same time, Warner had stood so as to bring 'some of my diplomatic experience and skills to the benefit of the Parliament'. This information suggests a close correspondence with all four of the stereotypical categories listed above. Already retired and at a venerable age, Warner could be said to have seen out a European stint and thereafter retired. At the same time, his reasons for standing down suggest a correspondence with the 'Frustrated/Disaffected' category, and his desire to put his special skills at the disposal of the Parliament indicate correspondence with both the older European Political Careerist, finishing off his career with a spell in the Parliament, and the Public Servant/Technician. It proved impossible to speak directly with Sir David Nicholson, but Group officials have confirmed what his retirement and absence from office might have suggested; that he preferred to

---

<sup>101</sup> For a brief spell, Warner held a position in the EDG Bureau, and saw out his term as Chairman of the Parliament's inter-parliamentary delegation to Japan (he had been UK Ambassador to Japan 1972-1975). Nicholson saw out his five year term without holding any office.

<sup>102</sup> This is a matter of taste, rather than age. Madron Seligman was born in the same year and is still, at the age of 73, very much a regular attender and active member of the Parliament.

devote his career interests primarily to his business concerns, and that he found the Parliament's new, more active, lifestyle too demanding in terms of time. Again, this information suggests some correspondence with all of the four stereotypical categories, although perhaps less with that of the European Political Careerist.<sup>103</sup>

Two of the eight, Sir Peter Vanneck and Dame Shelagh Roberts, lost their seats at the 1989 elections, both having seen initially huge majorities steadily ground down.<sup>104</sup> Of the two, Vanneck's case seems to have corresponded closely to that of Sir David Nicholson inasmuch that he held virtually no offices during his ten year period of office<sup>105</sup>, and seems to have concentrated his career interests elsewhere. On the other hand, the fact that he stood in 1984 and again in 1989 rules out any correspondence with the Frustrated/Disaffected category and possibly with the European Stint category too. Since other information about Vanneck's intentions is scarce, the most that can

---

<sup>103</sup> In any case, hindsight suggests that Sir David would not have been able to continue his parliamentary career for very much longer; his nomination of the apparently safe seat of London Central (the Conservatives had had a 54.4 per cent share of the vote and an almost 40,000 majority over Labour in 1979) was taken over by the unfortunate Adam Fergusson, a sitting MEP who gave up his seat of Strathclyde West (a wafer thin majority of 2,000 in 1979, lost to Labour by a 33,000 majority in 1984), only to see the Conservative share of the vote decline to 35.8 per cent and the seat go to Labour's Stan Newens (30,000 majority), with whom it has remained ever since.

<sup>104</sup> Vanneck from 50.6 per cent in 1979, to 40.7 and then 35.5 (Labour 47.6), and Roberts from 52 per cent in 1979 to 41.6 and then 38 in 1989. Dame Shelagh lost her seat (to Anita Pollack) by the agonisingly close margin of 0.3 per cent, or just 518 votes in a constituency of just under half a million and a total vote of 193,954!

<sup>105</sup> With the exception of a brief spell, from 1987 to 1989, as Vice-Chairman of the Political Affairs Committee.



be said is that his case would appear to correspond most but not very closely to the categories of the older European Political Careerist and/or the Public Servant/Technician.

There can be little doubt, on the other hand, as to which stereotypical category Dame Shelagh Roberts most closely corresponded. Here was an older European Political Careerist par excellence; rich in previous political experience, and holder of several important positions within the parliamentary hierarchy.<sup>106</sup>

Two other European Political Careerists par excellence were to be found among the eight; Sir Fred Catherwood, and Sir Henry Plumb. And since both had originally been selected to ultra-safe seats (both got around 45 per cent of the vote in the 1989 elections), neither had had to contend with the prospect of possible electoral setback. Both were of sufficient weight in terms of previous experience and standing to be immediately awarded committee chairmanships in the 1979 Parliament (Plumb to Agriculture, and Catherwood to the Committee on External Economic Relations). Plumb succeeded Scott-Hopkins to the EDG Presidency in 1982, whilst Catherwood became one of the Group's Vice-Presidents. Catherwood, who was regarded as the flag

---

<sup>106</sup> She would surely have held more if she had not been brought down by electoral defeat. Dame Shelagh's special knowledge of women's affairs led to her Vice-Chairmanship of the Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women and suggests a close if weaker correspondence with the Public Servant/Technician category. Although the obvious, general point could be made that the relative age of the eight meant that all of them necessarily brought with them a wealth of previous career experience and therefore necessarily an indicator of correspondence with the Public Servant/Technician category.

carrier within the Group of a tendency more sympathetic to the idea of European integration (and therefore increasingly at loggerheads with the Conservative Prime Minister), stood in turn against both Plumb and Prout for the leadership of the EDG. Plumb won the ultimate prize of the Parliament's Presidency in 1987, and has now slipped into graceful retirement as an older statesman on the backbenches. Catherwood carried on as a Vice-President of the Parliament and as a member of the EDG's Bureau. Plumb and Catherwood's careers in the Parliament have both been good examples of the three cardinal required qualities for successful politicians at the upper end of the scale; weight, momentum, and timing. Although there were clear differences of style and manner between them, the only fundamental difference between the two in career terms was their perceived relative distance from the mainstream 'pulse' of domestic Conservative politics.

There remain two distinct individual cases. The first, Sir 'Jack' Stewart Clark, gave up a successful career in senior management for the Parliament. In 1985-1986 Sir Jack enjoyed a high profile as Parliament's rapporteur for a special committee of inquiry into drug trafficking and abuse. He was also briefly a Vice-President of Parliament's delegation to Japan. However, his chief activity throughout almost the whole twelve-year period had been an extraordinary unbroken run as Treasurer of the EDG, a position of not inconsiderable, if discreet, power and influence. In January 1992,

Stewart Clark moved on to a Vice-Presidency of the Parliament (taking over Catherwood's position).<sup>107</sup> As such a 'niche' politician, Stewart-Clark clearly corresponds closely both to the younger European Political Careerist (he was only fifty when first elected) and the Public Servant/technician stereotypes.

If Madron Seligman had followed the orthodox political career pattern of former Presidents of the Oxford Union who go into politics, he would almost certainly have become 'something' in domestic politics. However, he opted for a career in business.<sup>108</sup> Since election he has also been something of a niche politician, having been either a member or a Vice-Chairman of the Energy Committee for the past twelve years. This factor, bringing a particular expertise to bear on a particular area of the Parliament's activities (he EDG Energy Spokesman from 1979 until the Group's dissolution in 1992), would suggest some correspondence with the Public Servant/Technician stereotype, a suggestion underlined by his chairmanship of an inter-

---

<sup>107</sup> There have been few examples of such faithful service to one particular hierarchical position within the Parliament. Among the 1979 UK intake of MEPs, only Anthony Simpson's run as a quaestor (1979-1986, 1989-onwards), and Andrew Pearce's long stint as Vice-President on the EEC-ACP Consultative Assembly (from 1979 till he lost his seat in 1989) come close. John Hume has served an unbroken stint as a member of the Socialist Group Bureau, but as he is the leader of his party in the Parliament, his election to that position is automatic. The consistent activities of members like Stewart-Clark, Simpson, and Pearce sets them apart as what might be termed 'niche' politicians; that is to say, having once found a middle-ranking hierarchical position that is either relatively obscure or generally perceived as being unduly onerous or uninteresting, they then camp out in it for so long that it almost becomes theirs by right.

<sup>108</sup> At the time of his election he was able to list his activities as including marketing director of a business group with 'over 60 companies worldwide'.

group for animal rights and his sometimes passionate stands on related issues. Like Stewart-Clark, Seligman was elected to a safe seat<sup>109</sup>, and has therefore been relatively free to develop the role of his choosing.<sup>110</sup> Taken altogether, it seems Seligman opted for the role of specialised backbencher. Being a committed backbencher is not incompatible with a correspondence to the European Political Careerist stereotype, and Seligman's case comes closest to this and, like Stewart Clark, the Public Servant/Technician stereotypes.

Table 4 lists the closest corresponding stereotypes of all 24 exceptional MEPs. It will be seen that the largest number of correspondences are with the

---

<sup>109</sup> Sussex West, 47.4 per cent of the vote in 1989; Stewart Clark's neighbouring Sussex East seat returned him with 48.2 per cent.

<sup>110</sup> Butler and Jowett (1985: 28) point out that, together with Christopher Prout, Seligman was one of the few MEPs to attempt to hold regular Westminster-style constituency surgeries.

Table 4

# The 24 Exceptional MEPs and Closest Corresponding Stereotypes

## THE 24 EXCEPTIONAL MEPs AND CLOSEST CORRESPONDING STEREOTYPES

a) The three Northern Ireland MEPs	
John HUME:	PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN
Ian PAISLEY:	PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN
John TAYLOR:	PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN
b) The Scottish Nationalist MEP	
Winifred EWING:	EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST CLOSED DOOR/EUROPEAN STINT PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN
c) The four English Dual Mandates	
Elaine KELLETT-BOWMAN:	EUROPEAN STINT
Tom NORMANTON:	EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST
Brandon RHYS-WILLIAMS:	PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN
Jim SPICER:	EUROPEAN STINT
d) The four Peers and the Peer-in-waiting	
Lord BETHELL:	PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN
Baroness ELLES:	EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST
Baron HARMAR-NICHOLS:	EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST EUROPEAN STINT? PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN
Lord O'HAGAN:	EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST
Marquess of DOURO:	EUROPEAN STINT? FRUSTRATED/DISAFFECTED?
e) The three previous Ministers	
Barbara CASTLE:	EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN
Basil DE FERRANTI:	EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN
James SCOTT-HOPKINS:	EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN
f) The eight Others	
Fred CATHERWOOD:	EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN*
David NICHOLSON:	EUROPEAN STINT? FRUSTRATED/DISAFFECTED? PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN*
Madron SELIGMAN:	EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN)
Jack STEWART CLARK:	EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN*
Henry PLUMB:	EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN*
Frederick WARNER:	EUROPEAN STINT FRUSTRATED/DISAFFECTED PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN*
Sir Peter VANNECK:	PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN* EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST
Shelagh ROBERTS:	EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERIST PUBLIC SERVANT/TECHNICIAN*

\* Since all eight came to the Parliament with lengthy extra-parliamentary, non-political careers behind them, this stereotype almost automatically corresponds in their cases.

Public Servant/Technician and the European Political Careerist stereotypes, with a lesser concentration on European Stint. From what is known of the selection procedures and of the general characteristics of the candidates, such concentrations might intuitively have been expected; that is, a predominance of individuals relatively enthusiastic for the European construct, if not necessarily for further integration, and of individuals selected for their past experience or specialised knowledge.<sup>111</sup> These findings at least partly confirm the supposition that individuals corresponding to the European Political Stereotype and the Public Servant/Technician would be more likely to be concentrated among relatively older MEPs.<sup>112</sup>

---

<sup>111</sup> Such specialisations, from Winifred Ewing's defence of the Scottish fishing industry, to Basil De Ferranti's pressure group against internal frontiers and Madron Seligman's pressure group for animal rights, are perfect examples of Edmund Burke's concept of the sectoral representative, what Pitkin (1972) has termed 'the representation of interests'. "Although the City of Birmingham elects no members to Parliament, it can still be virtually represented there because Bristol sends members; and these are really representatives of the trading interest, of which Birmingham, too, is a part ... Burke conceives of broad, relatively fixed interests, few in number and clearly defined ... These interests are largely economic, and are associated with particular localities ... He speaks of a mercantile interest, an agricultural interest, a professional interest. To a very great extent, these interests are conceived as 'unattached'; it is not the interest of farmers but the agricultural interest ..." (1972: 174) Intuitively, it might be imagined that such a representative 'style' could prove more appropriate to the specific context of the European Parliament. For example, Hagger and Wing (1979a) and Wing *et al* (1980) found specialisation to be a characteristic feature of the old, nominated Parliament.

<sup>112</sup> And European Stint. See Note 44 above.

## 7. Testing the Stereotypes

### i) Testing the Westminster-oriented stereotypes

We can now turn our attention to the 57 other UK MEPs. This section will test the correspondence of the Westminster-oriented stereotypes against what is known of the 57 MEPs' observable electoral or election-related behaviour. As has already been pointed out, the period under examination has been particularly rich in electoral activity, with UK General Elections in 1983, 1987, and 1992, and European elections in 1984 and 1989. Furthermore, the changes introduced by the 1983 Boundary Commissions and the introduction of compulsory reselection for sitting Labour MPs, together with the retirement of several MEPs, the death of one, and a considerable number of by-elections, provided still further occasions<sup>113</sup> for sitting MEPs to try for selection to a Westminster seat. Table 5 summarises the electoral and selectoral fortunes of the 1979 UK MEPs, with information about the 24 'exceptional' MEPs given in brackets. The vagaries of electoral and selectoral systems have taken their toll; of the 81 UK MEPs elected in 1979, only 30 were returned in both 1984 and 1989. Including Kellett-Bowman and Spencer, 32 of the original 81 were, by 1989, still sitting MEPs. Of the other 49, electoral defeat accounted for 21, and 'selectoral' defeat for five more. Eight retired or stood down, and

---

<sup>113</sup> perhaps 'temptations' would be a more accurate term.

one (De Ferranti) died. The other electoral factor, Westminster, accounted for the remaining 15; 12 were elected to the House of Commons, either in the General Elections of 1983 and 1987 or, in the case of Ann Clwyd, in a 1983 by-election, and the last three dropped the Strasbourg part of their former dual mandates in favour of continuing at Westminster. Putting these facts another way, departure for Westminster was the second most important factor for electoral turnover after electoral defeat (15 as opposed to 21). But Table 5 does not paint the whole picture; in particular, it can tell us nothing about those MEPs who tried to get a Westminster seat and failed.<sup>114</sup>

To overcome this handicap, a complete survey of The Times reporting from 1979 to the present day was conducted, with every explicit reference to an MEP's involvement in a selection process for a Westminster seat noted. Such a survey would be unlikely to reveal all attempts. In the first place, not all of them would have been reported.<sup>115</sup> But there are other reasons why comprehensive reportage would have been unlikely.

After its 1979 General Election defeat, the Labour Party introduced compulsory reselection for all sitting MPs, and Walworth Road feared (in retrospect, not without justification) that the process would be likely

---

<sup>114</sup> That is, individuals corresponding to the 'Closed Door' variant of the Westminster-oriented political careerist.

<sup>115</sup> And certainly not all of them would have been reported in The Times, it being in any case the sort of snippet of gossip information most likely to be found as a space-filler in the gossip columns.



Table 5

## ELECTORAL AND SELECTORAL FORTUNES OF THE 81 1979 UK MEPs

(Names and Numbers in square brackets [ ] denote 'exceptional' MEPs)

	LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	OTHER	ALL
STOOD DOWN IN 1984:  RETIRED*		Neil BALFOUR (1) Ian DALZIEL (2) Stanley JOHNSON (3) [David NICOLSON ] [Frederick WARNER] [Harmer HARMER-NICHOLLS]		3 + [3] = 6
SELECTED TO WESTMINSTER 1983/84 (4)	Roland BOYES Richard CABORN Allan ROGERS Ann CLWYD (5)	Eric FORTH David HARRIS Robert JACKSON John M. TAYLOR		4 + 4 = 8
CONTINUED WESTMINSTER e dropped trasbourg half of ual mandate in 1984)		[Elaine KELLETT-BOWMAN] [Brandon RHYS-WILLIAMS] [James SPICER]		[3]
RE-SELECTED*	Derek ENRIGHT (6) Michael GALLAGHER (7) Brian KEY (8)			3
OST SEAT IN 1984		Adam FERGUSON (9) Norvella FORSTER (10) Gloria HOOPER (11) William HOPPER (12) Brian HORD (13) Edward KELLETT-BOWMAN (14) Robert MORELAND (15) John PURVIS (16) Tom SPENCER (17) Alan TYRRELL (18)		10
STOOD DOWN IN 1989  RETIRED*	[Barbara CASTLE]	[Marquess of DOURO] [Baroness ELLES] Alexander SHERLOCK		[1]+[2] + 1 = 4
SELECTED TO WESTMINSTER 1987 (19)	Winston GRIFFITHS Joyce QUIN	David CURRY John MARSHALL	[John TAYLOR]	2 + 2 + [1] = 5
OST SEAT IN 1989		Robert BATTERSBY (20) Beata BROOKES (21) Richard COTTRELL (22) John DE COURCY LING (23) Alisdair HUTTON (24) Andrew PEARCE (25) James PROVAN (26) Fred TUCKMAN (27) [Tom NORMANTON] (28) [Sheila ROBERTS] [Peter VANNECK]		8 + [3] = 11
IED, 1988		[Basil DE FERRANTI]		[1]

## Table 5

## Notes

1. Balfour's seat of Yorkshire North (and majority of 57,056) was redistributed out of existence by the 1983 Boundary Commission. It is not clear whether he subsequently sought nomination elsewhere.
2. Dalziel was elected to his Lothian seat in 1979 by a relatively narrow majority of just over 5,000 votes. Heavily redistributed, the seat was won in 1984 by the Labour candidate with a 14 per cent majority. Dalziel did not contest the seat in 1984. Sources within his former party group suggest he was surprised to have been elected in 1979 and found the rhythm of work and travel more demanding than he had expected.
3. In a sense, Johnson was hoist by his own petard. He was genuinely interested in seeking a Westminster seat (see Table 26), but was vexed by the carpet-bagging activities of his Group colleagues whom, in a 'private group meeting', he accused of 'chasing around like locusts on the face of Egypt', without informing their Euro-constituencies. (*The Times*, 12.3.83) In order to avoid accusations of double standards, he resigned his own Euro-constituency nomination, but was then unsuccessful in his search for a Westminster nomination. Johnson went back to his previous career as an Environmental specialist in the EC Commission, and is now an expert with the Rome-based Food and Agriculture Organisation.
4. It is significant that all eight entries in this row have since occupied positions in Government or Opposition.
5. Chwyd was elected to Westminster in the Cynon Valley by-election in May 1984, just two months before the European elections.
6. Enright's Leeds constituency was fundamentally re-drawn by the 1983 Boundary Commission. On the pro-European wing of his party, he was denied nomination (the seat was represented, and won, by Michael McGowan). He agreed to fight, and duly lost, the hopeless (for Labour) seat of Kent East. In 1991, Enright was elected to the House of Commons in the Hemsworth by-election.
7. Having been elected as a Labour MEP in 1979, Gallagher left the Party and joined the SDP on 5 January 1984. He was selected (by the SDP) to fight the Tory safe seat of Lancashire Central (to which the sitting MEP, Michael Welsh, was re-elected with 50.4 per cent share of the vote), and came a poor third.
8. After a disputed re-selection procedure, Key, another noted pro-European, was denied the nomination. His successor, Norman West, was returned with a 67,749 Labour majority, 66.4 per cent of the vote. Key's de-selection was reported at the time as a straightforward fight between pro- and anti-Market elements within the local party. However, a party source has pointed out that when Key was originally selected the NUM, which was boycotting the European elections, was absent from the constituency selection committee. According to this view, Key was also noted for being on the right of the party, and his de-selection (with the NUM now represented on the committee) would have been more a matter of the prevailing ideological climate than of his views on Europe.
9. Fergusson switched nominations from the Tory marginal seat of Strathclyde West (Conservative majority of 1,827 in 1979; Labour majority of 23,038 in 1984) to the apparently less marginal seat of London Central (Conservative majority of 39,194 in 1979, and a calculated majority of 28,525 in 1983 - i.e., extrapolated from the General Election result), which he then lost to a locally well-known former Labour MP, Stan Newens. Again, the seat had been substantially redrawn by the 1983 Boundary Commission.
10. The 1983 Boundary Commission did away with Forster's marginal (5,237 Conservative majority in 1979) seat of Birmingham South. She was nominated to the newly constituted marginal (Conservative majority of just 829, based on 1983 General Election figures) of Birmingham East, where she lost to Christine Crawley (Labour majority of 13.9 per cent in 1984, 26.3 per cent in 1989).
11. Again, Hooper's marginal (7,227 Conservative majority in 1979) seat was done away with by the Boundary Commission. She was nominated to the new seat of Merseyside West, which she lost to Ken Stewart (Labour majority of 8.5 per cent). Hooper has since been elevated to a peerage and has served as a Government Minister - see Table 47.
12. Hopper was not himself obliged to find a new seat by the Boundary Commission's work, but had the misfortune to find himself up against the doughty Barbara Castle, herself dislodged from her (relatively) safe seat of Greater Manchester North (Labour majority of 11 per cent in 1979). Hopper had won the seat in 1979 by the narrowest of margins: 302 votes, or just 0.2 per cent. In the event, Castle had an easy victory (Labour majority of 37,898). It is worth pointing out that she had first applied to that seat in 1979, but had been excluded from the short list!
13. Hord was another of the sitting Conservative MEPs to suffer grievously from the 1983 boundary changes, and even considered launching a court case against the Boundary Commissioners. (Butler and Jowett, 1985: 38) He lost his seat to Michael Elliot (Labour) by just 5,229 votes.
14. Kellert-Bowman lost the seat to Michael Hindley (Labour majority of 7,905). Following the 1988 death of Basil de Ferranti, he was selected and elected to the Conservative safe seat of Hampshire Central.
15. Staffordshire East was another seat substantially re-drawn in 1983. Moreland was beaten into second place by the Labour candidate, George Stevenson (a small majority of 7,867).
16. In Purvis' seat of Scotland Mid and Fife, a small Conservative majority of 7,487 in 1979 was transformed into a Labour (Alex Falconer) majority of 27,166 in 1984. Purvis was another of those Tory candidates who, according to group insiders, may have been surprised to have won in 1979.
17. Spencer was another MEP to suffer from the boundary changes. His Derbyshire seat Conservative majority of 18,699 in 1979 swung to a Labour (Geoffrey Moon) majority of 6,853 in 1984. When the Marquess of Douro stood down in 1989, Spencer won the nomination to his Conservative safe seat of Surrey West, which he retained with a 49,342 (27.4 per cent majority) in 1989.

18. Tyrrell's London East seat was one of the few entirely unaffected by the Boundary Commission. Nevertheless, a small Conservative majority of 13,015 in 1979 turned into a slightly smaller Labour (Carol Tongue) majority of 12,159 in 1989. Tyrrell fought the same seat in 1989, but Tongue extended Labour's majority to 27,385.

19. Again, all five entries in this row have since occupied Government or Opposition positions at Westminster! (See Table 26)

20. Humberside was a notable 1989 Labour (Peter Crampton) gain. (Conservative majority in 1979, 23,010; in 1984, 8,015. Labour majority in 1989, 16,328.) Battersby has been re-selected to fight the seat in 1994.

21. The loss of Brookes' North Wales seat was another significant Labour (Joseph Wilson) 1989 gain. (Conservative majority in 1979, 27,546; in 1984, 12,278; Labour majority in 1989, 4,460.)

22. Another significant Conservative loss. Cottrell's Bristol majority was reduced from 40,717 in 1979, to 17,644 in 1984, and a Labour (Ian White) majority of 9,982 in 1989.

23. Idem. De Courcy Ling's Midlands Central seat majority was reduced from 48,049 in 1979, to 12,720 in 1984, and a Labour (Christine Oddy) majority of 5,093 in 1989.

24. Idem. Hutton's Scotland South seat majority was reduced from 23,671 in 1979, to 3,137 in 1984, and a Labour (Alex Smith) majority of 15,693 in 1989.

25. Idem. Pearce's Cheshire West seat majority was reduced from 46,313 in 1979, to 9,710 in 1984, and a Labour (Lyndon Hanson) majority of 23,201 in 1989. Pearce unsuccessfully fought the Westminster seat of Ellesmere Port and Neston in the 1992 General Election (see Table 26).

26. Idem. Provan's Scotland North East 1979 majority of 13,414 was reduced to 9,171 in 1984. Labour (Henry McCubbin) won the seat with a narrow 2,613 majority in 1989.

27. Idem. Tuckman's Leicester 1979 majority of 33,864 was reduced to 2,892 in 1984, and a Labour (Mel Read) majority of 15,322 in 1989.

28. Normanton's Cheshire East majority was reduced from 39,316 in 1979 to 18,376 in 1984. In 1989, the Labour candidate, Brian Simpson, just scraped ahead with a 1,864-vote majority out of a total vote of 181,378. This was a particularly cruel irony as Normanton, who had previously enjoyed a dual mandate, had in 1987 stood down from his Westminster seat in order to concentrate on his Strasbourg duties (the other three 1979 dual mandate MEPs, Elaine Kellett-Bowman, Sir Brandon Rhys Williams and Jim Spicer, all resigned the Strasbourg half of their mandates in 1984).

to encourage a number of opportunistic candidatures from outside interests, including Labour MEPs. The Party therefore went out of its way to try and limit unseemly squabbles between candidates and un-seated MPs, and introduced rules to limit the number of outside 'challenges'.<sup>116</sup> In the event, at least three Labour MEPs<sup>117</sup> tried to unseat sitting MPs in the reselection process.<sup>118</sup>

Conservative Central Office was also "...keen to keep the wraps on the entire process"<sup>119</sup> of selection to Westminster seats, although compared to the Labour Party it had less problems when it came to the selection procedure for the 1984 European elections.<sup>120</sup> Nevertheless, Conservative attempts to maintain quiet discretion about selection procedures were blown off course by an ugly row in the Conservative parliamentary seat of Clwyd, where the sitting MP, Sir Anthony Meyer<sup>121</sup>

---

<sup>116</sup> Conversely, the Party decided to wait until after the 1983 General Election before beginning the selection process to European seats necessitated by the Boundary Commission's recommendations, in order to allow displaced Labour MPs a chance of standing. (Butler and Jowett, 1985: 66)

<sup>117</sup> Richard Caborn, Alf Lomas and Barry Seal. Caborn was successful.

<sup>118</sup> Four of the five former MPs who lost their Westminster seats in the 1983 General Election and were successfully selected and elected to the European Parliament in 1984 were Labour (Bob Cryer, Leslie Huckfield, Stan Newens, and John Tomlinson - Sheila Faith was the fifth). So easy did the Strasbourg to Westminster process appear to be becoming that the 1991 Labour Party Conference decided to forbid sitting MEPs from putting their names forward for Westminster nominations.

<sup>119</sup> The Times, 9.3.83.

<sup>120</sup> "The great majority of the 60 (Conservative) MEPs were re-adopted without opposition, though some had to face a challenge because their boundaries had been changed." (Butler and Jowett, 1985: 48-51)

<sup>121</sup> Meyer was later to enjoy brief fame as the first MP to stand against Mrs Thatcher in the Conservative leadership contest - he was consequently de-selected.

was dislodged by Beata Brookes, the MEP for Wales North. Meyer claimed that irregularities had occurred in the selection process, and a court upheld his allegations. The selection procedure was re-run, and Meyer selected. The allegations, Court ruling and selection procedure were widely reported.<sup>122</sup>

A third major reason for less than comprehensive coverage of such attempts is that the candidates themselves had no interest in their attempts becoming publicly known.<sup>123</sup> Moreover, Euro-constituency associations would have been unlikely to look happily on reselecting their sitting members in, say, 1984 or 1989 if it was known that they had tried for Westminster nominations in, say, 1983 or 1987.

Nevertheless, it seems likely that the majority of MEPs' attempts to gain nomination to a Westminster seat have been uncovered. These are set out in **Table 6**. The results are striking, both in terms of the number of MEPs who have tried to get a Westminster seat (23 out of the 57; just under half), and in terms of those who have been successful (13 out of the 57; just under a quarter), and we will later return to consider this specific phenomenon.

At the outset, it was intuitively hypothesised that four factors would be of particular significance in

---

<sup>122</sup> See Note 5 to **Table 6**.

<sup>123</sup> As one report put it; "Because publicity is regarded as such a severe handicap, most of those MPs and hopefuls who have been parading their political talents around the country have become exceedingly quiet about their itineraries. It is also evident that rejection by one constituency, if it becomes known, does not help in another." (*The Times*, 25.3.83)

determining the correspondence between MEPs and the

T a b l e 6

1979 UK MEPs AND POST-1979 WESTMINSTER CANDIDATURES

	Applied	Short-listed	Nominated	Elected
ADAM (1)	X	X	X	
BALFE (2)	X	X	X	
BALFOUR (3)	X	X	X	
BOYES (4)	X	X	X	X
BROOKES (5)	X	X	X	
CABORN (6)	X	X	X	X
CLWYD (7)	X	X	X	X
COTTRELL (8)	X	X		
CURRY (9)	X	X	X	X
DE COURCY LING (10)	X	X		
ENRIGHT (11)	X	X	X	X
FORTH (12)	X	X	X	X
GRIFFITHS (13)	X	X	X	X
HARRIS (14)	X	X	X	X
HOWELL (15)	X			
JACKSON (16)	X	X	X	X
JOHNSON (17)	X	X		
LOMAS (18)	X	X		
MARSHALL (19)	X	X	X	X
QUIN (20)	X	X	X	X
ROGERS (21)	X	X	X	X
SEAL (22)	X	X		
TAYLOR, J.M. (23)	X	X	X	X
Not included:				
EWING	X	X	X	
HUME	X	X	X	X
TAYLOR, J.D.	X	X	X	X
PEARCE (24)	X	X	X	

## NOTES

1. Returned to the European Parliament in 1979, 1984, and 1989, Gordon Adam was selected in 1990 to contest the Westminster seat of Berwick-upon-Tweed. Despite a swing of 5.4 per cent to Labour, the seat was retained by the Liberal Democrat, Alan Beith, in the 1992 election.
2. Balfie put his name forward in 1983 for the Westminster seat of Southwark and Bermondsey, but was not short-listed. (The Times, 14, 16, 19 May 1983) In 1990 he put his name forward again for the same seat and was successfully nominated, but lost to the sitting Liberal Democrat MP, Simon Hughes, in the 1992 election.
3. Balfour's Yorkshire North European constituency disappeared as a result of the 1983 Boundary Commission's recommendations. He was not nominated to any other Euro-seat. (Evening Standard, 30 April 1986) In 1986, he stood unsuccessfully as the Conservative candidate in the by-election for the Westminster seat of Rydale.
4. Roland Boyes was elected to the Westminster seat of Houghton and Washington in the 1983 General Election. He stood down from his European constituency of Durham at the 1984 European elections.
5. Brookes was returned to the European Parliament in 1979 and 1984. She lost her seat in the 1989 European elections. In 1983 she was nominated as the Conservative candidate to the Westminster seat of Clwyd, dislodging the sitting MP, Sir Anthony Meyer, in the process. Sir Anthony complained about 'irregularities' in the selection process, and his complaints were upheld in Court. The constituency association was obliged to re-run the selection procedure. Sir Anthony was selected. (See, eg. The Times, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 29 March, 13, 14, 25 April, 7, 9, 10, 11 May and The Sunday Times, 13, 20 March and 7, 24 April 1983)
6. Caborn was one of several Labour MEPs to seek nomination against a sitting MP - Fred Mulley - a former Minister - in a re-selection procedure. He was nominated for the Westminster seat of Sheffield Park. The AEUW urged him to stand down, and Neil Kinnock, by then Party leader, opposed his selection, but his nomination was confirmed by the National Executive Committee. Caborn was returned in the 1983 General Election and stood down from the European Parliament in 1984. (See, eg. The Times, 18 February, and 1, 3, 5 and 25 March 1982)
7. Ann Clwyd first sought nomination to the Westminster seat of the Rhondda. She was not short-listed and objected, but her objections were over-ruled. The nomination went to another MEP, Allan Rogers. (See, eg. The Times, 8 and 9 May 1983) Following the death of the sitting MP, she was successfully nominated to the Westminster seat of Cynon Valley, comfortably winning the 3 May 1984 by-election. She stood down from her European seat of Mid and West Wales at the June 1984 European elections.
8. In 1983 The Times reported that Cottrell had been short-listed for the Westminster seat of Romsey and Waterside, but he did not win the nomination. (The Times, 11 and 14 March 1983) The same newspaper later reported that he had put his name forward for the seat of Wells, but he did not get on the short list. (The Times, 29 March 1983) Cottrell was returned to his European seat of Bristol in 1979 and 1984. He lost the seat in 1989.

9. David Curry was returned to the European Parliament in 1979 and 1984. In 1983, a general reference was made to the fact that he was known to be seeking a Westminster seat, though the name of the seat was not specified. (*The Times*, 18 March 1983) In 1986, he successfully sought nomination to the Westminster seat of Skipton and Ripon, which he won in the 1987 General Election. He stood down from his European seat of Essex North East at the 1989 European elections.
10. In 1983, *The Times* reported that De Courcy Ling had been short-listed, but then not nominated, for the Westminster seat of Tatton. (*The Times*, 9 and 12 March 1983) A new Westminster seat, it attracted big names such as Mr Jock Bruce Gardyne and Mr Mark Carlisle. De Courcy Ling was later reported as having put his name forward for South Ribble (*The Times*, 29 March 1983), said to be one of the few remaining safe seats, but he was again unsuccessful. De Courcy Ling was returned to his European seat of Midlands Central in 1979 and 1984, but lost the seat in 1989.
11. A pro-European Labour MEP, Enright was not re-nominated to his European seat of Leeds. (*Daily Telegraph*, 2 February 1984) He later won the nomination to fight the Conservative safe European seat of Kent East, which was won by Christopher Jackson. Enright disappeared from political life (at one stage he served in the external relations service of the European Commission) until 1991, when he successfully won the Westminster seat of Hemsworth in a by-election. (See, eg. *The Guardian*, 9 November 1991). He successfully retained the seat with an increased majority in the 1992 General Election.
12. In 1983, *The Times* reported Forth as having put his name forward for the Westminster seat of Wells. (See, eg. 29 March, 13 April 1983) Unsuccessful there, he later won nomination to the Westminster seat of Worcestershire Mid, which he won in the 1983 General Election. He stood down from his European seat of Birmingham North at the 1984 European elections.
13. Returned to his European seat of South Wales in 1979 and 1984, Griffiths won nomination to the Westminster seat of Bridgend in 1986 and was duly elected at the 1987 General Election. He stood down from the European Parliament at the 1989 European elections.
14. Harris was nominated to the Westminster seat of St. Ives, which he won in the 1983 General Election. He stood down from his European seat of Cornwall and Plymouth at the 1984 European elections.
15. Howell was reported as having put his name forward for the Westminster seat of Norfolk North. (*The Times*, 29 March 1983) He was not short-listed. Howell was returned to his European seat of Norfolk in 1979, 1984, and 1989.
16. Jackson was reported as having put his name forward to a number of Westminster constituencies before successfully winning the nomination to Wantage: Romsey and Waterside (short-listed, not nominated - *The Times*, 11 and 14 March 1983); Oxford East (not shortlisted - *The Times*, 29 March 1983). Jackson was returned to Wantage in the 1983 General Election, and resigned his Upper Thames European seat at the 1984 European elections.
17. In 1983, Johnson was reported as having won a place on the short-list for the Westminster seat of High Peak, but he was not nominated. (*The Times*, 29 March and 13 April 1983) Johnson stood down from his European seat of Wight and Hampshire East at the 1984 European elections.
18. Lomas was another Labour MEP who sought to gain a Westminster nomination from a sitting MP during the compulsory re-selection procedure. He was short-listed for the seat of Newham North West, but the Labour Party National Executive Committee barred him from the list. (*The Times*, 18 February 1982, Butler and Jowett, 1985: 32) Lomas was returned to his European seat of London North-East in 1979, 1984 and 1989.
19. Marshall was returned to the European Parliament (London North) in 1979 and 1984. In 1986, he won nomination to the Westminster seat of Hendon South, which he won at the 1987 General Election. He resigned his European seat at the 1989 European elections.
20. Quin was returned to the European Parliament (Tyne and Wear) in 1979 and 1984. In 1986, she won nomination to the Westminster seat of Gateshead East, which she won at the 1987 General Election. She resigned her European seat at the 1989 European elections.
21. In 1983, Rogers won nomination to the Labour Westminster safe seat of the Rhondda, to which he was duly returned in the General Election. He stood down from his European seat of South East Wales at the European elections of 1984.
22. In 1982, Seal unsuccessfully sought to gain nomination to the Westminster seat of Bradford South from the sitting MP during a mandatory re-selection process. He was returned to the European Parliament (West Yorkshire) in 1979, 1984 and 1989.
23. In 1983, John Mark Taylor won nomination to the Westminster seat of Solihull, to which he was duly returned in the General Election. He stood down from the European Parliament (Midlands East) at the 1984 European elections.
24. Returned to the European Parliament in 1979 and 1984, Pearce was defeated in 1989. In 1990, he was selected to the Conservative marginal Westminster seat of Ellesmere Port and Neston (1,853 majority in 1987), but lost to the Labour candidate (1,989 majority) at the 1992 General Election.



various categories of stereotypical individuals. These were: age, previous political experience, previous attempts to gain a Westminster seat, and previous indications of European interest. It was further hypothesised that particular combinations of these significant factors would be more or less associated with particular categories of stereotypical individuals. **Table 7** summarises these combinations in schematic form by building up eight cells. Each cell corresponds to one of the eight possible combinations of previous political experience, previous attempts to gain a Westminster seat, and previous indications of European interest. The age of each individual is given in round brackets. Lastly, the electoral fortunes of each individual are shown. Those who sought a Westminster seat are underlined. The Table gives us a simple way of testing whether, and to what extent, the hypothesised combinations of significant factors may hold explanatory value. It reveals a number of strikingly significant correlations.<sup>124</sup>

---

<sup>124</sup> One, not germane to the present inquiry, is that all of the individuals in Cell One have lost their seats. In other words, all six of the UK MEPs elected in 1979 who had had no previous political experience, had not previously experienced political office, and had manifested no previous interest in European matters, lost their seats; four in 1984, and two in 1989. Of the six, only one, Alan Tyrrell, has since won re-nomination, though he was unsuccessful in the 1989 elections. Such a strong coincidence would seem to suggest some common explanatory factor (such as, for example, the effect of the 1983 Boundary Commission), but examination of electoral data reveals no such common explanatory factor. The most evident factors in the six cases were the relative (though not necessarily absolute) decline in the Conservative vote, slightly higher turnout, a much-improved Labour vote, and large third party votes. In some cases there was clear evidence of the corrective effect of the 1983 Boundary Commissions' recommendations. Perhaps some of these individuals (Purvis, Fergusson and Hopper) were lucky to have been elected in

(Age in 1979 in brackets. \*Westminster\* MEPs underlined)

<b>CELL ONE: NO PREVIOUS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE, NO PREVIOUS INDICATIONS OF EUROPEAN INTEREST, AND NO PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO GAIN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL OFFICE</b>		
1.	<u>COTTRELL</u> (36)	Lost European seat in 1989
2.	<u>PURVIS</u> (41)	Lost European seat in 1984
3.	<u>DE COURCY LING</u> (46)	Lost European seat in 1989
4.	<u>TYRRELL</u> (46)	Lost European seat in 1984
5.	<u>FERGUSON</u> (47)	Lost European seat in 1984
6.	<u>HOPPER</u> (50)	Lost European seat in 1984
<b>CELL TWO: INDICATIONS OF PREVIOUS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE ONLY</b>		
1.	<u>KEY</u> (32)	De-selected 1984
2.	<u>CABORN</u> (36)	Now MP. Stood down from EP in 1984
3.	<u>GRIFFITHS</u> (36)	Now MP. Stood down from EP in 1989
4.	<u>HUTTON</u> (39)	Lost European seat in 1989
5.	<u>COLLINS</u> (40)	Still MEP
6.	<u>HOOPER</u> (40)	Lost European seat in 1984. Now a peer
7.	<u>BOYES</u> (42)	Now MP. Stood down from EP in 1984
8.	<u>PROVAN</u> (43)	Lost European seat in 1989
9.	<u>ENRIGHT</u> (44)	De-selected 1984. Now MP
10.	<u>ROGERS</u> (47)	Now MP. Stood down from EP in 1984
11.	<u>LOMAS</u> (50)	Still MEP
12.	<u>MEGAHY</u> (50)	Still MEP
13.	<u>SHERLOCK</u> (57)	Stood down from EP in 1989
14.	<u>BUCHAN</u> (53)	Still MEP
<b>CELL THREE: PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO GAIN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL OFFICE ONLY</b>		
1.	<u>JACKSON, C</u> (44)	Still MEP
<b>CELL FOUR: PREVIOUS INDICATIONS OF EUROPEAN INTEREST ONLY</b>		
1.	<u>JOHNSON</u> (39)	Stood down from EP in 1984
2.	<u>BATTERSBY</u> (55)	Lost European seat in 1989
3.	<u>PRAG</u> (56)	Still MEP
4.	<u>BEAZLEY</u> (57)	Still MEP
<b>CELL FIVE: PREVIOUS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE AND PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO GAIN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL OFFICE</b>		
1.	<u>BALFE</u> (35)	Still MEP. Westminster nomination
2.	<u>FORTH</u> (35)	Now MP. Stood down from EP in 1984
3.	<u>CLWYD</u> (35)	Now MP. Stood down from EP in 1984
4.	<u>TAYLOR</u> (38)	Now MP. Stood down from EP in 1984
5.	<u>MARSHALL</u> (39)	Now MP. Stood down from EP in 1989
6.	<u>HARRIS</u> (42)	Now MP. Stood down from EP in 1984
7.	<u>SEAL</u> (42)	Still MEP
8.	<u>ADAM</u> (45)	Still MEP. Westminster nomination
9.	<u>HORD</u> (45)	Lost European seat in 1984
10.	<u>KELLET</u>	
	<u>BOWMAN, Ed.</u> (48)	Now MEP. Lost seat 1984. Re-elected 1989
11.	<u>TURNER</u> (50)	Still MEP
<b>CELL SIX: PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO GAIN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL OFFICE AND PREVIOUS INDICATIONS OF EUROPEAN INTEREST</b>		
1.	<u>BALFOUR</u> (35)	Stood down from EP in 1984 (Euro-constituency drawn out 1983)
2.	<u>CURRY</u> (35)	Now MP. Stood down from EP in 1989
3.	<u>MORELAND</u> (38)	Lost European seat in 1984. Now ECOSOC member
4.	<u>BROOKES</u> (48)	Lost European seat in 1989
5.	<u>MOORHOUSE</u> (55)	Still MEP
<b>CELL SEVEN: PREVIOUS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE AND PREVIOUS INDICATIONS OF EUROPEAN INTEREST</b>		
1.	<u>HOWELL</u> (28)	Still MEP
2.	<u>SPENCER</u> (31)	Now MEP. Lost seat 1984. Re-elected 1989
3.	<u>DALZIEL</u> (32)	Stood down in 1984
4.	<u>QUIN</u> (35)	Now MP. Stood down from EP in 1989
5.	<u>SIMMONDS</u> (35)	Still MEP
6.	<u>WELSH</u> (37)	Still MEP
7.	<u>PROUT</u> (37)	Still MEP
8.	<u>FORSTER</u> (48)	Lost European seat in 1984
<b>CELL EIGHT: PREVIOUS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE, PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO GAIN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL OFFICE AND PREVIOUS INDICATIONS OF EUROPEAN INTEREST</b>		
1.	<u>JACKSON, R</u> (37)	Now MP. Stood down from EP in 1984
2.	<u>PRICE</u> (37)	Still MEP
3.	<u>NEWTON-DUNN</u> (38)	Still MEP
4.	<u>PATTERSON</u> (40)	Still MEP
5.	<u>PEARCE</u> (42)	Lost European seat in 1989
6.	<u>SIMPSON</u> (44)	Still MEP
7.	<u>GALLAGHER</u> (45)	Switched allegiance, de-selected, lost seat 1984
8.	<u>TUCKMAN</u> (57)	Lost European seat in 1989

1979, but the others seem to have been victims of general, rather than constituency-based, electoral trends.

One strong correlation is that of age in relation to (revealed) ambition.<sup>125</sup> A first striking finding, in line with the hypothesis, is that Westminsterite MEPs were relatively younger, both as opposed to the average age of all 57 MEPs under consideration and, even more pronouncedly, as opposed to the average age of the 34 non-Westminsterite MEPs.<sup>126</sup> Moreover, there is a clear difference between the Westminsterite and the non-Westminsterite MEPs, the former being markedly younger. This correlation may suggest something more than the self-evident link between youth and ambition - perhaps another self-evident link; that between youth and impatience, a theme that will be explored below in the section dealing with European political careerism.

Two more significant tendencies are apparent; the relative younger age of those individuals in Cell 7, and the relatively older age of those appearing in Cell 4. The average age of those with previous indications of European interest only (Cell 4) was 51.75 (the average age of all 57 MEPs being 42.3), whereas the average age of the related group of those individuals with both previous indications of European interest and previous political experience was just 35.3.<sup>127</sup> Why should there

---

<sup>125</sup> The average ages of Westminsterites in each cell (with the average ages of all other cell occupants in brackets) were as follows: Cell 1, 41 (46); Cell 2, 42.5 (44.25); Cell 3, None (44); Cell 4, 39 (56); Cell 5, 38.8 (47.6); Cell 6, 39.3 (46.5); Cell 7, 31.5 (36.6); Cell 8, 37 (43.25).

<sup>126</sup> The average age of all 57 MEPs was 42.3, that of all Westminsterite MEPs was 39.9, and that of all non-Westminsterite MEPs was 44.3.

<sup>127</sup> As can be seen from Table 7, Norvella Forster was considerably older than the other seven individuals in the Cell. If her age is excluded, then the average age of the other seven was just 33.5.

have been such distinct - and distant - averages for these two seemingly-related groups of individuals? A hint may lay in looking at where those individuals are now, a subject to which we will return below.

Another striking aspect of **Table 7** is the relative concentration of Westminsterite MEPs in certain cells and their relative absence from others.<sup>128</sup> The highest concentrations of Westminsterite MEPs are to be found in Cell V (individuals with previous political experience and previous attempts to gain political office), Cell VI (individuals with previous indications of European interest and previous attempts to gain political office), and Cell II (previous political experience alone).<sup>129</sup> Another way of looking at these statistics is in terms of electoral success and/or capacity for survival.<sup>130</sup> This perspective shows that Cell V (previous political experience and previous attempts to gain parliamentary political office) is not only remarkable for its concentration of Westminsterites but also for both successfully elected MPs and surviving MEPs. The combinations in Cell VI and Cell II have been far less successful in this regard.

---

<sup>128</sup> The concentrations of Westminsterites, in declining order, were: Cell 5 (72.7%); Cell 6 (60%); Cell 2 (42.8%); Cell 1 (33.3%); Cells 4 and 7 (25%); Cell 8 (12.5%); Cell 3 (0).

<sup>129</sup> The prevalence of previous political experience (particularly local government) underpins the findings (below) about the "local element".

<sup>130</sup> This can be measured by comparing, respectively, the number of MPs, the number of MEPs, and the overall number of individuals in each cell. The ratios are as follows: Cell 1, 0:0:6; Cell 2, 5:3:14; Cell 3, 0:1:1; Cell 4, 0:2:4; Cell 5, 5:5:11; Cell 6, 2:1:5; Cell 7, 1:5:8; Cell 8, 1:4:8. Only 1 of the 11 original occupants of Cell 5 does not now occupy an elected position.

The actual correlations displayed in **Table 7** can now be tested against the intuitively hypothesised correlations summarised in **Table 2**.

First, it was hypothesised that Westminster-oriented stereotypical individuals were likely to be relatively young. This hypothesis is entirely borne out; Westminster-oriented MEPs were indeed likely to be younger. In the second place, it was hypothesised that Westminster-oriented MEPs would be more likely to have had previous political experience, and would have been more likely to have made previous attempts to get to Westminster. In the case of the 1979 UK MEPs, those who had made previous attempts to get to Westminster and had previous political experience (i.e., those in Cell V) were indeed most likely to be Westminsterites. Moreover, it was hypothesised that Westminster-oriented MEPs would be less likely to have demonstrated previous European interest, and the entries in Cell V again confirm this. Indeed, a comparison between the entries in **Tables 2** and **7** shows that all of the hypothesised correlations were borne out to a considerable extent. In other words, previous experience and previous indications of interest did have considerable potential explanatory value, at least as far as the 1979 intake of UK MEPs was concerned. The study will shortly test whether these factors retained their explanatory value in the cases of the 1984 and 1989 intakes, but first we will examine some further survey evidence about the electoral intentions of the 1979 UK intake.

ii) 1979 MEPs and the 1984 European Elections -  
Survey Evidence about Intentions

At the time of the 1983 EUI Survey of MEPs, the intentions of those who at that time were seeking or had gained nominations to Westminster seats were fast becoming clear. What could not be so clear were the medium- and longer-term intentions of the other MEPs. Did they intend carrying on in the European Parliament until age, infirmity, or electoral defeat carried them away? Or did they harbour other, as yet unrevealed, ambitions? Such medium- and longer-term ambitions were considered to be equally important indicators of the likely stability of the European Parliament's membership, and the EUI Survey therefore set out to discover what those ambitions might be. If the 1982 mandatory re-selection procedures and the 1983 General Election had provided the first acid tests of Westminster-oriented ambitions, the 1984 European elections clearly constituted the first acid test of MEPs' Strasbourg-oriented ambitions. The EUI Survey therefore asked; "Will you seek re-election in 1984?"<sup>131</sup> As could be reasonably expected, the figures gave a good 'fit'.<sup>132</sup> Nevertheless, it can be remarked in passing

---

<sup>131</sup> In all, 65 of the 81 UK MEPs were interviewed, 51 belonging to the non-exceptional group of 57 MEPs - 91 per cent of that category.

<sup>132</sup> 65% of respondents said they would stand. 75% of all 81 MEPs actually did stand. 10% of respondents said they would not stand. 16% of MEPs actually did not stand.

that the 1984 European elections returned a number of UK MEPs who had already made attempts to leave the Parliament for Westminster.

iii) 1984: Survey Evidence on MEPs' Motivations

In addition to establishing MEPs' intentions, the EUI Survey also attempted to discover something about their motivations. In particular, respondents were asked to specify the reasons behind their electoral intentions.<sup>133</sup>

Considering first the responses of all those who said they would probably/definitely be standing for re-election to Strasbourg, by far the most important chosen motive was "to continue your work in the EP" (39 respondents), followed by 'to guarantee/further the efficiency/continuity of the EP' (26 respondents). These relatively high rates compare with the low rates awarded to the other alternative responses. For example, whilst 'to continue your work in the EP' scored relatively highly, 'to pursue your political career' earned a

---

<sup>133</sup> Respondents were filtered onto two further questions, depending on their responses to the question about electoral intentions. These were; "Which of the following reasons best describe your desire to stand for re-election? Please rank up to three: a) to continue your work in the EP?; b) to pursue your political career?; c) to guarantee/further the continuity/efficiency of the EP?; d) to further European integration?; e) Party obligations?". And "Which of the following reasons best describe your desire not to stand for re-election? Please rank up to three; a) Private commitments?; b) Substantive work in the EP is impossible?; c) The EP as an institution is ineffective?; d) I seek other elective/public office?; e) I want to retire from politics?; f) I don't expect to be nominated?" This extensive response set, and the possibility for ranking, resulted in a large set of data which can not be presented here.

relatively low score (15 respondents). In other words, while 39 MEPs indicated a high degree of commitment to their work, only 15 thought of that work in career-related terms.

Similarly, while 26 MEPs said they were re-standing in order to 'guarantee/further the efficiency/continuity of the EP', only 15 made mention of 'to further European integration'. This division of the UK contingent between pragmatic and ideological 'Europeanists' has remained a familiar feature to the present day.<sup>134</sup>

40 of the 57 non-exceptional MEPs responded to the question, but no significant patterns were discernible in their replies.<sup>135</sup> In contrast, although only 7 of the 24 exceptional MEPs responded, the difference in emphasis was clear; a higher degree of commitment to work, efficiency and party obligations, and little to careerism.

Among responding unsuccessful Westminsterites (corresponding, thus, to the concept of the 'Closed Door'), the scores for idealism and party obligation remain about the norm, but careerism rockets, and commitment factors plummet. Here, for the first time, is substantial proof of individuals corresponding to the 'Closed Door' stereotype which, it will be recalled, hypothesised that failed Westminsterites would 'fall back' on the European Parliament as an intended

---

<sup>134</sup> Although it could be argued that there is another, less evident, division between pragmatic integrationists and those who believe in EP efficiency for ideological reasons.

<sup>135</sup> Their responses were slightly more careerist, slightly less idealist, and indicated less obligation to party.



temporary elective haven. The individuals concerned were candid about their intentions, awarding very low scores to such responses as 'to continue your work in the EP' and 'to guarantee/further the efficiency/continuity of the EP'. They were in the European Parliament because they could not be elsewhere.

Finally, the responses of Labour and Conservative respondents reveal a contrast that could have been intuitively expected on the basis of what was known about the prevalent views towards European integration within the two national contingents. Thus, party obligations scored very low for Conservative responses, while 'to further European integration' scored highly, while on the Labour side party obligations scored highly and commitment to European integration scored very lowly.

Only 9 of the respondents interviewed were definitely not standing for re-election. Six were Westminsterites from among the 57 non-exceptional MEPs and were all elected to the House of Commons in the 1983 General Election. Most of the six plumped for the straightforward reason that they sought 'other elective/public office' (one preferred to refer coyly to this as 'private commitments').<sup>136</sup> The other three responses revealed some correspondence with the category of the 'Frustrated/Disaffected' stereotype. All three

---

<sup>136</sup> Unfortunately, the response set for the question was not symmetrical; for example, those definitely standing for re-election to Strasbourg were given the chance to indicate political careerism whereas those definitely not standing were not.

were from the group of 24 'exceptional' MEPs. Two felt 'substantive work in the EP is impossible', and one that 'the EP as an institution is ineffective'. Two of the three wanted to retire from politics<sup>137</sup>, and one sought 'other elective/public office'.<sup>138</sup>

#### iv) MEPs' Longer-Term Intentions

A further question in the EUI Survey sought to elicit MEPs' possible longer-term intentions outside the European Parliament.<sup>139</sup> It revealed a number of striking findings. The first is that no less than 30 out of the 57 respondents said they had a longer-term elective ambition outside the European Parliament. The second is that no less than 20 of these (by mentioning either 'Westminster' or 'national parliament') were directed at the House of Commons. Of course, all of this fits well with what we now know; in particular, that 23 of the 1979 UK MEPs were 'Westminsterites', with 13 of them being successful so far.<sup>140</sup>

---

<sup>137</sup> Clearly corresponding to Warner and Nicholson.

<sup>138</sup> One of the two dual mandate MEPs, Elaine Kellett-Bowman and Jim Spicer.

<sup>139</sup> "Are there any public offices outside the European Parliament to which you aspire? a) no; b) yes ... filter ... which?" In retrospect, the question seems a little direct, but it was posed towards the end of the questionnaire, long after the confidence of respondents had been won or lost. In fact, the majority of respondents gave straightforward and candid answers to the question. Only one MEP refused to answer (he said 'Pass') whilst suggesting that his answer would have been affirmative (a none too enigmatic smile), and a further three gave conditional answers ('it depends,' etc.). The remaining 57 MEPs answered the question openly, though some were very reticent when it came to specifying what public offices they might have been interested in.

<sup>140</sup> The one exceptional MEP to cite Westminster aspirations was one of the dual mandate holders, and was presumably therefore

Just as striking was the very small number of MEPs who recorded some sort of European ambition (five respondents altogether, three of them from among the non-exceptional MEPs). This would seem to confirm an observation made at the outset that there are few perceived career pathways within or leading from the European Parliament.<sup>141</sup> The proposition will be tested further below.

#### **v) The Stepping Stone Theory Reconsidered**

It was hypothesised that MEPs might use membership of the European Parliament as a 'stepping stone' to Westminster. A number of MEPs certainly regarded Strasbourg as an intermediary halt on their way elsewhere. But was membership of the European Parliament useful? In particular, how did known 'Westminsterites' fare; did they find membership of the European Parliament to be beneficial, or did it prove to be a handicap? In this section, we will be looking first at the opinion of those who successfully won nomination to

---

referring to ambition within the House of Commons or the government.

<sup>141</sup> Some of the respondents elaborated on their answers, and these further confirmed this observation. Several said that, while they had no direct European ambitions, they would like to retain an indirect link with the Community. One respondent said he wanted to become the UK Minister of Trade and Industry. Two others said they would like to become Foreign Secretary or a European Commissioner. Several respondents' elaborations corresponded closely to the 'European Stint' stereotype. One said "After ten years I'd like to get to Westminster." Another thought that "I might be looking around after a couple of terms here." A third said "I'll see how I get on."

a Westminster seat, and then at the opinions of those who were unsuccessful.

At the time of the EUI Survey, 7 MEPs had been successfully nominated and selected to Westminster seats. Early on in their interviews, all MEPs were asked the following question; "There has been some discussion about the effect of membership of the European Parliament upon a politician's career. What do you think of it?" As with all questions in the Survey, it was not designed to elicit UK MEPs' opinions in particular, but the Westminsterites were in no doubt as to what the question was referring. All seven successful Westminsterites responded to the question, with varying degrees of frankness. One ironically responded by saying "I don't know what this question means." The others gave more direct responses, and these are shown in **Table 8**.

There was no common experience. The opinions of the six ranged from "detrimental" to "neither an advantage nor a disadvantage" to "beneficial". Surprisingly, given their ambiguous position within the Party, Labour respondents were not noticeably more negative than their Conservative counterparts. The presence of two factors, and the absence of another, in these comments are of particular interest. The "local element" (response 5) will be considered in the next section. There was also clear mention of an "ideological element", which appeared to apply equally to both parties. This was not so much a 'second ideological dimension' (Hagger, 1980: 209) of pro- or anti-Marketees; rather, Westminsterites

had the impression that both Labour and Conservative constituency associations appeared to favour those candidates who were relatively more sceptical about the European Community.<sup>142</sup>

---

<sup>142</sup> Thus, Julian Haviland, political editor of The Times, reported; "The most committed 'Europeans' among Conservatives claimed yesterday that Mr. Forth's success (in winning a nomination) was part of a pattern. Like the other two MEPs chosen for Westminster seats, Mr. David Harris and Mr. John Taylor, he is regarded by colleagues at Strasbourg as on the right of the party and sceptical about many aspects of the European Community. Two enthusiasts for the Community among the MEPs, Mr. Stanley Johnson (Wight and Hampshire East) and Mr. Robert Jackson (Upper Thames), have failed to win approval, in spite of many attempts, and their friends attribute this to the Conservative Party's present coolness to the Community." (The Times, 13.4.83) In the end, Robert Jackson won nomination to a Westminster safe seat. Johnson failed to win nomination.

## Table

## Eight

IS MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ADVANTAGEOUS  
FOR WESTMINSTERITES?

1. "The party activists who were responsible for selecting me had to be very strongly reassured. In fact, it was a positive handicap to have been a member of the European Parliament."
2. "It's neither an advantage nor a disadvantage. It raises one's profile, but it also creates jealousy on the part of national parliamentarians."
3. "In terms of my career, membership has been a two-edged sword. Perhaps a spell in the wilderness and a re-entry into UK politics is difficult, but it adds an extra dimension to the local boy."
4. "It depends on the stage of a politician's career. UK life is so rigid that it is not necessarily a good thing. It's a high-risk business if you want to go to Westminster. It's a box, and it's hard to get out of."
5. "I've been selected for a seat which is part of my Euro-constituency, so I suppose that membership of the EP must have helped."
6. "It can't be detrimental. In the Labour Party, perhaps, it could obviously be detrimental for ideological reasons. Otherwise I would say that I have learnt an awful lot."

IS MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DISADVANTAGEOUS  
FOR WESTMINSTERITES?

1. "Not applicable. You are judged by your achievements. It depends upon what you get done in the Parliament."
2. "It all depends on what you make of it."
3. "Beneficial. It can only be beneficial."
4. "Beneficial. I sought a Westminster seat, and EP membership didn't seem particularly helpful. Maybe, later on, it may prove to have been a useful experience, a feather in my cap."
5. "Beneficial. It must be."
6. "Not applicable. Politics is not a career, it's a profession."
7. "It doesn't help as far as the Labour Party is concerned. It's a backwater."
8. "It's rather bad if you are thinking of Westminster. Westminster is very jealous of its sovereignty. The European Parliament is seen as a competitor. It also depends on who is Prime Minister. The UK has much less integration than other countries."

One factor which press reports indicated was important in selection procedures -the problem of the dual mandate- did not figure in these MEPs' responses, nor did it figure, as we shall see below, in the responses of unsuccessful Westminsterites.<sup>143</sup>

As we have seen, only one of the successful Westminsterites was considering (in April 1983) the dual mandate. Since he was selected, we can at least say that the dual mandate question was not, in this case, an insurmountable problem. For the other six MEPs, the dual mandate question would only have arisen in the short term, since none of them were considering prolonging both mandates beyond the 1984 European elections. In short, the question of the dual mandate does not appear to have been a "common problem"; certainly, no successful Westminsterite MEP mentioned that the question had been raised by steering committees.

Did unsuccessful Westminsterites find the dual mandate a "common problem"? Responses for eight of the nine are listed in Table 8. As with successful Westminsterites, there was no mention of the dual mandate.

One successful and one unsuccessful Westminsterite mentioned the jealousy of domestic politicians, though neither suggested how it might have affected their

---

<sup>143</sup>A political correspondent reported that: "Although three MEPs have succeeded in selections for Westminster constituencies...existing membership of the European Parliament has proved a handicap...The common problem posed by steering committees has been the question of the dual mandate: whether anyone can serve in two parliaments at the same time." (The Times, 29.3.83)

chances, and one unsuccessful Westminsterite mentioned party. Strikingly, there was a lack of ill feeling, and no mention of the scepticism which Community enthusiasts thought to be part of a pattern. In short, there was little mention and no agreement on why these Westminsterites had failed.

vi) The Closed Door Theory and the Local Element

The responses recorded in the last section give little reason to believe that Westminsterite MEPs experienced large amounts of the prejudices which might intuitively have been associated with the "Closed Door" theory. A few mentioned the jealousies of national politicians, but without suggesting how these might have affected their selection procedures. One (successful) MEP believed that membership had acted as a handicap, though, obviously, it was a handicap he had managed to overcome. One MEP believed that membership did not help in the case of the Labour Party. Several claimed that it was difficult "to get back". Newspaper reports spoke of a pattern of prejudice against European Community sympathisers, a pattern which may well have existed, but for which no evidence was found among MEPs' responses. However, one theme common to several of the comments recorded in the last section is worthy of further examination. Another MEP, not himself interested in Westminster, expressed it in this way; "Those who have



been selected were locally known; that is, they weren't chosen because they were MEPs."

Table 9

## WESTMINSTERITE MEPs AND THEIR CONSTITUENCIES

MEP	Euro-constituency	Westminster constituency	Westminster constituency within Euro-constituency?	Successfully nominated to Westminster constituency?
ADAM	Northumbria	Berwick-upon-Tweed	yes	yes
BALFE	London South Inner	Southwark and Bermondsey	yes	yes
BALFOUR (1)	Yorkshire North (1)	Ryedale (1)	yes (1)	yes (1)
BOYES	Durham	Houghton and Washington	yes	yes
BROOKES (2)	North Wales (2)	Clwyd (2)	yes	yes
CABORN	Sheffield	Sheffield Park (Sheffield Central)	yes	yes
CLWYD (3)	Mid and West Wales (3)	Cynon Valley (3)	no (3)	yes (3)
COTTRELL	Bristol	1. Romsey and Waterside 2. Wells	no no	no no
CURRY	Essex North-East	Skipton and Rippon	no	no
DE COURCY LING	Midlands Central	Tatton	no	no
ENRIGHT (4)	Leeds (4)	Hemsworth (4)	no	yes (4)
FORTH	Birmingham North	Mid-Worcestershire	no	yes
GRIFFITHS	South Wales	Bridgend	yes	yes
HARRIS	Cornwall and Plymouth	St. Ives	yes	yes
HOWELL	Norfolk	Norfolk North	yes	no
JACKSON, R	Upper Thames	1. Romsey and Waterside 2. Oxford East 3. Havering, Uxminster 4. Wantage	no no no no	no no no yes
LOMAS (5)	London North-East (5)	Newham North-East (5)	yes (5)	no (5)
MARSHALL	London North	Hendon South	yes	yes
PEARCE	Cheshire West	Ellesmere Port and Neston	yes	yes (6)
QUIN	Tyne and Wear	Gateshead East	yes	yes
ROGERS	South East Wales	Rhondda	yes	yes
SEAL	Yorkshire West	Bradford North	yes	no
TAYLOR, J M (7)	Midlands East	Solihull	no	yes

## Notes

- (1) Balfour's Euro-constituency was re-drawn out of existence in 1983. He did not contest a European seat in 1984. He contested the Westminster seat of Ryedale in 1986.
- (2) Following a court case, the selection process was repeated, and the incumbent MP, Sir Anthony Meyer, preferred over Brookes, who continued as an MEP.
- (3) Although not in her Euro-constituency, Cynon Valley was a neighbouring Welsh constituency.
- (4) Enright was de-selected from his Euro-constituency in 1984. He disappeared from political life until 1991, when he won the Hemsworth by-election.
- (5) The Labour Party NEC disqualified Lomas' candidature, which he would otherwise almost certainly have won.
- (6) Pearce lost his Euro-seat in 1989. He stood in the 1992 General Election, but was unsuccessful.
- (7) Taylor was a well-known local politician. Solihull bordered on his Euro-constituency.

Table 9 lists the 23 known Westminsterite MEPs together with their Euro-constituencies, the Westminster constituencies on whose lists their names appeared, whether the latter were a part of the former, and whether they were successfully nominated. The correlation this juxtaposition reveals could hardly be much stronger. Of the 13 MEPs who put their names forward for nomination to a Westminster constituency within their European constituency, no less than 10 were successful, and one of the three who were unsuccessful, Alf Lomas, would almost certainly have been successful if the Labour Party's National Executive Committee had not forbidden his candidature. Of the four MEPs successfully nominated by a Westminster constituency from outside their European constituency, two (Ann Clwyd, and John M. Taylor) were selected in neighbouring constituencies. Moreover, one (being Welsh) had regional and linguistic affinities, and the other had a reputation as a long-serving local politician. Four MEPs unsuccessfully sought nominations to Westminster constituencies falling outside their European constituencies, and if previous unsuccessful attempts are included (Robert Jackson's prior attempts), then the figure goes up to seven. There were, lastly, three exceptional cases, Balfour, Enright, and Pearce.<sup>144</sup> If the cases of Lomas, Clwyd and Taylor are included, then

---

<sup>144</sup> The first's Euro-constituency disappeared in the 1983 re-drawing of constituency boundaries. The second was effectively de-selected in the same period. The last lost his Strasbourg seat in 1989. All three won their Westminster nominations much later on.

13 out of 17 MEPs were successfully nominated to constituencies falling within their European constituencies. Some sort of local factor was clearly at work. Of what might this have consisted?

Firstly, sitting MEPs enjoy privileged access, both to the local party network and its information, and to the national party organisations and the government and opposition front benches, all non-negligeable elements in seeking nominations, both in getting onto the short list and in performing well before the selection committee. Sitting MEPs also benefit from a number of practical and material advantages. Election to the European Parliament in 1979 turned some of the apparently most unlikely individuals into full-time career politicians, heading small but functioning political machines, benefitting from constituency, party, and European headquarters, together with the national and constituency political organisations, not to mention their own offices, research assistants, and secretarial staff. In addition, the 1979 MEPs perhaps benefitted from more availability and less political constraints<sup>145</sup>, together with the habit and readiness to travel. Above all, they were plugged into the political networks in a way that no other Westminster hopefuls, even those in local government, could be.

---

<sup>145</sup> The parliamentary Whip applies, and then only very weakly (see Section 16) for just one week in each parliamentary week.

## Table Ten

## GENERAL COMMENTS ON MEPs AND WESTMINSTER

1. "The position in the UK is very different to that in other Member States. Membership of the EP is seen as an impediment to a national career."
2. "For Westminster it seems advantageous. Ambitious politicians see their careers in the national parliament."
3. "For an MEP who wants to go to Westminster membership is beneficial in terms of experience, but I find it impossible to keep in touch with my constituency as much as I would like to."
4. "For others I think it's probably good. I must say that four Tories have already been adopted as Westminster candidates."
5. "It is less of an advantage for Westminster than I had hoped."
6. "Membership doesn't stop people from getting on to Westminster."

## EUROPEAN POLITICAL CAREERISTS

1. "This is my career, and there will be a career here if my wife permits it."
2. "I am a European politician. I will stay in the European Parliament."
3. "My career is in the European Parliament."
4. "From 1972 onwards my ambition was to get to the European Parliament, and everything has gone according to plan. I have no intentions of going to Westminster."
5. "It's an end in itself for me."
6. "The last place I want to go is the House of Commons. I'll stay here."
7. "It's a unique role. I don't see it as a stepping stone to Westminster. It is possible to have a European career."
8. "I'm here because I wanted to be in the EP. I'm not interested in the House of Commons."
9. "I haven't sought a Westminster seat. I'm a European."
10. "My career is directed at Europe."
11. "My career is here."

**vii) Respondents' General Observations**

As was previously noted, those administering the questionnaire were encouraged to note down any additional elaborations respondents might have felt like expressing. With regard to Westminster, for example, six additional comments were made and noted; these are listed in Table 10. We have seen that although, as response 1 records, membership of the European Parliament was seen as an impediment to a national career, it was also, as response 2 records, "advantageous" and, as response 3 records, "beneficial in terms of experience", or (response 4) "probably good". And even if respondent 5 found it "less of an advantage for Westminster than I had hoped", respondent 4 pointed out that "four Tories have already been adopted as Westminster candidates", and respondent 6 that "membership doesn't stop people from getting on to Westminster."

**viii) European Careerist and 'Non-Careerist'  
Responses**

Before looking in more detail at possible career structures within the European Parliament, it is instructive to look briefly at some of the other responses. We know that at least 22 of the 81 UK MEPs had, in 1983, no admitted ambitions outside the Parliament. Clearly, it is to this group that we would

first look for the existence of individual cases corresponding to the stereotype of the "European Political Careerist". At the same time, it should be stressed that the responses to the Question are not necessarily reliable indicators of all individuals with a possible correspondence to this stereotype. Respondents were not asked directly whether they wished to pursue political careers at Strasbourg, although they were given an indirect possibility to indicate as much, and all such indications were recorded. In the event, eleven of the 21 respondents gave answers suggestive of a strong correlation with the European Political Careerist stereotype. These are recorded in Table 10.

**ix) Some Preliminary Conclusions**

Overall, responses to the 1983 question about longer-term intentions showed up 18 of the 23 Westminsterite MEPs now known to us through their electoral activity, but they also showed up 27 MEPs who at that stage had no ambition outside the European Parliament. On the other hand, responses to the question uncovered 11 individuals strongly corresponding to the stereotype of the "European Political Careerist". Taken together, these responses and the survey evidence examined so far create a composite image of a Parliamentary membership fairly evenly divided between those who, for one reason or another, were most likely to stay with the Parliament, and those who, chiefly for

reasons of political ambition, were most likely to attempt to leave the Parliament for another, national, political instance. We have seen too that the hypothetical stereotypes elaborated at the beginning of this chapter, together with the underlying assumptions, largely corresponded to the observable behaviour of the 1979 group of UK MEPs, suggesting that the model had some potential explanatory capacity. The simplest way to find out whether such explanatory capacity truly existed would be to test the model, and an apparently obvious way of doing this would seem to be by carrying out exactly the same exercise for the 1984 and 1989 intakes of UK MEPs.

x) Testing the Model: the 1984 and 1989 intakes of UK MEPs

Alas, such an apparently easy way of testing the model is not as straightforward as it might at first sight appear. In the first place, the numbers involved are necessarily much smaller; 31 new MEPs were returned in 1984, and 26 in 1989. Moreover, five of the new MEPs elected in 1984 were former MPs who had lost their Westminster seats in the 1983 General Election, and whose motives were clear; Strasbourg was in the first place a safe haven, even if for some it became something more, and for others something less. Further, two of the new 1989 MEPs had first been elected in 1979, had lost their seats in 1984, and had then won fresh nominations



for 1989.<sup>146</sup> Again, their motives were clear; it would be perverse to believe either harboured any ambitions with regard to Westminster, at least in the short- and medium-terms. The five and the two would have to be siphoned off into the category of 'exceptional' cases, as was done for the 1979 intake, reducing still further the number of MEPs comparable in circumstances to the 57 non-exceptional MEPs elected in 1979.

Objective circumstances were also very different. The Labour Party adopted a ruling that forbade sitting MEPs from contesting Westminster seats in cases of mandatory re-selection. The 1989 European Elections were fought on virtually the same boundaries as 1984, and there was no large-scale alteration of Westminster boundaries, so that the only openings to Westminster were occasional by-elections. This lack of an electoral/selectoral bonanza comparable to that of 1982/1983 could have had important hidden consequences for the model; since far fewer opportunities had arisen, far fewer potential Westminsterites would have been encouraged to try their hand. A further difference was that potential candidates were now aware of what the job entailed, both in terms of pay and conditions (above all, working hours and travel), and what the position would consist of in terms of power and influence. There would be no certain way of knowing whether this had an effect on the sort of individuals putting themselves

---

<sup>146</sup> Kellet-Bowman and Spencer, although the former had already taken his seat in a by-election.

forward as potential candidates, but we might suppose it would discourage some of those who would otherwise have corresponded to the "Stepping Stone" stereotype.

Another important difference was the relative absence from the 1984 and 1989 intakes of what have here been referred to as exceptional MEPs. Apart from the five former MPs elected in 1984 and the two former MEPs elected in 1989, the only other MEP apparently qualifying for this category would have been the one new peer, Lord Inglewood (elected in 1989).<sup>147</sup> This absence could be explained by a number of factors, among them the more relaxed attitude both the major parties seemed to take towards the degree of experience considered necessary, and awareness of the growing amount of work and travel involved.<sup>148</sup> This is to say nothing about the quality and quantity of experience involved, as will be seen below.

Another important objective difference is related to the differing time lapses involved. The 1979 Westminsterite MEPs have had more than a decade to win a Westminster nomination.<sup>149</sup> The 1989 MEPs have been in office for just over two years.

---

<sup>147</sup> Even Inglewood was in fact elected as plain Mr. Richard Vane, and only succeeded to the title after his election. (In an example of the small world of politics, he had, as the plain Mr. Vane, in the 1983 General Election, contested the Westminster seat of Washington and Houghton, which was won by the former MEP, Roland Boyes ).

<sup>148</sup> The new 1984 and 1989 MEPs included no sitting MPs and no peers.

<sup>149</sup> Balfe and Adam did not win theirs until 1991. Enright was elected in a 1991 by-election.

Subjective circumstances also changed considerably. The events of 1982/1983 had led to an unusually large number of selectoral possibilities, but the almost freakish results in 1979 meant that there would invariably be grievous losses to the Conservative camp and exaggerated gains for Labour. In 1984, just eight new Conservative MEPs were elected, compared with 23 Labour MEPs, and the pattern repeated itself in 1989; six Conservative, 19 Labour.

All these objective and subjective changes militate in favour of a more conditional approach. In particular, the nature of the subject matter under examination has changed so considerably that care has to be taken in interpreting the data.

The same analysis of the four factors of age, previous attempts to gain political office, previous political experience, and previous indications of European interest was carried out in relation to the 1984 and 1989 UK intakes.<sup>150</sup>

---

<sup>150</sup> The analysis revealed some interesting "sub-plots". For example, Christopher Beazley (1984) and James Elles (1984) were both sons of sitting MEPs, and Caroline Jackson (1984) was the wife of a sitting MEP and even took over his seat. The nearest the 1979 UK intake came to this sort of "family affair" was the husband-and-wife team of the Kellett-Bowmans, Edward and Elaine. However, the 1989 data shows that this was not the beginning of a trend; no further siblings or spouses were elected. However, one other finding seems set to become a constant theme. Three of the new MEPs elected in 1984 had previously been assistants to the political groups in the European Parliament or to individual MEPs (MacMillan Scott, Hughes, Tongue). Similarly, among the 1989 intake, Anne McIntosh had previously worked for the EDG, and several other unsuccessful candidates had also previously worked for MEPs. That such a trend should exist is not surprising. Those working close to MEPs and the political groups benefit from several of the advantages MEPs themselves enjoy; they are close to the political machines, privy to political gossip and all manner of inside information, and will have a good grasp of the political processes with which they might have to contend. Section 7.x will further consider the possible consequences of this finding.

The analysis highlighted two clearly identifiable general characteristics. First, between 30 and 40 per cent of each of the three electoral intakes to date had previously contested a Westminster seat, including no less than five of the six new Conservative MEPs elected in 1989. The second common characteristic was elected local government experience. Between 25 and 60 per cent of the 1979, 1984, and 1989 intakes had previously served at some level of local government. Is this a new and distinctive feature particular to MEPs? Or is it, like the contesting of marginal or hopeless Westminster seats, a common apprenticeship for many politicians elected to the national chamber?<sup>151</sup>

A third common characteristic revealed among Labour MEPs is the high percentage of individuals with previous experience in local party political and trades union organisations, many having previously occupied positions within party constituency organisations at the Westminster or European level. Taken together, these three common characteristics underline the fact that, for many if not most MEPs, membership of the European Parliament represents the continuation, and not the beginning, of electoral political careers. On the Labour side, these last two tendencies would certainly help to emphasise a characteristic observed by some that "the Labour members were regionalistic rather than nationalistic". (Butler and Jowett, 1985: 30) In more

---

<sup>151</sup> It would be interesting to compare the political apprenticeship of MEPs with that of MPs.

general terms, all three factors illustrate how most MEPs grow out of their national and regional cultures, and why many retain their local links. In fact, the same "local element" that might have helped an MEP win a Westminster nomination probably helped him or her win the nomination to Strasbourg before that.

Table 11

## THE 1984 AND 1989 UK MEPs AND THE FOUR INDICATORS

1984	1989
CELL ONE: NO PREVIOUS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE, NO PREVIOUS INDICATIONS OF EUROPEAN INTEREST, AND NO PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO GAIN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL OFFICE	
1. <u>HOON</u> , Geoffrey (31) (Elected to Westminster seat of Ashfield in 1992 General Election)	
CELL TWO: INDICATIONS OF PREVIOUS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE ONLY	
1. MARTIN, David (30) 2. FORD, Glyn (34) 3. <u>SMITH</u> , Llewellyn (40) (Elected to Westminster seat of Blaenau Gwent in 1992 General Election) 4. FALCONER, Alec (44) 5. <u>STEVENSON</u> , George (46) (Elected to Westminster seat of Stoke-on-Trent South in 1992 General Election) 6. WEST, Norman (49) 7. CASSIDY, Bryan (50) 8. STEWART, Ken (59)	1. DONNELLY, Alan (32) 2. BOWE, David (36) 3. HARRISON, Lyndon (42) 4. WYNN, Terence (43) 5. BARTON, Roger (44) 6. SIMPSON, Brian (46) 7. SMITH, Alex (46) 8. McGUBBIN, Henry (47) 9. READ, Mel (50)
CELL THREE: PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO GAIN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL OFFICE ONLY	
	1. WHITE, Ian (44)
CELL FOUR: PREVIOUS INDICATIONS OF EUROPEAN INTEREST ONLY	
1. TONGUE, Carole (29) 2. McMILLAN-SCOTT, Edward (35) 3. ELLES, James (35) 4. DALY, Margaret (46) 5. KILBY, Michael (60)	1. ODDY, Christine (34)
CELL FIVE: PREVIOUS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE AND PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO GAIN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL OFFICE	
1. CRAWLEY, Christine (34) 2. HINDLEY, Michael (37) 3. MORRIS, David (54) 4. McGOWAN, Michael (44) 5. McMAHON, Hugh (46) 6. PITT, Terence (47)	1. WILSON, Joseph (52)
CELL SIX: PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO GAIN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL OFFICE AND PREVIOUS INDICATIONS OF EUROPEAN INTEREST	
	1. STEVENS, John (34) 2. McINTOSH, Ann (35) 3. RAWLINGS, Patricia (50)
CELL SEVEN: INDICATIONS OF PREVIOUS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE AND PREVIOUS INDICATIONS OF EUROPEAN INTEREST	
1. BEAZLEY, Peter (32) 2. HUGHES, Stephen (32)	1. DAVID, Wayne (32) 2. GREEN, Pauline (41) 3. CRAMPTON, Peter (57) 4. BIRD, John (63)
CELL EIGHT: PREVIOUS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE, PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO GAIN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL OFFICE AND PREVIOUS INDICATIONS OF EUROPEAN INTEREST	
1. JACKSON, Caroline (36) 2. ELLIOTT, Michael (52)	1. VANE, Richard (38) (Lord INGLEWOOD) 2. SPENCER, Tom (41) 3. KELLETT-BOWMAN, Edward (58)

- Ages in brackets

- Table excludes five former MPs (Faith, Cryer, Huckfield, Newens, Tomlinson) and Nicholson

Table 11 distributes the new 1984 and 1989 UK MEPs into one of eight cells, according to the combinations of the four factors of age, previous indications of European interest, previous attempts to gain a Westminster seat, and previous political experience.<sup>152</sup> The findings contrast considerably with the 1979 intake.

The first and most striking difference is that there have since been only three identifiable Westminsterite MEPs.<sup>153</sup> Moreover, one (Hoon) is to be found in Cell One (none of the three indicators), although he was among the younger new MEPs when elected<sup>154</sup>, and the other two are to be found in Cell Two, and not in Cell 5 where, it will be recalled, a high proportion of the 1979 Westminsterites were to be found. Nor, at the age of 46, could Stevenson have been said to have been relatively young (though Smith, at 40, was). What conclusions, if any, might be drawn from this? Perhaps the 1979 intake was, because of its particular pioneering circumstances, largely sui generis, and perhaps the large number of Westminsterite MEPs it harboured have almost all now been "flushed" from the system by a propitious combination of selectoral and electoral events. On the other hand, perhaps it is simply too early to tell, in which case

---

<sup>152</sup> In effect, it is a repeat of the exercise conducted in relation to the group of 57 non-exceptional MEPs from the 1979 UK intake, as summarised in Table 7.

<sup>153</sup> These are; Geoffrey Hoon (a member of the 1984 intake, elected to the Westminster seat of Ashfield in 1992), Llewelyn Smith (also a member of the 1984 intake, elected to the Westminster seat of Blaenau Gwent in 1992) and George Stevenson (again, 1984 intake, elected to the Westminster seat of Stoke-on-Trent South in 1992).

<sup>154</sup> 31, as opposed to his peer group's average age of 42.6.

the 1991 Labour Party Conference's decision to ban sitting MEPs from searching for Westminster nominations will indeed, unless changed, serve to hide the phenomenon we might otherwise have hoped to observe.<sup>155</sup>

On the other hand, there remains potential significance in the numbers of MEPs situated in Cells Two, Five and Six (though, with the exception of Cell Two, there was little consistency between the two electoral intakes). Such potential significance permits one weak and conditional prediction. If the high concentrations of Westminsterite MEPs in Cells Five, Six, and Two among the 1979 intake contained a significance going beyond the particular circumstances of the 1979 elections, then we might reasonably expect to find Westminsterite MEPs from the 1984 and 1989 intakes similarly concentrated in those three cells though, because of the smaller numbers involved and lesser selectoral possibilities, the trend, if such there be, will take longer to become apparent. As has been pointed out, only time could tell whether the moves to Westminster of Hoon, Smith and Stevenson were isolated incidents or the continuation of a generalised process.

---

<sup>155</sup> Whatever might be the case, Table 11 is one of those compilations of data that allows very little to be said about rather a lot. We cannot even make the Cassandra-like conditional prediction that future Westminsterite MEPs are most likely to be found among (younger) individuals in Cells Five, Six and Two, since most MEPs of the two new intakes are situated in those three boxes.



xi) Overall Links Between Strasbourg and  
Westminster

It was earlier pointed out that examination of the new embryonic career pathways in Strasbourg and established pathways in Westminster, together with the embryonic pathways between the two, might illuminate the extent to which the two parliaments were interacting. The above analysis underlined the fact that, for some MEPs, their time in Strasbourg had to be seen as a possible continuation of their (necessarily domestic) elected political careers, rather than a beginning. The detail examined in this section so far has given some impression of the extent to which the Strasbourg and Westminster memberships have overlapped, and this too must be seen in the context of the continual, evolving relationship between the two parliaments.

The most evident manifestation of such overlapping is the dual mandate<sup>156</sup>, yet dual mandates have been dwindling; there are only nine now, four in the Lords, and two Northern Ireland MEPs<sup>157</sup>, plus the three Labour

---

<sup>156</sup> The term is used here for MEPs who are members of either House at Westminster, though, 'twin mandate' might be more accurate in the case of members of the Lords.

<sup>157</sup> Both the Conservative and the Labour Parties disapproved of dual mandates. The Labour Party banned them (which explains why only three sitting Labour MPs, Castle, de Freitas, and Philips, sought Strasbourg nominations in 1979), while the Conservative Party tolerated them. Part of the problem at party headquarters level was the suspicion of pecuniary motives, since it was initially supposed that MEPs fulfilling dual mandates would earn two salaries and benefit from two sets of allowances. More importantly, at both party and Euro-constituency level there were strong doubts about the practical possibility of fulfilling both mandates, and fears that Westminster constituencies would suffer.

MEPs elected to Westminster seats in the 1992 General Election.<sup>158</sup> Several Conservative MPs, some identified from their responses to the EUI Survey, stood for the European Parliament because they felt they could thus assure continuity with the House of Commons and hence with the former appointed European Parliament.<sup>159</sup> In so doing, these MPs felt they were acting in the interests of both institutions and, as a minimum quid pro quo, believed the Whip's Offices in both Strasbourg and Westminster should make some allowance for a more than typically peripatetic working life. In the event, little such allowance was made.<sup>160</sup> Only Tom Normanton kept both mandates after 1984.<sup>161</sup> From June 1989 until April, 1992, there were only two Commons dual mandates, both (Paisley and Hume) representing the multi-member constituency of Northern Ireland. The three MEPs elected to Westminster in the 1992 general election will see out their Strasbourg mandates (to 1994), as did the dual mandates created in 1983 and 1987.<sup>162</sup> The situation is no different in relation to the Lords. There are only four

---

It was such doubts and fears that obliged Scott-Hopkins to resign his Westminster constituency before winning selection to a European seat.

<sup>158</sup> Hoon, Stevenson, and Smith are already much less in evidence in the EP.

<sup>159</sup> Elaine Kellett-Bowman, Tom Normanton, and Jim Spicer carried on directly from appointed to elected European Parliament. Lord Bethell was also a member of the appointed Parliament until 1979, as was Winifred Ewing.

<sup>160</sup> Although this negligence caused occasional resentment and frustration, it was said to be more the outcome of ignorance of the extent of the new MEPs' duties, rather than a prejudice against them.

<sup>161</sup> As we have seen, he decided to stand down from his Westminster seat in 1987, only to lose his Strasbourg seat in 1989.

<sup>162</sup> European by-elections are considered by the party managers to be notoriously costly and unpredictable and therefore unpopular.

peers in the European Parliament now.<sup>163</sup> Since the Labour Party has continued to forbid dual mandates, and since Conservative numbers in the European Parliament were substantially reduced in both 1984 and 1989, a proportional reduction in the number of dual mandates was only to be expected. Perhaps more importantly, the full extent of the onerous amounts of work and travel involved was apparent to all budding candidates in 1984 and 1989. Perhaps inevitably, the current memberships of the European Parliament and the Houses of Parliament overlap less and less.

On the other hand, while the dual mandate might be the most evident manifestation of overlapping, it is not the only one. A fuller picture of the linkage between the Houses of Commons and Lords and the appointed and elected (1979) European Parliament would include previous membership.

Thus, 19 of the original 81 British members of the first directly-elected European Parliament now sit in the House of Commons - just under a quarter. A further nine MPs were members of the pre-1979 appointed Parliament. Two former, and one current MEP from the original 81 have been created life peers.<sup>164</sup> They sit in the Lords together with the three hereditary peers who are still MEPs (Bethell and O'Hagan from 1979, and

---

<sup>163</sup> One, Lord Plumb, was enobled shortly after his election and the other, Lord Inglewood, succeeded to the title shortly after his election. The two others, Bethell and O'Hagan, were both members of the former appointed Parliament.

<sup>164</sup> One other former MEP, Dame Shelagh Roberts, died shortly before her elevation to the Lords.

Inglewood from 1984), the peer, Elles, who stood down from the Strasbourg Parliament in 1989, and no less than 14 peers who were members of the pre-1979 Parliament. Perhaps Westminster was not particularly well represented in the European Parliament after direct elections, but Strasbourg was certainly well represented in Westminster.

Emphasis on the quantitative should not obscure the qualitative. Many of the findings in this chapter have begged a series of simple questions<sup>165</sup>, all of which beg the fundamental normative question as to the exact form and substance that relations should take between the European and national parliaments, and between their respective memberships.<sup>166</sup> It is a question that increasingly occupies the Member States' and the Community's constitutionalists, that preoccupation having found its most recent textual expression in a protocol to the Maastricht Treaty on European Union.<sup>167</sup>

---

<sup>165</sup> Is an overlap between the two Parliaments' memberships important and, if so, why and in what way beyond the initial concern to "bed" the new Parliament "in" to parliamentary practice? Is the 'defection' of young MEPs to Westminster a matter for concern and, if so, when (remembering *Typologies IV and V*, and especially Cotta's thesis) does a 'healthy' steady trickle become a dangerous haemorrhage? On the other hand, is it inevitable that the directly-elected Parliament should completely shrug off its old, nominated roots? Is it desirable, or would it be preferable for the European Parliament to retain a mechanism that would guarantee the continued exchange of experience back into the national parliaments?

<sup>166</sup> On this matter see, for example, Ionescu and Morgan, 1988.

<sup>167</sup> "...the Conference considers that it is important for contacts between the national parliaments and the European Parliament to be stepped up, in particular through the granting of appropriate reciprocal facilities and regular meetings between members of Parliament interested in the same issues." (European Commission, 1992: 225)

Such questions go far beyond this study's field of inquiry, but it is clear that empirical study could help. To take one example, the government and opposition front benches are currently rich in former members of the 1979 European Parliament; Curry, Forth, Jackson and Taylor are all junior ministers, and Clwyd and Rogers are both prominent members of the Opposition front bench (together with a former member of the old nominated European Parliament, John Prescott). But has former membership of the European Parliament made any substantive difference to the way they carry out their duties? Put another way, has former membership brought a qualitative distinction to parliamentary activity? It is this author's impression that previous European Parliamentary experience among members of the Government and the Commons has made very little difference.<sup>168</sup> Former MEPs have not been prominent in any of the major debates on European issues (for example, Maastricht, the Single European Act) that have taken place since 1983. In fact, it seems almost as if these former MEPs sought to play down their previous experience. With the possible exception of Eric Forth (Department of Trade and Industry) and David Curry (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, with responsibility for Fisheries), few of those MEPs who have since become Ministers have held portfolios where their European experience might be

---

<sup>168</sup> For example, Roland Boyes, Richard Caborn, Ann Clwyd, and Allan Rogers all joined the Commons Select Committee on European Legislation, an obvious forum in which to exploit their experience, but had all left it within five years, Boyes and Rogers in November 1987, Caborn and Clwyd in February 1988.

of much relevance, and the same holds true for former Labour MEPs on the Opposition front benches. The picture is much the same in the House of Lords where, despite their numbers, few former and no current MEPs serve on the Select Committee on the European Communities.<sup>169</sup>

---

<sup>169</sup> Empirical research could do much to show how far these anecdotal impressions are correct.

PART III: EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT CAREER PATHWAYS;  
THE PARLIAMENTARY HIERARCHY, THE ASSIGNMENT  
PROCESS, THE CONSEQUENCES

7. European Parliament Career Pathways

i) Introduction

By definition, Westminster political careerism implies an easily observable dynamic, measurable in terms of attempts, whether successful or not, to get to Westminster.<sup>1</sup> Much the same argument applies to flows to and from the European Parliament and other Member State parliamentary chambers.

Observing political careerism within the European Parliament is more problematic. There is no self-evident, easily observable and easily measurable dynamic between chambers, and career pathways at Strasbourg will necessarily be less clearly established (the possibility of following such a career has existed for little more than a decade). Moreover, as will be seen below, these depend on a complex and not immediately apparent mixture of factors, including the evaluation of ambiguous factors.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> And because career pathways at Westminster are clearly established, a further stage could involve tracing the political careers of those who have so far been successful in their attempts to get to the House of Commons.

<sup>2</sup> As Kirchner put it: "Selecting leadership positions, however, is not easily established without engaging in an extensive argument or analysis as to which position is more important. There might even be a question as to whether some of the leadership positions (e.g., deputy leaders or vice-chairmen) necessarily reflect effort or ability." (1984: 64)

The examination of exceptional MEPs in the previous section revealed several individuals<sup>3</sup> who clearly corresponded closely to the intuitively-constructed stereotype of the European Political Careerist, and the observable electoral behaviour of some non-exceptional MEPs<sup>4</sup> clearly put them in the same camp. In addition, EUI survey evidence revealed the existence of 11 self-avowed European political careerists. (Unfortunately, this third source of indicators is unavailable in a general examination of the entire corpus of UK MEPs elected in 1979 because those 11 responses were volunteered and not directly and explicitly sought from each respondent.) Lastly, a question about MEPs' longer-term intentions revealed that at least 22 MEPs had no ambitions outside the Parliament, but this would not enable us to conclude that they therefore necessarily had ambitions within the Parliament.

Since comprehensive survey evidence is unavailable, this section will be looking at other possible indicators; first, and only briefly, at electoral/selectoral behaviour at the aggregate level, and then, secondly, at hierarchical positions occupied within the Parliament. However, in order to assess hierarchical flows it is first necessary to understand

---

<sup>3</sup> For example, Lord Plumb, Sir Fred Catherwood, Baroness Elles, Dame Shelagh Roberts, Basil de Ferranti.

<sup>4</sup> For example, Edward Kellett Bowman and Tom Spencer, who lost their seats in 1984 and were elected to other European seats in 1989, or Richard Simmonds, who switched nominations from the marginal seat of Midlands West (Conservative majority of just 1,892 in 1979) to Wight and Hampshire East (Consevative majority of 23 per cent in 1984).



the mechanics of appointment<sup>5</sup> and the relative importance of the galaxy of leadership/hierarchical positions that exist within the Parliament, requiring in turn an understanding of the varying fortunes of the 'tendencies' within the two UK party contingents. The bulk of the rest of this chapter will therefore be devoted: first, to a study of hierarchical positions within the Parliament and the mechanics of appointment and, where appropriate, overviews of developments within the two party contingents; and, second, a study of the assignment process and its consequences.<sup>6</sup> The chapter ends with a series of reflections on the methodological problems posed by, and the institutional consequences of, the European Parliament's consensus appointment mechanisms.<sup>7</sup>

ii) Electoral/Selectoral Evolution of the 1979 Cohort

Table 5 summarised the electoral and selectoral fortunes of the 81 UK MEPs elected in 1979. It showed that 49 had, for whatever reason - death, retirement,

---

<sup>5</sup> Though Parliament's rules speak only of 'election' the term 'appointment' is used advisedly.

<sup>6</sup> Including reference to the American literature. As will be seen, few comparative, empirical studies of assignment processes in European parliaments have been published. Moreover, the US Congress and the European Parliament share two common characteristics: both have powerful committee systems, and governments are 'drawn' from neither.

<sup>7</sup> It should perhaps be pointed out that the study of the Parliament's hierarchy is necessarily subjective and impressionistic in its approach; the Parliament is yet too young for a more empirically-based, quantitative, 'time series' approach to be appropriate.

de-selection, election to Westminster - since left the Parliament. 20 of the 57 non-exceptional MEPs were successfully returned in 1979, 1984, and 1989, together with 10 of the exceptional MEPs. In addition, Spencer and Kellett Bowman, who lost their seats in 1984, were returned again in 1989. Thus, in 1991, 32 of the original 81 directly-elected MEPs remained, and it was seen that this relatively high percentage of 'survivors' made the UK contingent the most experienced, especially when seen against the backdrop of generally decreasing membership stability. Evidently, the electoral/selectoral durability of these 32 members immediately identifies them as potential European political careerists and it is to them and, to a lesser extent, to the 51 1979 MEPs returned in 1984, that we would first look for evidence of hierarchical ambition and advancement.<sup>8</sup> The general gradual decline in the 1979 intake's numbers, from 81 to 51 to 32, hides two more particular tendencies.

Firstly, the gentle decline (17 to 10 to 7) in the originally very small number (17 out of 81) of 1979 Labour MEPs has been accompanied by large increases in the total number of Labour MEPs returned (from 17 to 32 to 45). The original distinctions between the 'pro' and 'anti' camps of Labour MEPs became gradually blurred over the five years of their first term, and a significant number (Barbara Castle chief among them) announced their conversion to the idea of continued UK

---

<sup>8</sup> And enthusiasm for constitutional reform.

membership of the EC. 1984 saw a profusion of tendencies within the Labour Group, with the election of a group of more militant MEPs<sup>9</sup>, sometimes referred to as the 'Campaign' group, and the balance was to switch again in 1989, with the election, *inter alia*, of four enthusiastically federalist Labour MEPs<sup>10</sup>. By 1989, the 1979 'survivors' represented just over 15 per cent of the total Labour membership, whereas although not very much more numerous (10 as opposed to 7) they had constituted a potentially more influential bloc of 31 per cent in 1984. All of this leads us to intuit that, to the extent that they could be considered a group per se, the 1979 'survivors' probably were most coherent and enjoyed most potential influence within the Group as a whole in the period around the 1984 elections.

The Conservatives' fortunes reveals a very different picture. Although the party suffered shocking reductions in 1984 and 1989 (from 60 to 45 to 32 seats), the 1979 'survivors' remained the most important group within it (82 per cent in 1984, almost 69 per cent in 1989). Moreover, the split among the Conservatives was less divisive, nor was there a profusion of tendencies among the contingent.

In 1979, the average age of the 60 Tory MEPs returned was almost 46. By 1984, the average age of the 37 who remained was 51.5, as opposed to an average age

---

<sup>9</sup> For example, Newman, West, Falconer, Smith, Stewart, Huckfield, MacGowan.

<sup>10</sup> Coates, Crampton, McCubbin and White - sometimes collectively referred to as 'the federalist four'.

of 44 for the 8 new Conservative MEPs. But 8 MEPs represented little more than a quarter of the total EDG membership, and hardly constituted an influential bloc. Moreover, although the 37 were reduced to just 20 by 1989, the 8 were similarly reduced to 6, and joined by a further 6 new MEPs.<sup>11</sup>

The picture in the Labour camp was strikingly different. The average age of the 17 original 1979 members, and the ratchet effect upwards of the ages of the 'survivors' in 1984 and 1989, roughly mirrored that of the 1979 Conservatives; 45 and 43, 51 and 50, 55 and 55 respectively. But the absolute numbers involved were different, and the age gaps tended to be larger. Put another way, whereas the 1979 Conservative survivors remain numerous and dominant, the number of 1979 Labour survivors has been rapidly dwindling and is increasingly dominated by large groups of both relatively and similarly young newcomers<sup>12</sup>. Without knowing anything about the relative success of the various political strains within the two contingents, we would expect to find the dominant 1979 Tory MEPs enjoying a greater share of the hierarchical 'spoils' pertaining to the Group which, in any case, the British Conservatives dominated to the virtual exclusion of all other nationalities and political parties. Conversely, we would not expect to find the relatively small and hence

---

<sup>11</sup> Or 22, 6 and 4, if Kellett Bowman and Spencer are counted among the original 1979 intake.

<sup>12</sup> In 1989, the average age of the 19 1984 survivors was about 46.5, and the average age of the 19 MEPs elected for the first time in 1989 was 44.25.

less influential number of 1979 Labour survivors enjoying a great, and certainly not a disproportionate, share of the 'spoils' pertaining to their national contingent within the Socialist Group, even though since 1989 that national contingent has been the largest within the Group.

## 8. Hierarchical Positions Within the European Parliament

### I. Bureau, Group, and Party

#### i) Introduction

When the first directly-elected members of the European Parliament arrived in Strasbourg in July 1979 they were, technically, confronted with a tabula rasa.<sup>13</sup> The configuration of its internal rules was left entirely up to the new Parliament to decide. Similarly, the numbers, roles and powers of its "officers" and "President" was entirely the Parliament's prerogative.

In practice, the Parliament opted for a broad degree of continuity, taking over most of the organisational structure, together with the basic secretariat, of the previous, appointed Parliament. There were some minor, and a few major, quibbles over changes to the Rules of Procedure<sup>14</sup>, but the Rules were

---

<sup>13</sup> Article 10(3) of the 1976 Act instituting the Direct Elections obliged the Parliament to meet on the first Tuesday after expiry of an interval of one month from the elections themselves. Article 140 (EEC) obliged the Parliament to "elect its President and its officers from among its members," and Article 142 (EEC) envisaged that the Parliament should adopt "its rules of procedure".

<sup>14</sup> For example, Marco Pannella's stand over the composition and rights of smaller political groups.

not changed so much that a member of the pre-direct elections Parliament would have felt out of place in the new Parliament.<sup>15</sup>

That this should have been so is not difficult to understand; as has been seen, members with previous experience of the pre-1979 Parliament made up a sizeable and coherent minority of the newly elected Parliament's membership. It was only natural that they should prefer a degree of structural and organisational continuity. Moreover, there were no fundamental objections to such continuity, nor any similarly sizeable minorities with alternative views of how the Parliament should be constituted and run. Though the institution of direct elections was a much-acclaimed and long-awaited measure, many long-serving MEPs, particularly those with dual mandates, did not at first understand how radical and invigorating a departure it would prove to be. Thus, although the first days of the new Parliament were full of ceremony and political excitement, there was an underlying air of procedural business, if not as usual, then much as before.<sup>16</sup> Another, possibly as important, factor militating in favour of continuity was the inheritance of the old Parliament's secretariat.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> See Bieber, 1984, for an analysis of the March 1981 rules changes. Even the fundamental overhaul of Parliament's Rules of Procedure undertaken in 1986 following the ratification of the Single European Act still retained the basic pre-1979 structure.

<sup>16</sup> The leaders of the Political Groups in the outgoing Parliament had already provisionally agreed on the most likely political colouring of the future directly-elected Parliament's first President, and had even pencilled in a candidate's name (Gaston Thorn).

<sup>17</sup> For example, to have undertaken a fundamental reform of Parliament's committee structure would have been possible but, quite apart from the upset to the traditional system of sharing

Lastly, though several changed their names and others were formed in July 1979, the political groups and groupings within the European Parliament imposed their own logic for continuity, particularly the three pre-eminent groups of the Christian Democrats, the Socialists, and the Liberals.<sup>18</sup> As with the Parliament's secretariat, the basic administrative structure of the major political groups was inherited largely unchanged.

In choosing continuity of structure and organisation, the Parliament was also perpetuating the pre-1979 Parliament's administrative and political hierarchies, but with one all-important difference. Whereas, before 1979, positions within the Parliament had been adjuncts or accessories to the mainstay of a domestic political position<sup>19</sup>, after direct elections, and after the diminution of the dual mandate, these positions delineated the skeletal career pathways of the new Parliament.

---

out committee positions to the political groups such a reform would have implied, it would have involved a major re-organisation of the Parliament's bureaucratic and administrative structure. This, in turn, would have been possible, but would have required a major and coherent effort of will on the part of the new membership. Quite simply, such change was not considered necessary, and no such will existed.

<sup>18</sup> For many of the leading politicians in these groups, direct elections did not so much imply handing over to new hands, as to the other hand. (The Presidencies of three political groups, the EPP (Klepsch), the EDA (de la Malène) and the Communist and Allies (Amendola), remained the same after direct elections.)

<sup>19</sup> Though admittedly this was less true of the major positions of power and prestige such as the Presidency and the leadership of the political groups.

ii) Positions within the Bureau and the Enlarged Bureau

a) The Presidency - Power and Prestige

In terms of formal hierarchical positions, the new Parliament's Rules of Procedure foresaw that its activities would be organised and directed by the President, assisted by twelve Vice-Presidents and five 'Quaestors'. Together, the President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors formed the Parliamentary organ known as the 'Bureau'. Directly inherited from the pre-1979 Parliament, a distinct 'pecking order' had long since emerged within this structure.

Pre-eminent was the Presidency, the only office foreseen in the Treaties.<sup>20</sup> The Presidency consists of an institutionally idiosyncratic mixture of political, procedural and administrative powers.<sup>21</sup> The mixture of

---

<sup>20</sup> The (then) Rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure described the duties of the President as falling into four categories: directing Parliament's activities; presiding over plenary sittings; functions relating to the preparation and establishment of the budget; representing Parliament externally. In very general terms, it could be said that most of the Presidency's intra-institutional power was concentrated in the first two of these categories, and most of its prestige in the second two. Butler and Marquand described the post as being; "...of much greater political importance than that of the Speaker of the House of Commons. The President of the Parliament does not merely preside over debates in the hemicycle. He or she is also the head of the Parliament's executive, and presides over the meetings of the enlarged Bureau, which manages Parliament's business. It is as though the Speaker of the House of Commons were also the Leader of the House, and at the same time the head of a separate bureaucracy, independent of Whitehall." (1981: 144)

<sup>21</sup> This mixture did not meet with universal approval. Immediately after the election of Simone Veil, "...Barbara Castle called a Press Conference with Mr. Ernest Glinne, the new Belgian leader of the Socialist Group, to lodge a protest against Mme Veil's election to the presidency on party lines...Mrs Castle argued that the President should be more nearly akin to the Speaker of the House of Commons in the manner of election and in presidential practice...At any rate, she was correct to draw a distinction



the particular constitutional powers and role of the Presidency can be at least partly explained by the absence of any governing party or governing coalition with managerial powers over, and a vested interest in, the Parliament's business and timetable.<sup>22</sup>

As with all other occupants of leading positions within organisations, there can be relatively weak and relatively strong Presidents. Presidential style is also said to be of importance.<sup>23</sup> Other informal and formal power centres within Parliament's political and hierarchical structure (for example, a powerful committee chairman, or a prestigious political figure) can and frequently do compete with the President over

---

between a Speaker who carefully keeps at arm's length from the business managers at Westminster, and a President of the European Parliament, who heads the managerial bureau and also serves as the Parliament's "ministerial" negotiator with the Council of Ministers." (Wood, Times Guide, 1979: 79) There was undoubtedly a whiff of political sour grapes in Castle's objections; as has already been pointed out (Note 16 *supra*), the political colour of the Presidency had been virtually decided by a centre-right coalition before the direct elections took place, and the same author wrote that "not all the Westminster journalists present immediately recognised her theory of Speakership." (*ibid.*)

<sup>22</sup> As a brief aside, it might be added that, although the deadlines in the budgetary procedure and the quasi-legislative cooperation procedure introduced by the Single European Act, the deadline of the internal market legislative programme, and the tightened-up procedure for adoption of the Commission's annual legislative programme have introduced some of the imperatives of governmental programmes to parliamentary planning, the managerial function remains solidly within the Parliament.

<sup>23</sup> With some Presidents "...setting a more direct leadership example, and others adopting a more consensual system." (Jacobs and Corbett, 1990: 85) Moreover, "Successive Presidents' differing conceptions of their role have had a major impact on the ways they have interpreted their different responsibilities, and on the balance between them. Simone Veil, for example, put a heavy emphasis on the President's ambassadorial role, whereas Piet Dankert attached a higher priority to internal Parliament administration and to budgetary powers. The President's relations with the Vice-Presidents and the Group leaders have also varied considerably, with some Presidents attempting a more direct leadership style, and others preferring a more collegiate approach." (Corbett and Jacobs, 1988: 33)

many issues, and a relatively weak President would clearly be more prone to cede power or influence under such circumstances. To a considerable extent, the tone of a Presidency may be set by a coincidence of factors beyond the Presidency's control.<sup>24</sup>

Many argue that the leaders of the major political groupings within the Parliament, and particularly the big two - the Socialists and the Christian Democrats, may wield as much power and influence as the Presidency. One parliamentary expert has insisted on a distinction between power in terms of pure policy, where the larger Group Presidencies are pre-eminent, and in terms of prestige and representation, where the Presidency is more evident and attractive.<sup>25</sup> In overall terms, the Presidency is recognised as the pinnacle of the power structure within the Parliament, as underlined by Egon Klepsch's readiness to give up the leadership of the EPP Group in order to become President. The Presidency is also the explanatory key stone to most other political and hierarchical position assignments within the Parliament.

---

<sup>24</sup> For example, Enrico Baron Crespo's Presidency ran in parallel with two Inter-Governmental Conferences and the collapse of the Communist system in Eastern Europe, and thus his Presidency was largely coloured by institutional/constitutional and geopolitical considerations. On the other hand, his direct predecessor, Lord Plumb, presided during a period characterised by budgetary tensions, resulting in the Inter-Institutional Agreement, the implementation of the Single European Act, involving a major rule change, a clarification of legislative relations with the Commission, resulting in the annual legislative programme, and his winning of the right for Parliament's President to attend and address the European Council.

<sup>25</sup> Although curiously, what the political groups consider as 'pure policy' is frequently non-legislative business, such as the high-profile resolutions adopted at the end of political debates.

b) The Presidency - Elections 1979-1992:

Considerations and Conclusions

According to the Rules of Procedure of the old, nominated Parliament, the President held office for just one year. Since this left little time to settle in and develop any distinct policy identity, the custom grew of electing the President to a second term by acclamation.<sup>26</sup> Article 3 of the Act instituting Direct Elections laid down that representatives were to be elected for a five-year term. Retaining the spirit of the old two-year custom and splitting the new five-year term, the first directly-elected Parliament fixed the period of office of the President (and of the Vice-Presidents and Quaestors) at two-and-a-half years.

The mechanism for the election of the President was also retained largely intact.<sup>27</sup> There have been six Presidential elections to date, and the circumstances of each have been very different, though a tendency towards consensus candidates has been developing. As with all

---

<sup>26</sup> There were exceptions: Jean Duvieusart served just one term, 1964-65; Alain Poher was re-elected twice, 1966-69; Emilio Colombo served until direct elections came into force, 1977-79 (ie two-and-a half terms).

<sup>27</sup> The President is elected by an absolute majority of the votes cast (and not, then, of total membership, although the vast majority of the EP's membership has participated in all presidential elections to date). The ballot is secret. If no candidate wins an absolute majority in the first round, the Rules provide for a second and a third ballot, with no obligation on first ballot candidates to stand down, and with the possibility for new candidates to enter their names. A conclusive fourth ballot may be held, in which only the two candidates with the highest number of votes in the third ballot may take part. In the fourth ballot, a simple majority is sufficient.

positions in the Parliament, there is a great difference between the theoretical mechanisms leading to appointment and the reality. A series of informal conditions must be met by all successful candidates. There are also conventional mechanisms to ensure an equitable share-out of hierarchical positions between political groups and national contingents on the one hand, and between Member States on the other. The latter consideration is largely extraneous to the Parliament and impossible to predict. Partly as a result of this, the timing of candidacies is at a considerable premium.

All other appointments within the Parliament flow to a greater or lesser extent from the election of the President, and similar considerations and mechanisms are found to be at play at each and every level. Above all, where the major political groups reach a coherent and tenable agreement about the post (an increasingly likely occurrence), selection is as good as election. Similar analyses are increasingly applicable to all other hierarchical positions within the Parliament.

#### c) The Vice Presidents - Election and Role

The election of the President is followed, with him or her in the chair, by the election of the Vice-Presidents, which is formally governed by the same election procedure; a procedure, like that for the election of the Presidency, inherited from the old

appointed Parliament.<sup>28</sup> But in practice, "these posts are effectively divided between the Political Groups (and within them the different national delegations) on the basis of their numerical strength after having taken into account which Political Group has obtained the Presidency".<sup>29</sup>

At the overall Parliamentary level, considerations of balanced political representation override concerns about national representation.<sup>30</sup> The greatest concern of the two largest political groups is the overall balance of power within the increasingly pre-eminent enlarged Bureau. Bureau posts are shared out on a proportional (d'Hondt system) basis, but the Presidency counts as two. Clever use of this mechanism has created left-wing majorities within the enlarged Bureau from 1987 onwards.<sup>31</sup> In this explanation lies an understanding of the Socialist Group's equanimity in accepting a Klepsch Presidency, despite the left-of-centre majority among the membership. (Klepsch's Presidency 'cost' the EPP two of its d'Hondt Bureau points, thus reinforcing the

---

<sup>28</sup> Until Spanish and Portuguese accession in 1986, the number of Vice-Presidents was set at 12. Since then it has been set at 14. The Rules (currently Rule 14) state that the Vice-Presidents are elected on a single ballot paper. On the first and second ballots the 12 (14) candidates who obtain an absolute majority of the votes cast are declared elected in the numerical order of their votes. Where necessary, a relative majority is sufficient on the third ballot.

<sup>29</sup> Jacobs and Corbett, 1990: 88. "An attempt is also made to ensure that a broad variety of nationalities are represented among the Vice-Presidents and Quaestors, although certain smaller countries, such as Luxembourg and Ireland, cannot always have such a representative." (Jacobs and Corbett, 1990: 88)

<sup>30</sup> As will be seen, this is not the case within political groups, where the share-out of positions is far more closely related to the numerical strength of national contingents.

<sup>31</sup> See Corbett and Jacobs, 1988: 33.

Socialist Group and left-wing dominance of the Bureau and enlarged Bureau in the second half of the 1989-1994 term.)<sup>32</sup> In fact, both the practice and the theory from which it so largely departs were inherited from the old appointed Parliament.<sup>33</sup>

Though clearly less important than that of the Presidency, the role of the Vice-Presidents is also a mixture of prestige<sup>34</sup>, procedural authority, and

---

<sup>32</sup> The 'points' system in the European Parliament is strongly reminiscent of the complicated system used in Belgian politics to divide up government positions between the linguistic communities and the political parties. The Prime Ministership 'costs' 3 points. The 11 Ministers 'cost' 2 points each; the 3 Secretaries of State, 1; and the 2 Presidents of the Assembly, 2. For an account of the Belgian system, see for example *La Libre Belgique*, 25.2.92.

<sup>33</sup> "Up until 1976 the Vice-Presidents were elected by acclamation, since the political groups were always able to agree on the candidates to be put forward. The balance thus negotiated in the Bureau was respected in 1973 and 1974 even to the extent of allocating a post of Vice-President in their absence to the British Labour members, who were temporarily boycotting Parliament. Departing from the Rules of Procedure, Parliament elected only 11 instead of the 12 Vice-Presidents prescribed. This procedure ... was made official in September 1973. The relevant provision in the current Rules of Procedure reads: 'However, if the number of nominations does not exceed the number of seats to be filled, the candidates may be elected by acclamation.' (European Parliament, 1989: 154) This arrangement of patronage between the political groups, and particularly the larger among them, has come under attack, but has never been seriously menaced, by its chief victims; 'non-attached' members, smaller political groups, and smaller Member State contingents. In 1977, for the first time, non-attached members stood for the office of Vice-President in addition to the lists of candidates agreed between the political groups but were unable to affect the agreed outcome. Thereafter, the agreed lists remained uncontested until January, 1987, when three ballots were required to elect the 14 'agreed' Vice-Presidents, whose candidatures had been contested by a representative of the Rainbow Group (largely, though not only, composed of Greens and ecologists), of the European Right, and of the Non-attached Members. Again, the 'agreed' outcome was not seriously threatened, though the popular Belgian Rainbow candidate, François Roelants de Vivier, achieved the Pyrrhic victory of winning more votes than his Political Group disported. Green protests became muted after 1989, when a powerful electoral advance and consequent group status, together with the workings of the d'Hondt system, entitled the group to a Vice-Presidency.

<sup>34</sup> According to Rule 14(2), the 'order of precedence' of the Vice-Presidents is determined by the order in which they are elected but, "In practice the numerical ranking of the Vice-Presidents is of little direct significance." (Jacobs and Corbett, 1990: 86)

political influence. Vice-Presidents have three chief formal duties; to preside over the plenary sessions when the President is not in the chair, to replace the President in conciliation or other meetings when the President cannot be present, and to take part in the meetings of the Bureau and the enlarged Bureau. Outside the Parliament, Vice-Presidents enjoy a certain informal ambassadorial prestige, and some have chosen to exploit this particular aspect of their unofficial duties more than others.

Within the Parliament, a myriad factors may play a role in determining a Vice-President's importance. For example, as a former President, Dankert clearly carried authority in his own right. Some Vice-Presidents may carry the political authority of their Group, of their nationality (especially if they are the only representative of their nationality in the Bureau or enlarged Bureau), or of their national contingent within their Group. Others bring their previous political authority to bear. Still others become influential through the strength of their character or a particular ability. Although there is no formal specialisation, some Vice-Presidents enjoy particular popularity or respect because of their procedural aptitudes.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> For example, the French Socialist, Nicole Pery, is much admired for her speedy and efficient handling of frequently complex votes in the plenary. In an assembly where long, complex, and disputatious votes are increasingly common and where plenary time is increasingly at a premium, these qualities are highly valued, and it is no coincidence that Pery has served several terms as Vice-President (thus coincidentally corresponding with the concept of the 'niche' politician outlined above).

As a hierarchical position per se, the Vice-Presidency may serve many different purposes. For example, it has been used as a suitably prestigious position for a defeated former President (Dankert), and for a defeated President-in-waiting (Baron Crespo), and for other also rans<sup>36</sup>.

Though clearly a far lesser position, in one important respect a Vice-Presidency enjoys the same power as the President and the leaders of the political groups and that is that they all have one vote in the Bureau. This can be important on particular issues, especially if a number of strong Vice-Presidents share a common position, perhaps independently from their political groups.

With one brief exception, there have generally been two UK representatives on the Bureau, one from each of the major parties.<sup>37</sup> This, it should perhaps be

<sup>36</sup> For example, the Socialist Mario Zagari in 1979, Egon Klepsch in 1982, and the EDG's Baroness Elles in 1984, though she had previously been a Vice-President from 1982 to 1984.

<sup>37</sup> UK Presidential, Vice-Presidential, and Quaestor candidates have been as follows, with successful candidates starred.

Year	Presidential elections	Vice-Presidential elections	Quaestors
1979	NONE	DE FERRANTI (ED)*	SIMPSON (ED)*
1982	SCOTT-HOPKINS (ED)	LADY ELLES (ED)* JOHNSON (ED)	SIMPSON (ED)* ENRIGHT (SOC)
1984	LADY ELLES (ED)	LADY ELLES (ED)* GRIFFITHS (SOC)*	SIMPSON (ED)*
1987	PLUMB (ED)*	MEGAHY (SOC)*	PROVAN (ED)*
1989	EWING (ARC/UK)	MARTIN (SOC)* CATHERWOOD (ED)*	SIMPSON (ED)*
1992	NONE	MARTIN (SOC)* STEWART-CLARK (ED)*	SIMPSON (ED)* READ (SOC)* EWING (ARC)



stressed, is more the result of the d'Hondt system's machinations within the Socialist Group, although the British Labour contingent's 'right' to one of the Socialist Group's 'share' of the Vice-Presidencies (five out of the twelve) was always clear.<sup>38</sup>

How did particular MEPs come to be selected for these positions? A member's standing within his or her national contingent (within his or her political group) is more important than simple standing within the group, and certainly far more important than standing within the Parliament, which is largely irrelevant. To understand why the four Labour Vice-Presidents to date have been Allan Rogers, Winston Griffiths, Tom Megahy and David Martin, is to understand the ebbs and flows of particular political views within the Labour membership. Thus, Allan Rogers was a senior (in terms of age) anti-marketeer at a time when the dominant majority within the British Labour contingent was anti-marketeer.<sup>39</sup> Wyn Griffiths, on the other hand, was known to be wavering towards support of the pro- camp at a time when the majority within the contingent was shifting towards a pro- line, and its leader, Barbara Castle, had already

---

<sup>38</sup> Moreover, the Labour members could argue that the existence of a political group tantamount to a national party contingent in the EDG guaranteed British Conservatives two places and votes in the increasingly pre-eminent enlarged Bureau; one through the Vice-Presidency (theirs through the d'Hondt system), and one through the political Group leadership.

<sup>39</sup> Rogers, who resigned in 1982 and was elected to Westminster in 1983, was not replaced immediately, since Dankert's election to the Presidency 'cost' the Socialist Group two Bureau points. The BLG Vice Presidency was restored in 1984.

undergone a conversion of views.<sup>40</sup> He was succeeded by a wavering anti, Tom Megahy, at a time when an enthusiastic pro, David Martin, had been elected to the leadership of the Group by a very narrow majority. Finally, Megahy was succeeded by the same David Martin, at a time when the pros represented a large majority within the Group and had elected one of their number leader.<sup>41</sup> From this brief account it becomes clear that the possibility of a member in the search for hierarchical advancement enjoying the British Labour Group's backing and patronage over the last thirteen years depended very much on the luck of the electoral and ideological draw, as majorities shifted one way or another and back again.<sup>42</sup>

The picture for the British Conservatives has been very different. In the first place, and as has been repeatedly observed, the political party contingent is tantamount to the Group; standing in the contingent and standing in the Group have, therefore, amounted to the same thing. In the second place, the pro- and agnostic camps have always outnumbered the anti-camp, so that the repository of patronage within the party contingent has remained the same throughout the period under

---

<sup>40</sup> An enthusiastic pro-Marketeer would have been unacceptable to the antis and 'agnostics', who together still formed a majority within the contingent.

<sup>41</sup> Presumably, Martin was selected from among the pros on the strength of his having previously been leader of the Group - an example of the phenomenon of 'political inertia', perhaps.

<sup>42</sup> As was intuited at the start of this section, as far as Labour Vice-Presidencies are concerned, the 1979 intake would appear to have had its day; the last of its number was Tom Megahy (1986 to 1989).

examination. In the third place and as was intuited at the beginning of this section, the 1979 intake has continued to share out among its membership the spoils of hierarchical office (De Ferranti, Elles, Plumb, and Catherwood). Moreover, all were hierarchically highly placed within the Group in 1979.<sup>43</sup>

#### d) The Quaestors

In 1977, the 'Quaestor's Office'<sup>44</sup> was introduced to deal with administrative and financial matters directly relating to Members and their working conditions. This first 'College of Quaestors' was set up by a decision of the enlarged Bureau on the basis of a proposal from the political group chairmen, and consisted of the President and three Vice-Presidents appointed by the Bureau. 'Quaestors' were thus members of the Bureau with full voting rights.

The 1979 revision of the Rules of Procedure changed the situation in two important respects. Firstly, the number of quaestors was increased to five, and provision made for them to be directly elected by the Parliament as a whole.<sup>45</sup> Secondly, quaestors were no longer to enjoy full voting rights but remained members of the

---

<sup>43</sup> All are members of the exceptional category of MEPs, a matter Section 8 will examine in more detail.

<sup>44</sup> A familiar institution in some Member State parliaments, but alien to the Westminster tradition.

<sup>45</sup> This is done immediately after the election of the President and the Vice-Presidents, in accordance with the election procedure for the latter. Their term of office is two-and-a-half years and runs concurrently with that of the Presidents and the Vice-Presidents.

Bureau and enlarged Bureau, though in an advisory capacity only. In addition, the quaestors' powers and responsibilities, which were previously derived from the Bureau or the President, were now set out in the Rules of Procedure, and later constrained by Guidelines laid down by the Bureau in 1981.

By those same 1981 Guidelines, the College was empowered to lay down its own rules of procedure and, although in principle the President still chairs its meetings, in practice College members chair in four-monthly rotations, so that the College of Quaestors represents a separate and partly independent sub-group within the Bureau and the enlarged Bureau, which was indeed the intention behind the rule changes.<sup>46</sup>

The College's duties are divided into three general categories; those where it can take a decision at its own discretion, those where it may make proposals at its own initiative, and those where it may deliver an opinion.<sup>47</sup> None of these duties entails the possibility of a high profile, but a strong (that is, strong-charactered or politically well-backed) quaestor can have considerable influence on matters outside the College's direct influence within the Bureau and the enlarged Bureau. In fact, the role of quaestor consists of a mixture of (purely internal) prestige, (generally

---

<sup>46</sup> "It is contended by many European parliamentarians that the creation of Quaestors is necessary to ensure that backbench opinion and independent or non-aligned members' opinions are represented in both the Bureau and the enlarged Bureau." (Wood & Wood, 1979: 30)

<sup>47</sup> See European Parliament, 1989: 158-159 for a fuller description of the College's duties. See also Corbett and Jacobs, 1988: 34, and Jacobs and Corbett, 1990: 86.

weak and occasional) influence and, in a Parliament where more and more power is becoming concentrated and centralised, highly prized priveleged access to information. As one parliamentary official put it, "You can't really know what it is unless you've done it."

From 1979 to 1992, only two British MEPs had been quaestors, both EDG members. In a perfect example of a 'niche' parliamentarian, Anthony Simpson has been a Quaestor since 1979 until the present day.<sup>48</sup> Until 1992 the BLG seemed to eschew the position. Informal soundings of other UK MEPs reveal varying opinions about the position. One argued that it was uninteresting, and that "Simpson is welcome to it." Another argued that "The job is important, Simpson does it well, and that's why he's still there." (In fact, Simpson came to the Parliament with a strong background in law, and there is a strong suggestion of correspondence with the "Public Servant/Technician" category of stereotype.)<sup>49</sup> A third MEP said of Simpson's position that "He's in on everything, and there'd be more people chasing his job if they realised."<sup>50</sup> If the position is obscure, it is also privileged. In 1992, for the first time a BLG/EPLP member, Mel Read (a member of the 1989 intake), was

---

<sup>48</sup> With a short hiatus from 1987 to 1989, when his position was taken by James Provan. Perhaps Provan would have wanted to continue after 1989, but he lost his seat in the July elections, and Simpson was again returned to the position.

<sup>49</sup> Witness, for example, the expertise displayed in his written and oral evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee's investigation into the privileges and immunities of MEPs (House of Lords, 1986: 17-33).

<sup>50</sup> Simpson was first elected to the Parliament in 1979, and his claim to the position, both within his Group and within his national contingent, has yet to be contested by any member of a post-1979 intake.

elected to the position of quaestor, alongside the long-serving Simpson; perhaps an indication that Labour's traditional eschewal of the position was over.

**e) The Other Members of the Enlarged Bureau - the Leaders of the Political Groups**

The exact share out of power and responsibility between the Bureau and the enlarged Bureau, whether formal or informal, is a matter of some debate, but all agree that between them they share virtually all of the Parliament's managerial functions, and that within that overall dominance competences have been gradually shifting to the enlarged Bureau. The increasing dominance of the two bodies has much to do with the Parliament's growing powers and responsibilities and the need, if these are to be exercised effectively, for centralised coordination. The increasing pre-eminence of the enlarged Bureau (although it should be recalled that the one subsumes the other) is intimately linked to the increasing power of the political groups.<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> "It is the Groups who play the decisive role in changing the Parliament's leaders, the President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors, the committee chairmen and vice-chairmen and the interparliamentary delegations' chairmen. The Groups also set the parliamentary agenda, choose the rapporteurs and decide on the allocation of speaking time. They have their own large and growing staff, receive considerable funds from the Parliament and often have an important say in the choice of the Parliament's own top officials. The power of the Groups is also shown by the powerlessness of those non-attached members who are not in Political Groups, who are highly unlikely, for example, ever to hold a powerful post within the Parliament, nor be a major rapporteur." (Jacobs and Corbett, 1990: 54)

Although an attempt was made to change them immediately after the first direct elections in 1979, Parliament's rules governing the formation of political groups were also inherited largely unchanged from the old appointed Parliament. In particular, though the number of members had more than doubled (from 198 to 410), a spirited, skillful and prolonged display of filibustering and appeals to the rules by the Italian Radical, Marco Pannella, prevented any increase in the minimum threshold for the formation of political groups.<sup>52</sup> Despite further increases in membership (after the Greek, Spanish and Portuguese accessions), the rules have remained unchanged. Thus, 23 members from one Member State, 18 members from two Member States, or just 12 members from three or more Member States, may form a political group.

Although the rules may have remained unchanged, the number of groups, and the numerical relationship between them, has constantly altered, as a result both of accessions<sup>53</sup> and of electoral fortunes<sup>54</sup>, and of changing political agendas<sup>55</sup>. Despite all of these changes, there

---

<sup>52</sup> Such an increase would have prevented the formation of a proposed Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members, among them being the Italian Radicals.

<sup>53</sup> For example, UK accession and the subsequent foundation of the European Conservative Group.

<sup>54</sup> For example, the disappearance in 1984 of the German Free Democrats.

<sup>55</sup> For example, the formation of the Green and European Right Groups, and the split in the old Communist and Allies Group.

have been two underlying tendencies.<sup>56</sup> The first is the gradual proliferation of political groups, from just three in 1953 to ten in 1989, so that although the membership has steadily grown it has also become more fragmented. The second tendency, offsetting this proliferation and profitting from it, is the continuous and latterly growing dominance of the two big groups,

<sup>56</sup> The table below demonstrates this proliferation.

THE PROLIFERATION OF POLITICAL GROUPS  
IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

N° of members	Year	GROUPS											
		SOC	EPP	LDR									
77	1953	SOC	EPP	LDR									
137	1966	SOC	EPP	LDR	RDE								
183	1973	SOC	EPP	LDR	RDE	ED							
183	1974	SOC	EPP	LDR	RDE	ED	COM						
410	1979	SOC	EPP	LDR	RDE	ED	COM	ARC					NI
434	1984	SOC	EPP	LDR	RDE	ED	COM	ARC	DE				NI
518	1987	SOC	EPP	LDR	RDE	ED	COM	ARC	DE	CTDI			NI
518	1989	SOC	EPP	LDR	RDE	ED	GUE	CG	ARC	DE	GREEN		NI

Sources: 1966-67; Annuaire Manuel de l'Assemblée, from 1967; European Parliament 'Grey Lists'; and European Parliament 1989: 126



the Socialist and EPP, accompanied by a continuous decline in the numerical strength of the third party, a role traditionally played by the Liberal Group, but temporarily usurped by the EDG between 1979 and 1989.<sup>57</sup>

The relevance of these tendencies to the present inquiry is clear, linked to the repeated distinction between groups and contingents; throughout most of the period under review, British Conservatives (numerically dominated by the 1979 intake) did not only enjoy homogeneous group status, but dominant group status, whereas the British Labour members have seen their status change from weak to dominant, but still heterogeneous, contingent within a dominant but heterogeneous Group, and within that context the 1979 intake has seen its status change from dominant to weak, with all that this implies for Group patronage.

As a general rule (but frequently observed more in the breach), internal Group patronage mechanisms are a microcosm of those found at the level of the Parliament, with national contingents, or even currents within them, playing the role of the Political Groups. Thus, large contingents will inevitably carry more weight, expressed in terms of entitlement to hierarchical positions, than small ones.<sup>58</sup> Largest national contingents clearly have a major claim to the Group leaderships.

---

<sup>57</sup> Other recent events are likely to further reinforce this stranglehold. The EDG has dissolved itself and its individual members have all joined the EPP. On the other hand, the Italian PDS (formerly the PCI) has finally been granted admission to join the Socialist International, and its MEPs will doubtless join the EP Socialist Group in 1992.

<sup>58</sup> Though this is not necessarily always calculated on a strict d'Hondt basis.

However, in the case of the Socialist Group, the current leadership resides not with the numerically most important contingent, which is, by a long chalk, the British Labour Group, but with the fourth strongest contingent, the French. The reason for this is typically complex. From 1975 until direct elections in 1979, the Socialist Group was led by a German SPD member, Ludwig Fellermaier, in line with the SPD's dominant position within the Group.<sup>59</sup> Fellermaier was returned to the Parliament in 1979 and, in the same spirit of continuity that saw Klepsch re-elected as the leader of the Christian Democrats (and with German membership drastically reinforced and British Labour membership just as drastically reduced), Fellermaier again stood as the mainstream candidate for the Group leadership. He was opposed by a Belgian, Ernest Glinne, and a distinguished Dutch politician, Anne Vondeling. Glinne was unexpectedly elected, with British support.<sup>60</sup> Glinne led the Group until 1984, when he was replaced by another German SDP member, Rudi Arndt, thus re-

---

<sup>59</sup> 15 members. British members were numerically superior - 18, but with the domestic party in ideological turmoil did not press their claim. The Labour Party did not take up its entitlement of places in the EP (and hence the Socialist Group) until after the 1975 referendum on the EC terms of entry. See Butler and Marquand, 1981; 7-22.

<sup>60</sup> "There had been a good deal of muttering against Ludwig Fellermaier's chairmanship among the nominated British members of the old Parliament, and it was not altogether surprising that the Labour members of the new, elected Parliament decided to vote for Ernest Glinne instead. The new German delegation was probably somewhat to the left of the old one and it may well be that some Germans also voted for Glinne against Fellermaier. In any event, Ernest Glinne was elected, and almost certainly elected with British support." (1981: 146)

establishing the German contingent's pre-eminence (again, shared with the British Labour Group).

After the 1989 elections, a complicated piece of deal-making took place.<sup>61</sup> The Spanish contingent (third largest) 'spent' its patronage entitlement on its successful Presidential candidate, Baron Crespo, and on an important committee chairmanship.<sup>62</sup> The German contingent (second largest) was reckoned to have had its 'turn' at the leadership, and 'spent' its patronage entitlement on a Vice-Presidency (Hans Peters) and on another important committee chairmanship.<sup>63</sup> By prior agreement, the French (fourth largest) contingent's candidate for the leadership (Jean-Pierre Cot) was elected, and it 'spent' its remaining patronage entitlement on a Vice-Presidency (Nicole Pery) and, again, on an important committee chairmanship.<sup>64</sup>

In foregoing its Group leadership 'entitlement', the now predominant British Labour contingent was able to hold out for a number of prizes, although not all of them were parliamentary. Like all the larger, and some of the smaller, Member State contingents, it got a Vice Presidency (David Martin), and in addition it got two committee chairmanships, one important (Ken Collins, Environment), the other considered to be less so (Christine Crawley, Women's Rights). Last but not least,

---

<sup>61</sup> At the time it was rumoured that the deal had been struck by Jospin, Gonzalez and Kinnock.

<sup>62</sup> Juan Colino Salamanca, Agriculture.

<sup>63</sup> Thomas Von der Vring, Budgets.

<sup>64</sup> Henri Saby, Development - more on this below.

it won the Secretary Generalship of the Group, an influential and important position.<sup>65</sup>

The configuration of the deal had something to do with the Franco-German balance of power within the institutions, and it also had to do with the personal qualities and high standing within his national contingent of Jean Pierre Cot, a former French minister and respected outgoing Chairman of the Budgets Committee. The success of the deal had also to do with the neat way in which each national contingent ended up both with the committee chairmanship(s) it considered most important, and with those where it had a natural strong candidate.

There are many partial explanations as to why the BLG/EPLP didn't hold out for the leadership of the Group in 1989. First, such a concept would almost certainly have been unacceptable, no matter what the mathematical arguments at that stage might have been, for the other parties in the Group.<sup>66</sup> The historical context similarly indicates that the domestic Labour Party was not yet ready for such a role to be fulfilled by one of its representatives. Leadership of the pro-integration Socialist Group in the European Parliament would have

---

<sup>65</sup> This reflected a traditional British belief in the power implicit in top administrative positions; cf. David Williamson's Secretary Generalship and, until recently, Richard Hay's Director Generalship, at the Commission, and William Hemingway's Directorship in the Council General Secretariat.

<sup>66</sup> June, 1989 must be seen in its historical context. In particular, the outgoing leadership of the BLG had been staunchly anti-Marketeer, and there could be no guarantees as to the new composition of the contingent after the elections.

been a too open admission of the gradual transition then being effected by the Party's leadership.<sup>67</sup>

In the third place, even had the contingent possessed sufficient internal coherence to launch a bid for the Group leadership, the search for a suitable candidate acceptable to all wings of the contingent risked being painfully divisive and would not necessarily have produced a clear winner.<sup>68</sup>

Fourthly, there is some evidence to suggest that the post-election hierarchy and patronage decisions of the BLG/EPLP were the result of a carefully-planned court conspiracy whose details and potential supporters (that is, among members not yet elected but standing in seats considered winnable) were elaborated far in advance of the 1989 elections. Tying up such a deal would have required a precise and realistic 'shopping list' of positions sought and suitable candidates, a requirement which would have militated against flexibility after the elections, even if the result was better than had been expected. Thus, it seems likely that the Baron Crespo-Cot-Priestley deal within the Group was intimately inter-twined with the Collins-Martin-Crawley-Priestley deal within the Labour contingent.

From all of the foregoing it is clear, first, that the most probable moment for the Labour contingent to

---

<sup>67</sup> See Fitzmaurice, 1992 for a summary of the Party's changing stance towards European integration.

<sup>68</sup> The need to select a single individual would have short-circuited the BLG's tenderly-evolved predilection for a numerous leadership - see Section iii.a below.

have gained one of the Parliament's most powerful and prestigious hierarchical positions was in 1989, second, that that possibility was foregone in favour of lesser but more numerous positions and, third, that the position could not in any case have gone to one of the seven remaining survivors of the 1979 intake who, as we saw earlier, were not a homogeneous group and were largely outnumbered by the similarly heterogeneous 1984 and 1989 intakes.<sup>69</sup>

At the outset of this section, it was stated that a crude 'pecking order' had become discernible among the various positions within the enlarged Bureau, but it should be emphasised that such 'pecking orders' are subjective judgements, liable to change, and are in any case dependent on policy fields and issues.<sup>70</sup>

---

<sup>69</sup> In terms of power and influence, rather than hierarchical occupancy and prestige, the British Labour contingent remains the most influential within the Socialist Group, and it is of note in this context that the Labour leader, Glyn Ford, frequently replaces Cot in the enlarged Bureau and sits beside him on the hemicycle front bench. Although it is an enlarged Bureau position, the leadership of the EDG will be dealt with in the next section, together with the leadership of the British Labour contingent.

<sup>70</sup> There follow the views on the matter of one parliamentary expert. They have been cited in full because, whilst confirming that 'pecking orders' do indeed exist within the Parliamentary hierarchy, the description equally confirms that such relative evaluations are temporary and changing, depending on the individual, the subject matter, the circumstances, and the context. "I would say that the most powerful positions are, depending on the function and the activity, the Presidency of the Parliament and the Presidency of the two largest Political Groups. In terms of pure policy, the group Presidencies are clearly more powerful. In terms of prestige and external representation, the Presidency is clearly more attractive. How otherwise explain the fact that several group Presidents have been prepared to give up their positions for the Presidency? Next in line would come certain committee chairmanships, but their powers are area-related and constrained. I would distinguish between two levels of work within the Parliament. In the first place, there are those matters which the Political Groups consider to be of importance, as measured by, say, the amount of time they spend debating those issues. These would consist mainly of oral questions with debate, topical and urgent debates, and major set-piece debates. In this

iii) Other Important and/or Hierarchical  
Positions

a) The Leaders of the National Contingents

- Before and immediately after the first  
direct elections

A strong theme of continuity between the old and the new Parliaments also underlined the nature of the appointments of the two national contingents' leaders, although there was a considerable difference between the two major UK parties represented at Strasbourg after the elections as to both the manner and the atmosphere in which these appointments were carried out.

The first British members of the European Parliament took their seats on 15 January 1973. This first delegation consisted of 18 Conservatives and two Liberals. Two cross-benchers were later added.<sup>71</sup> Conservative Central Office had been responsible for the composition of the Conservative delegation, which "had been chosen with some care in terms of geographic and political balance." (Butler and Marquand, 1981: 8) After

---

context, hierarchical positions of power and influence are those which exercise influence on policy outcomes, and hence; the Group Chairmen, the leaders of national delegations, and Group spokesmen. In the second place, there are those matters which, by the default mechanism of lack of Group attention, are mainly dealt with and sorted out in committee. In that case, committee chairmen, rapporteurs, group spokesmen and coordinators are all of potential importance."

<sup>71</sup> Following the October 1972 Labour Party Conference, the Parliamentary Labour Party decided (13 December 1972) that no Labour MPs should attend the European Parliament. This absence, and their numerical preponderance, brought the Conservatives perhaps additional attention as not only their party's but also by default their country's representation.

its arrival in Strasbourg, and after much ideological soul-searching, the delegation decided to form itself into a group with the Danish Conservative Party's two members.<sup>72</sup> From the very outset, therefore, the Conservative Group was dominated by its British Conservative members.

As the leader of the Conservative delegation, Conservative Central Office had chosen a Junior Minister in the Defence Department, Mr. (later Sir) Peter Kirk.<sup>73</sup> Given his delegation's numerical preponderance, it seemed natural that Kirk should become the leader of the group. Not surprisingly, the Danish Conservative members acquiesced in this.<sup>74</sup> Formal obeisance to the delegation's status within a group was demonstrated by the Group's adoption of Rules of Procedure stating that the Chairman was to be elected by the Group. In terms of numerical logic, this was unlikely to be anything other than a British Conservative, and "In practice, its chairman was always appointed by the leader of the Westminster Conservative Party." (Butler and Marquand, 1981: 9) After adoption of the Rules of Procedure, "The reality remained unchanged." (*ibid.*)

---

<sup>72</sup> The British had hoped to be joined by their Norwegian confrères, but the referendum result went against membership. One other Danish MEP, from the Centre Democratic Party, was to join in 1974.

<sup>73</sup> Although at first most reluctant to come to Strasbourg, Kirk had considerable experience of European parliamentary politics through his previous membership of the Western European Union and Council of Europe Parliamentary Assemblies and considerable knowledge of European politics through his previous occupation as a diplomatic correspondent, and was soon to become a much-respected and influential figure in the Parliament.

<sup>74</sup> And until the end of the Group's existence they accepted a British Conservative as leader of the group.



The untimely death of Kirk in April 1977 led to confirmation of this practice, though the circumstances of the Conservative Party and of the delegation had changed considerably for, whereas in 1973 the Party had been in government, it was now in opposition, and its leader had changed from Edward Heath to the more sceptical and pragmatic Margaret Thatcher. There was still no question in the delegation but that its new leader would be chosen by the Party's leader.

Thatcher duly asked Geoffrey Rippon, a senior ex-Cabinet minister who had managed the entry negotiations in 1971-1972, but matters were complicated by the fact that, for completely extraneous reasons, the Party's European constituency associations were already in the throes of selecting their candidates for the direct elections to the Parliament, which were then expected to take place the following year. This meant that Rippon, who had been traumatised by a long history of constituency difficulties, would have to seek a dual mandate. Rippon was afraid both of rebuffs and of problems with his Westminster constituency (Hexham), and the Party managers were unable to find a compliant Euro-constituency organisation. Butler and Marquand reported that "He did have clandestine meetings with safe Euro-seats in the south but they were not willing to consider him if he stayed on in Hexham." (1981: 73) In the end, and very late in the day, Rippon gave up, though he carried on as the Group's interim leader.

The next preferred candidate was Paul Channon, a former junior minister and also, through the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, with some previous European parliamentary experience, but it proved impossible to find a European seat for him.<sup>75</sup>

Thatcher's third and unenthusiastic (since she had passed over him immediately after Kirk's death) choice, precipitated by Geoffrey Rippon's sudden resignation of the leadership in February 1979, was (now Sir) James Scott-Hopkins, at that time Deputy-Leader of the Group. His appointment came on 28 March 1979, virtually on the eve of the elections, as he had had considerable problems in winning a Euro-nomination and had only finally done so (at Hereford and Worcester) on condition that he stand down from his Westminster seat.

Butler and Marquand reported that "some resentment was expressed about the party's high-handedness ... in relation to the leadership of the delegation" at the first meeting of Conservative candidates (1981: 73), but a Group official argued that "in February the candidates had only just met for the first time and nobody in those days looked at the constitutional niceties of group rights and leadership", and Butler and Marquand went on to report that "it was recognised that there was no obvious alternative to Mr Scott-Hopkins." (*ibid*, 74)<sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>75</sup> "...in an inept manouevre, a belated attempt was made to get a Euro-nomination in Essex North East...But the candidates on the short list were not prepared to withdraw and the whole plan backfired when David Curry defeated Paul Channon in the final selection conference." (Butler and Marquand, 1981: 73)

<sup>76</sup> Since Scott-Hopkins had not even been formally appointed in February, it is fair to conclude that if such resentment existed

In retrospect, the beginning of the end of the old appointed leadership process was discernible in this experience.

The end of that beginning came with the failure of Scott-Hopkins' candidature in the 1982 Presidential elections. By then there was within the Group a sizeable group of critics of his leadership (and by implication of the manner of his appointment and relationship to the Party leadership and Conservative Central Office). Had he won the Presidency, it is unclear whether this group would have forced a literal reading of the rules on the election of the leader. But his failure served as sufficient reason for a leadership election to be held, an election Sir Henry Plumb duly won.

The Group's decision to break with previous tradition and hold such an election was a fait accompli to the Party's leader, whose increasing displeasure with the European Conservatives' growing independence was a poorly-kept secret.<sup>77</sup>

Labour MPs did not take up their entitlement of places in Strasbourg until after the 1975 referendum on membership, and the appointment and composition of that delegation was a far more complicated affair. In the

---

among the candidates it had more to do with Central Office bullying in Essex North East than with Scott-Hopkins' nomination.

<sup>77</sup> See, for example, Butler and Jowett, 1985: 20. For Downing Street to have questioned Plumb's leadership would clearly have been hugely counter-productive, but an amusing and almost certainly apocryphal account of Plumb's first encounter with Thatcher has it that Thatcher first congratulated Plumb on his election to the leadership of the Group, then warned him that this did not necessarily entitle him to the leadership of the British Conservative delegation (with the implication that this was still in her gift).

first place, the Party's structure was very different. Whereas the Conservative Party's leader in Parliament enjoyed largely uncontested rights and powers of patronage (as long as that leadership was undisputed), the Labour Party leadership was constrained by the Parliamentary Labour Party on the one hand and the National Executive Committee and the Party Conference on the other. In the second place, a power struggle was still unfolding between the Party's various arms, and this struggle was profoundly inter-twined with, thirdly, a dispute about the benefits and constitutional consequences of European Community membership (unresolved by the referendum) and, fourthly, a struggle chiefly focussed in but not restricted to the PLP about Harold Wilson's leadership. Just how nimbly the party leadership was obliged to manouevre in this morass of conflicting camps can be illustrated by the fact that, though badly bruised by the unexpected outcome of the referendum, the anti-marketeers still comprised half the parliamentary party, but some of the strongest critics of the Wilson leadership were to be found among the pro-Marketeers. The leadership's desire was, therefore, for as inconspicuous and balanced a delegation as possible.<sup>78</sup> In order to assure such an aim, the

---

<sup>78</sup> "For all these reasons, the leadership and the party managers were determined that the first Labour delegation to the European Parliament should be 'balanced' as between pro-Marketeers and anti-Marketeers and that it should not contain the strongest, most vociferous or, in party terms, the most 'divisive' members of either camp. They wanted, above all, to heal the wounds inside the party ... What the leadership wanted was an unprovocative delegation; that meant a balanced delegations, and it also meant an inconspicuous delegation." (Butler and Marquand, 1981, 23)

leadership wanted to appoint the delegation itself. This desire provoked acrimonious debate, and was only finally grudgingly granted by the parliamentary party with the proviso that the appointments would run for just one year. There ensued a highly complicated and also at times acrimonious debate about just what that 'balanced' composition should be. Nonetheless, the result was roughly what the leadership had sought and, although the delegation contained a fair scattering of 'names', few of them had been in anyway outspoken in the debate over Community membership.<sup>79</sup>

Further acrimonious dispute was to accompany the nomination of the leader of the delegation.<sup>80</sup> In the end, the job fell to Michael Stewart<sup>81</sup>, a respected older statesman, and somebody whose experience and seniority could elevate him above the fray.

Those early days illustrated certain experiences which were to become common themes of the delegation, both before and since direct elections. The most obvious was the range and vehemence of views held within the

---

<sup>79</sup> "...if those who supported continued membership of the Community in 1975 were to count as pros, the pros were in a majority of 11 to 7; if the term is to be confined to those who both had an opportunity to vote in 1971, and voted in favour of British entry, the pros were in a minority of seven to eight." (Butler and Marquand, 1981, 24)

<sup>80</sup> The then Foreign Secretary, Jim Callaghan, would apparently have preferred Tam Dalyell, then Chairman of the back-bench Foreign Affairs Group, but Dalyell was a vociferous critic of the Prime Minister, and Wilson vetoed Callaghan's choice.

<sup>81</sup> He did not have the European profile of another delegation member, Sir Geoffrey de Freitas, who had been both a President of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and chairman of the Labour Committee for Europe, but he had also been a consistent 'pro' (that is, voted for membership in 1971 and continued membership in 1975), and was a former Foreign Secretary (1965 to 1966, and 1968 to 1970).

party, and hence represented within the group. The second was the balancing act the Party leadership was obliged to conduct (a balancing act the leadership was still conducting in 1989, when it forewent the Group leadership). A third theme was soon to become apparent.

Immediately after its arrival in Strasbourg, the Labour delegation had applied for membership of the Socialist Group (which in happily welcoming it became the largest group within the Parliament). The Labour delegation was entitled to three positions on the Group's managerial bureau. One went to the leader, Stewart. A second went to the delegation's Parliamentary Vice-President, de Freitas. Dalyell was chosen as the third member of the Bureau. Thus all three positions went to pro-Marketeers. It was in reacting to this initial monopoly that the Labour delegation's anti-Marketeers eroded the domestic Party's patronage. Dalyell was voted off the Bureau in March 1976 and replaced by the anti-Marketeer John Prescott, and when in the autumn of the same year a tired Stewart happily acceded to the Prime Minister's request that he chair the Commons Privileges Committee, Prescott was elected to the leadership, a position he held until direct elections. The delegation had thereby asserted its independence in the matter of the election of the leadership long before direct elections.

If anything, direct elections weakened this independence. As a result of the NEC decision requiring sitting MPs to renounce their Westminster candidatures

before putting their names forward for Strasbourg seats, only 3 sitting MPs sought nominations, and only one of these was selected and returned. None of the other successful Labour candidates could boast of any significant national experience. In itself, this would have given the former MP a certain seniority, but the breadth and depth of Barbara Castle's experience made it inevitable that she should be the delegation's leader, and her election in 1979 was a formality.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, she was re-elected uncontested until 1984. Her incomparable relative stature could thus be said to have effectively 'deprived' the delegation of the right it had won in the autumn of 1976. This situation might have continued until her resignation in 1989 if her views on Community membership had remained the same, but these had gradually shifted.

- Since 1979

Castle was not alone in changing her views during the course of the elected Parliament's first term. Again, a review of the domestic and Labour group political context at that time illustrates both why Castle could change her views in 1982 and remain leader in 1983, but yet be nearly ousted in 1984, and voted out of the post in 1985.<sup>83</sup>

---

<sup>82</sup> Thus, "...given her seniority, her position at the head of the Labour group was beyond challenge." (Butler and Jowett, 1985: 29)

<sup>83</sup> "Ditched," as a press report inelegantly put it at the time. (The Times, 12.6.85)

Of the 17 Labour MEPs elected in 1979, six were committed anti-Marketeters.<sup>84</sup> The 1979 Labour Party (as opposed to Socialist Group) manifesto had promised that "Labour members of the EEC Assembly will work ... in close cooperation with the Labour Party at Westminster, and will argue the case for reform of the Community, in accordance with Labour Party policy," and had gone on to declare "...that if the fundamental reforms contained in this manifesto are not achieved within a reasonable period of time, then the Labour Party would have to consider very seriously whether continued EEC membership was in the best interests of the British people." In faithful defence of this line, the six anti-marketeter MEPs formed the "Labour MEPs for the Party Manifesto Group" within the Labour group: in effect, a group within a group within a group. The domestic party's position became more obdurate after the 1979 elections, culminating in the adoption<sup>85</sup> at the October 1981 Labour Party Conference of a motion calling for withdrawal from the Community and a referendum, should a Labour government come to power.

These events were anathema to sizeable numbers of MPs, and the four 1979 Labour MEPs who openly admitted their membership of the Labour Committee for Europe<sup>86</sup>, the other MEPs known to be sympathetic, Collins and,

---

<sup>84</sup> Lomas, Seal, Megahy, Caborn, Balfe, and Buchan.

<sup>85</sup> By 5.8m to 1.1m votes.

<sup>86</sup> Quin, Enright, Key, and Gallagher. All four were to leave the Parliament: three were effectively de-selected, although Gallagher had 'defected' to the SDP. Two, Quin and Enright, are now MPs.



gradually, Griffiths<sup>87</sup>, and the vast bulk of the rest of the Socialist Group membership in the Parliament.

In early 1982, pro-Market Labour MPs established a group, called the 'Red Rose', to fight against the previous October's Conference resolution. In February, a TUC policy document argued against any hasty implementation of the decision to withdraw. In April, the EP's Socialist Group condemned the Labour Party's policy.<sup>88</sup> In May, the then Labour Commissioner, Ivor Richard, publicly committed himself to the campaign to reverse the Conference decision.

The remaining five 1979 Labour MEPs<sup>89</sup> had all been counted in the anti-Market camp immediately after the elections, but were not insensitive to the arguments of the 'Red Rose' Group and their own experiences within the Socialist Group and the Parliament. Most, if not all, gradually drifted towards a more pro-European stance. Some made their conversion public. Clwyd was the first to take the plunge.<sup>90</sup> She was followed in September by the leader of the Labour delegation, Barbara Castle.<sup>91</sup> Butler and Jowett reported that, "by the end of the Parliament there was a two-to-one majority among the 17 MEPs for staying in" (1985: 31),

---

<sup>87</sup> Griffiths is now also an MP.

<sup>88</sup> This episode echoes the sometimes violent clashes that had occurred between the anti-Market members of the Labour Party's delegation to the pre-elected Parliament and other members of the Socialist Group. "Why have you come?" Erwin Lange once cried accusingly to Lord Castle. See Butler and Marquand, 1981: 25.

<sup>89</sup> Castle, Clwyd, Adam, Rogers, and Boyes. Again, three of these are now MPs. Castle has retired. Adam unsuccessfully contested a Westminster seat in the 1992 General Election.

<sup>90</sup> 19 February, 1982, in a New Statesman article.

<sup>91</sup> New Statesman, 17 September.

and it was this majority view (and no longer the anti-market majority she had once commanded) which assured Castle of the leadership position on the eve of the 1984 elections.

She faced a very differently composed delegation after those elections. The number of Labour members had almost doubled, from 17 to 32, but there was now a two-to-one majority in favour of British withdrawal. (Many of the MEPs elected in 1984 had been selected in 1983.) Her pre-eminence within the Group was still uncontested, but the writing was on the wall. Anti-marketeer candidates swept the board of all other leadership positions within the delegation. The most significant of these was the deputy leadership, where the pro-Market incumbent, Ken Collins<sup>92</sup>, was ousted by Alf Lomas (by 20 votes against 9). At the same time, the four surviving members of the 1979 intake's hard 'antis' all won positions.<sup>93</sup>

The true significance of Collins' defeat was revealed the following year, when Lomas challenged Castle for the leadership and won, 18 votes to 14. The narrowness of the victory was due to the willingness among some of the milder 'antis' to grant Castle her wish to be allowed to serve one further year and then retire.<sup>94</sup>

---

<sup>92</sup> Who had served in the position since 1979 and had originally been elected as a 'pro' counterweight to Castle's 'anti' leadership.

<sup>93</sup> Buchan became Secretary, Balfe Treasurer, Seal Chief Whip, and Megahy Group Chairman.

<sup>94</sup> Other saw this, perhaps correctly, as a stalling action on her part. It was in any case to no avail.

Lomas was returned in 1986 and 1987, but some of the members (collectively dubbed as the 'Tribune' group by insiders) of the delegation over which he presided were undergoing a similar sort of conversion to that experienced by the five gradually less anti-marketeer members of the 1979 intake, and the extent of this conversion in turn became clear in 1988, when Lomas was ousted from the leadership, by just one vote, by a pro-Market member of the 1984 intake, David Martin.<sup>95</sup> However, in the next year's elections, the anti-marketeer Barry Seal ousted Martin, again by one vote.<sup>96</sup>

1989 saw the election of four Labour members of the federalist left<sup>97</sup>, and their presence, together with an overall more balanced composition within the delegation as a whole, resulted in the election of a balanced, but essentially pro-Market, ticket headed by Glyn Ford.<sup>98</sup> While some subsidiary positions have changed, the Ford leadership has remained stable.

Although there have also been pressure groups and significant differences of opinion about the Community within the EDG, the changes in the Conservative/EDG leadership have been altogether less complicated

---

<sup>95</sup> His victory was said to have been the result of an agreement between the pro-marketeers and the 'Tribune' members. Martin, it should be noted, had himself undergone conversion from sceptic/agnostic to integrationist.

<sup>96</sup> Some commentators saw this process as evidence of the existence of 'floating voters' within the Labour delegation. More cynical analysts linked these regular reverses to the more mundane attractions of patronage; some delegation members were prepared to switch allegiances, so it was said, in return for the promise of a position on the delegation's bureau.

<sup>97</sup> Coates, Crampton, McCubbin and White; known collectively as 'the federalist four'.

<sup>98</sup> As was suggested above, the origins of the Ford-Tongue ticket may well have pre-dated the elections.

affairs. After his ill-fated 1982 run for the Presidency, attempts were made to persuade Scott-Hopkins to stand down. This he refused to do and in the end the leadership was contested by him, Plumb, Catherwood, and J.M. Taylor<sup>99</sup>. Plumb proved an easy winner and his occupancy of the post was uncontested until his successful 1987 run for the Presidency of the Parliament. Again, there were several candidates and one easy frontrunner, Mr. (later Sir) Christopher Prout.<sup>100</sup> Like his predecessor's, Prout's stewardship was uncontested. One of his chief activities was to continue the search for a rapprochement with the EPP, in the clear knowledge that any such rapprochement was likely to do away with the position of EDG leader or, at the least, considerably diminish its stature.<sup>101</sup> (It is a moot point, though, as to whether a deputy leadership of the vast EPP was less desirable than leadership of the by then diminutive EDG.)

Can any general lesson be gleaned from the foregoing? In the case of the Labour MEPs, the answer is an emphatic "no". Majority and minority views, and the intensity with which they have been held, have changed unpredictably (partly because they depended on

---

<sup>99</sup> Taylor was elected to the House of Commons in 1983.

<sup>100</sup> Where Plumb's parliamentary reputation had been based on his stewardship of the Agriculture Committee, and although Sir Christopher had been a committee chairman, his parliamentary reputation was built on his role as Parliament's rapporteur on the major rule change necessitated by the implementation of the Single European Act (including the assent and cooperation procedures), which rapidly transformed him into one of the Parliament's constitutional experts.

<sup>101</sup> As one British Conservative MEP unkindly put it, "Sir Christopher belongs to that select group of leaders intent on negotiating themselves out of a job."

the prevalent mood in the party when selections took place, rather than when elections occurred), and hence so have the managerial majorities governing BLG/EPLP patronage. Perhaps all that has now changed. Since the 1991 Labour Party Conference decision, frustrated ambitious MEPs no longer have the escape hatch of a Westminster nomination to fall back on. The dominant majority is pro-Market and likely to remain so.<sup>102</sup> This apparent stability may create a more fertile breeding ground for longer-term careers. If so, it will have come too late for the 17 Labour MEPs elected in 1979.<sup>103</sup>

In terms of the EDG, the answer is a conditional "yes" but, again, lessons based on the past may be of little use in future. The most powerful conclusion, a recurrent theme in this study, is that success begets success.<sup>104</sup> A second and lesser conclusion is that luck has an important role to play, though it is the sort of luck that can be 'made'.<sup>105</sup>

---

<sup>102</sup> Although some speculate that the pendulum may swing back again now that Labour has lost a fourth consecutive General Election - see the conclusions in Part V.

<sup>103</sup> With one notable exception, Ken Collins, whose case will be considered below, in relation to committee chairmanships.

<sup>104</sup> For example, Plumb owed his committee chairmanship in 1979 to his successful career in the NUF, he owed the EDG leadership to his successful committee chairmanship, and he owed his run for the Presidency to his group leadership. Similarly, Prout's success as EDG Deputy Whip between 1979 and 1982 brought him a minor committee chairmanship (Verification of Credentials, 1982-1984), and promotion to EDG Whip in 1983. His success as rapporteur on the 1986 major change in the Rules of Procedure brought him success in the 1987 leadership election.

<sup>105</sup> A consideration which will be examined in more detail below in relation to MEPs' specialisations.

b) Other Group and Party Positions- Hierarchical positions

Group hierarchies do not consist only of a President<sup>106</sup>. Managerial functions and policy formulation are jointly carried out by a bureau, another organisational attribute inherited virtually unchanged from the old, appointed Parliament.

In addition to the Group President, a typical bureau would consist of a number of Vice-Presidents, a number of members, and a treasurer. The exact number of Vice-Presidents and members is a matter of generalised convention which has it that all component parties should be represented on the Group bureau. By convention, the d'Hondt system determines the number of bureau members each national and/or party contingent enjoys<sup>107</sup>, but all leaders of party contingents would normally be bureau members. In the case of larger party contingents, their leaders are automatically Group Vice-Presidents. Parliamentary Vice-Presidents and, where appropriate, its President are automatically bureau members. Other bureau members are elected by their national contingents.

---

<sup>106</sup> Or Presidents; the current Green and Rainbow Groups have two leaders each. These were supposed to rotate after two-and-a-half years, but the Group finally decided to reinstate the two previous Presidents.

<sup>107</sup> The distinction can be an important one. The Socialist Group has two Italian member parties, the PSI and the PSDI. It also has two British member parties, the Labour Party and the Northern Irish SDLP. Similarly, the EDG for some time had two British party members, the Conservatives, and the Ulster Unionists.

Thus, since the arrival of the first British delegation and almost without a break until the present day, the British Labour Group has enjoyed three bureau positions; the BLG/EPLP leader, its Parliamentary Vice-President, and an ordinary bureau member (currently Ford, Martin, and Tomlinson respectively). To complicate matters, candidates for these three posts would normally be part of a complex ticket.

The EDG has clearly been different from the Socialist Group, in the sense of having one overwhelmingly, numerically preponderant national contingent, but similar, in the sense that it has respected the same conventions, insofar as it could, concerning national party contingent<sup>108</sup> leaders, Parliamentary Vice-Presidents, and so on.<sup>109</sup>

---

<sup>108</sup> Respectively, the Ulster Unionists, until 1989, when their representative joined the EPP; the Danish Conservatives; the Spanish Partido Popular between 1986 and 1989.

<sup>109</sup> For a very brief period, from late 1980 to early 1981, the EDG toyed with an additional hierarchical layer of "First Vice-Chairmen", otherwise, the Group/contingent structure (there being virtually no distinction) has remained the same throughout the whole period under review.

Table 12

LEADERS AND HIERARCHIES OF THE EDG, 1979-1992(1)

Date	Chairman	Vice-Chairman	Bureau members	Treasurer
24.09.79	SCOTT-HOPKINS Sir James	MÖLLER, Poul, DE FERRANTI, Basil, ELLES, Baroness		STEWART-CLARK, Sir Jack
14.04.80	SCOTT-HOPKINS Sir James	MÖLLER, Poul, ELLES, Baroness	DE FERRANTI, Basil, O'HAGAN, Lord, WARNER, Sir Frederick	STEWART-CLARK, Sir Jack
01.09.81	SCOTT-HOPKINS Sir James	KIRK, Peter, TAYLOR, John Mark	ELLES, Baroness, O'HAGAN, Lord, WARNER, Sir Frederick MÖLLER, Poul, DE FERRANTI, Basil	STEWART-CLARK, Sir Jack
09.03.82	PLUMB, Sir Henry	KIRK, Peter	TAYLOR, John Mark, ROBERTS, Dame Shelagh, JACKSON, Robert, BEAZLEY, Peter, DE COURCY LING, John, ELLES, Baroness, MÖLLER, Poul	STEWART-CLARK, Sir Jack
14.04.83	PLUMB, Sir Henry	CATHERWOOD, Sir Fred, KIRK, Peter	FERGUSON, Adam, KELLET- BOWMAN, Edward, WELSH, Michael, PROUT, Christopher, ELLES, Baroness, MÖLLER, Poul	STEWART-CLARK, Sir Jack
10.09.84	PLUMB, Sir Henry	CATHERWOOD, Sir Fred,	WELSH, Richard, PROUT, Christopher, ELLES, Baroness, MÖLLER, Poul	STEWART-CLARK, Sir Jack
11.02.85	PLUMB, Sir Henry	CATHERWOOD, Sir Fred, TOKSVIG, Claus	CURRY, David, JACKSON, Christopher, SCOTT-HOPKINS, Sir James, ELLES, Baroness, MÖLLER, Poul, PROUT, Christopher	STEWART-CLARK, Sir Jack
06.10.86	PLUMB, Sir Henry	CATHERWOOD, Sir Fred, PERINAT ELIO, Luis, TOKSVIG, Claus	NAVARRO VELASCO, Antonio, CURRY, David, JACKSON, Christopher, DALY, Margaret, DOURO, Marquess of, PROUT, Christopher, DURAN CORSANEGO, Emiko, ELLES, Baroness, MÖLLER, Poul	STEWART-CLARK, Sir Jack
06.04.87	PROUT, Sir Christopher	SUAREZ GONZALEZ, Fernando, TOKSVIG, Claus, ROBERTS, Dame Shelagh	NAVARRO VELASCO, Antonio, JEPSEN, Marie, JACKSON, Christopher, PERINAT ELIO, Luis, BATTERSBY, Robert, ALVAREZ DE EULATE PENARANDA, José Maria	STEWART-CLARK, Sir Jack
26.10.87	PROUT, Sir Christopher	SUAREZ GONZALEZ Fernando, TOKSVIG, Claus, ROBERTS, Dame Shelagh	NAVARRO VELASCO, Antonio, JEPSEN, Marie, JACKSON, Christopher, SIMPSON, Anthony, JACKSON, Caroline, PERINAT ELIO, Luis, BATTERSBY, Robert, ALVAREZ DE EULATE PENARANDA, José Maria	STEWART-CLARK, Sir Jack



12.02.90	PROUT, Sir Christopher	JEPSEN, Marie, JACKSON, Christopher	BEAZLEY, Christopher, NEWTON-DUNN, William, JACKSON, Caroline, DALY, Margaret, PRICE, Peter, CATHERWOOD, Sir Fred, TURNER, Armandée, SPENCER, Tom	STEWART-CLARK Sir Jack
06.04.92	PROUT, Sir Christopher	JEPSEN, Marie, NEWTON-DUNN, William	BEAZLEY, Christopher, PRICE, Peter, JACKSON, Caroline, DALY, Margaret, PATTERSON, Ben, STEWART-CLARK, Sir Jack, SIMMONDS, Richard	KELLETT-BOWMAN, Edward
01.05.92	GROUP CEASED TO EXIST			

Source: European Parliament 'Grey Lists'

Notes:

- (1) At the outset, the EDG was only able to claim political group status (under the European Parliament's definition) because of the three Danish members (1 Centrum Demokratieme, 2 Konservative Folkeparti) who chose to join it. Group status waxed and waned with the arrival and departure of an Ulster Unionist and, for three years, 17 Spanish Alianza Popular MEPs. In its dying days, the EDG owed its group status to the lonely existence of two Danish KF members. Despite three variations, the EDG established a Bureau along group lines, with all national contingents represented. Nevertheless, the exact reasoning behind the large numbers of Bureau members traditionally appointed remains unclear.

BRITISH LABOUR AND SDLP MEMBERSHIP OF THE SOCIALIST GROUP BUREAU, 1979-1992

Date	Vice-Chairman	Bureau members	Treasurer
24.09.79	CASTLE, Barbara	CLWYD, Ann	HUME, John (SDLP)
09.02.81	CASTLE, Barbara	SEAL, Barry	HUME, John (SDLP)
09.03.82	CASTLE, Barbara	SEAL, Barry HUME, John (SDLP)	
09.09.85	CASTLE, Barbara	LOMAS, Alf HUME, John (SDLP)	
10.03.86	CASTLE, Barbara	LOMAS, Alf GRIFFITHS, Winston HUME, John (SDLP)	
06.04.87	LOMAS, Alf	SEAL, Barry MEGAHY, Tom HUME, John (SDLP)	
26.10.87	MARTIN, David	SEAL, Barry MEGAHY, Tom HUME, John (SDLP)	
1988	SEAL, Barry	HINDLEY, Michael MEGAHY, Tom HUME, John (SDLP)	
1989	FORD, Glyn	TOMLINSON, John MARTIN, David HUME, John (SDLP)	
12.02.90	FORD, Glyn	TOMLINSON, John MARTIN, David HUME, John (SDLP)	
06.04.92	FORD, Glyn	TOMLINSON, John MARTIN, David GREEN Pauline HUME, John (SDLP)	

LEADERS AND HIERARCHIES OF THE BLG/EPLP, 1979-1992 (1)(2)(3)(4)

Year	Leader	Deputy Leader	Chair	Secretary	Socialist Group Bureau Member	Parliament Vice-President
1979	CASTLE, Barbara	COLLINS, Ken	CABORN, Richard	ROGERS, Allan	CLWYD, Ann(5)	ROGERS, Allan
1980	CASTLE, Barbara	COLLINS, Ken	CABORN, Richard	ROGERS, Allan	SEAL, Barry	ROGERS, Allan
1981	CASTLE, Barbara	COLLINS, Ken	CABORN, Richard	ROGERS, Allan	SEAL, Barry	ROGERS, Allan
1982	CASTLE, Barbara	COLLINS, Ken	CABORN, Richard	ROGERS, Allan	SEAL, Barry	- (6)
1983	CASTLE, Barbara	COLLINS, Ken	CABORN, Richard	ROGERS, Allan	SEAL, Barry	-
1984	CASTLE, Barbara	LOMAS, Alf	MEGAHY, Tom	BUCHAN, Janey	SEAL, Barry	GRIFFITHS, Winston
1985	LOMAS, Alf	MEGAHY, Tom	NEWENS, Stan	BUCHAN, Janey	SEAL, Barry	GRIFFITHS, Winston
1986	LOMAS, Alf	MEGAHY, Tom	NEWENS, Stan	BUCHAN, Janey	SEAL, Barry	GRIFFITHS, Winston
1987	MARTIN, David	TOMLINSON, John	STEVENSON, George	BALFE, Richard	GRIFFITHS, Winston	MEGAHY, Tom
1988	SEAL, Barry	NEWENS, Stan	BUCHAN, Janey	BALFE, Richard	HINDLEY, Michael	MEGAHY, Tom
1989	FORD, Glyn	TONGUE, Carole	BIRD, John	DONNELLY, Alan	TOMLINSON, John	MARTIN, David
1990	FORD, Glyn	TONGUE, Carole	BIRD, John	DONNELLY, Alan	TOMLINSON, John	MARTIN, David
1991	FORD, Glyn	HUGHES, Stephen	READ, Mel	HARRISON, Lyndon	TOMLINSON, John	MARTIN, David

- (1) This was an extraordinarily difficult table to compile and may not yet be entirely correct. The BLG/EPLP, and the Labour Party itself, were happy to throw open their records, including the minutes of BLG/EPLP meetings. Unfortunately, the BLG/EPLP had sent all pre-1989 archives to the Museum of Labour History in Manchester, and they had yet to be unpacked. I am extremely grateful to Richard Corbett and John Fitzmaurice, who were generous with their time. Above all, I would like to thank Richard Balfe, MEP, who gave up an hour of his time. The collective memory of all three enabled me to compile the table.
- (2) BLG = British Labour Group. Since 1989, EPLP = European Parliamentary Labour Party.
- (3) The BLG/EPLP elects a number of other offices, but these are non-executive and amount to non-voting membership of the Bureau. They include a Whip, two Auditors and, above all, the Treasurer. Treasurers so far: Richard Balfe, 1979-86, and 1991.; Glyn Ford, 1987; Eddie Newman, 1988; Wayne David, 1989-90.
- (4) Richard Balfe has pointed out that the BLG's hierarchical structure - Leader, Deputy Leader, Chair and Secretary - clearly reflected the local government experience most of its members shared. The position of Bureau member and Vice-President were bows to the Parliament's structure.
- (5) Clwyd moved on to the ad hoc position of Group Press Officer, a position she held until she was elected to Westminster in 1984. Janey Buchan took over the position, but it fell out of use when she was elected Group Secretary.
- (6) The BLG had a marginal 'right' to one of the Socialist Group's 'quota' of Vice-Presidencies of the Parliament. When Danker was elected President of Parliament in 1982, the Socialist Group's quota was accordingly reduced in the Bureau, and the BLG marginal right to a Vice-Presidency was lost. It was regained in 1984.

EDG hierarchical positions, and their occupants, are shown in Table 12. It reveals two striking findings. The first, in line with what was earlier intuited, is the near-monopoly of hierarchical positions that the 1979 intake has enjoyed and still enjoyed on the eve of the Group's dissolution, over twelve years after having first been elected.<sup>110</sup> A second finding is the increasingly disproportionate number of hierarchical positions within the Group.<sup>111</sup>

Such inflation might indicate simple inertia, but there are two pragmatic reasons why the Group might have wanted to keep a disproportionately high number of bureau posts. The first is bound up with the Group's dwindling size, which meant (because of the consequent diminution in the Group's powers of patronage) a

<sup>110</sup> If the Danish Conservative Vice-Chairmanship is discounted, 1979 MEPs occupied 8 of the remaining 11 positions, almost 73 per cent.

<sup>111</sup> At the end, 12 out of 34 -over 35 per cent of EDG members - were necessarily Group bureau members, as opposed to 15 per cent for the Socialist Group. This inflationary trend is clearly illustrated in the following table.

THE EDG: SHRINKING MEMBERSHIP, RELATIVELY  
GROWING HIERARCHY

Date	N° of Members	N° of Bureau Members	Average N° of Bureau positions per Member
1979-1980	64	7	0.10
1981-1982	63	9	0.15
1984-1985	50	10	0.20
1986-1987	63	14	0.22
1987-1988	66	13	0.19
1989-1990	32	12	0.375
1991-1992	34	11	0.32

Source: European Parliament 'Grey Lists'

dwindling share of hierarchical and occasional (see below) Parliamentary positions outside the Group. It could be imagined that a relatively increasing proportion of positions inside the Group could have served to dull the pain of this loss. The second is bound up with the 1979 intake's predominance within the Group. Since there were still many of them, and they had been accustomed to a period when the Group enjoyed more patronage, a large number of Group positions might have been useful, both to provide a sufficient number of positions for them and to permit members of subsequent intakes to be represented on the bureau.

**Table 12** also shows British Labour membership of the Socialist Group Bureau and the Leaders and Hierarchy of the BLG/EPLP respectively. As was mentioned above, the occupants of the BLG/EPLP's three positions on the Socialist Group bureau form part of a complex ticket. That ticket would normally cover all of the major positions on the BLG/EPLP's own bureau. If, in a sense, the apportioning of the Groups' bureau patronage could be said to be a microcosm of the Parliament's method then, in a similar sense, the apportioning of the BLG/EPLP's bureau patronage could be said to be a microcosm of the Socialist Group's method; the 'ticket' being typically the result of a complex series of negotiations and calculations which must both reflect the dominant 'camp' within the contingent (for the moment the pro-marketeers), but also, to avoid an entirely partisan leadership, take on board some

minority representation. Tickets may not be followed all the way down the line, and some personal/ideological preference voting comes into play, particularly among the lower positions. Personal rivalries and jealousies may also result in tactical voting and, as was earlier pointed out, promises of patronage may also result in switches of allegiance. Nevertheless, in overall terms, all BLG/EPLP leaderships have resulted from such careful ticket negotiation.

Since 1979, the BLG/EPLP bureau has consisted of seven positions; the Leader, the Chairman (who mainly presides over the party's meetings), the Deputy Leader, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Bureau Member, and the Whip.<sup>112</sup> Parliamentary Vice-Presidents are not ex-officio members so that, at the time of writing, David Martin is a Parliamentary Vice-President and therefore a member of the Socialist Group bureau, but is not a member of the BLG/EPLP bureau (despite, it might be added, having briefly been BLG leader).

The BLG/EPLP experience has been the opposite of that of the EDG.<sup>113</sup> If, in 1979, the BLG disposed of a

---

<sup>112</sup> In addition, the delegation elects an auditor, but although of potential influence this is not a bureau position.

<sup>113</sup> Figures for membership and hierarchy positions are set out in the following table.

THE BLG/EPLP: GROWING MEMBERSHIP,  
RELATIVELY SHRINKING HIERARCHY

Date	N° of Members	N° of Bureau Members	Average N° of Bureau positions per Member
1979	17	6	0.35
1984	32	6	0.18
1989	45	6	0.13

Source: European Parliament 'Grey Lists'

disproportionate number of hierarchical positions<sup>114</sup>, that number has since remained the same, and this despite the steady growth in the group's size.<sup>115</sup>

There are several probable reasons for the plethora of hierarchical positions created within the BLG after the 1979 elections. A first was bound up with the BLG's or, rather, the dominant anti-Market camp's position within, and relations with, the rest of the Socialist Group. Even within the heterogenous and "relentlessly multi-national" (Butler and Jowett, 1985: 25) Socialist Group, the BLG was isolated by its basic stance towards the Community. It is thus probable that this sentiment of a group within a group led to a conscious duplication of the Group hierarchy.<sup>116</sup> A second probable reason was bound up with the rivalry between the Labour and Conservative contingents. The British Conservatives' distinct Group status no doubt encouraged the BLG to erect a similar hierarchical apparatus, over and above the simple administrative positions which would in any case have been necessary.<sup>117</sup>

---

<sup>114</sup> 8 for a group of 17; in other words, 47 per cent of members were guaranteed a hierarchical position of some sort.

<sup>115</sup> So that the respective figures are now 8 out of 46, or 17.3 per cent.

<sup>116</sup> Relations were to get worse before they got better. With both the delegation and the 'anti' camp bolstered by the 1984 election results, there was even talk of the BLG leaving the Socialist Group to form a separate group.

<sup>117</sup> In this context, it is worthwhile recording that the BLG, which had been the strongest delegation within the Socialist Group

A third probable reason was linked with the divisions within the Group. The convention has grown of 'tickets' for bureau positions, and within that convention another has grown of balanced tickets. Logically, where many divisions exist within a group, a balanced ticket is only possible if there are a sufficient number of positions to represent all (or most, or many) of those divisions.<sup>118</sup> A fourth probable reason is bound up with the Labour MEPs' local government roots, with the same basic hierarchical structure having been borrowed.<sup>119</sup>

- Occasional Positions: Spokesmen, Coordinators

Groups appoint spokesmen on policy areas, usually although not always corresponding to the competences of the various parliamentary committees.<sup>120</sup> Some MEPs may bring a self-evident prior expertise with them to the Parliament, and in such cases their parliamentary colleagues naturally accord them the respect their expertise deserves<sup>121</sup>, but the post of spokesman is generally in the gift of the Group bureaux and as such

---

immediately before the 1979 elections, inherited the secretarial infrastructure of its predecessor.

<sup>118</sup> As one member of the EPLP secretariat put it, "If the BLG secretariat has such a top-heavy hierarchical structure, it is not simply a matter of 'jobs for the boys', but 'jobs for all the boys'."

<sup>119</sup> I'm grateful to Richard Balfe, MEP, for having made this point.

<sup>120</sup> Thus, the Group spokesman on a particular policy area would normally be a member of the corresponding committee.

<sup>121</sup> To give some current examples, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing on monetary policy, Claude Cheysson or Leo Tindemans on foreign policy, Emilio Colombo on institutional matters.

may form part of the overall negotiations and package deals between the party contingents comprising the Groups.

The chief advantage of the position of Group spokesman is relative visibility. In plenary debates covering their policy areas, spokesmen speak first, and their status entitles them to more speaking time than the average backbencher. Because of its formalised structure and constant respect for the iron restraint of Group speaking time allocations (based on the familiar d'Hondt system), plenary debate has little influence on Parliament's policy formulation, but the more adept Group spokesmen may be able to enhance their role and policy influence by acting as coalition brokers and go-betweens between the Groups.

In terms of the interests of the career MEP, the potential advantage of a Group spokesmanship is primarily internal, rather than external. As was previously observed, success begets success, and a successful tenureship of a high-profile portfolio may lead on to greater things within the gift of the Group, since to gain a spokesmanship, however lowly, is to place a foot on the hierarchical ladder.<sup>122</sup>

---

<sup>122</sup> David Curry's nomination/election to the Chairmanship of the Agriculture Committee in 1982 (following Plumb's election as leader of the EDG) provides a good example of this process at work, since his Chairmanship was based largely on his success as EDG spokesman on agriculture. However, in career terms, the impression is that the majority of Group spokesmanships lead nowhere in themselves, but there is, as with group coordinator positions, a methodological problem involved in reaching a more empirically-based evaluation. This is, simply, that the groups (and the contingents within them) keep no centralised, comprehensive, accessible records of such appointments.



For each committee, each Group appoints a coordinator from among its members on that committee. Theoretically, the coordinator's job is to coordinate the Group's position within the committee. In practice, this amounts mainly to managing the Group's 'kitty' of points<sup>123</sup>, and wielding a certain amount of delegated authority. Like a spokespersonship, the position of Group coordinator represents a foot on the hierarchical ladder and may, depending on the committee and the topic, involve a substantial role and policy influence. However, unlike spokespersonships, a rapid glance through the biographical entries in the three Times Guides to date and Who's Who reveals that few MEPs considered a coordinatorship worth mentioning in their biographical entries.<sup>124</sup> By spending their Group's d'Hondt committee points, the coordinators determine which reports their Groups will be responsible for and help determine which of their Group's committee members will act as rapporteurs. However, where major reports are concerned, these decisions are taken higher up in the Group hierarchy, in the bureaux, and will probably be the subject of both inter- and intra-Group negotiation. On the other hand, spokesmen may, and indeed are, expected to have expert input into the Groups' policy formation processes in their areas of expertise.

---

<sup>123</sup> These are awarded according to the ubiquitous d'Hondt system.

<sup>124</sup> This is probably because spokespersonships are considered to have more, if still weak, policy-making autonomy.

## II. Committee and Delegation Assignment

### c. Committee Assignments and Leadership

#### Positions

#### A. Introduction

Standing committees are a characteristic of most democratic legislatures and assemblies, and certainly of all Western democratic legislatures and assemblies.<sup>1</sup> They are such a frequent structural element because they meet a practical need.<sup>2</sup> Committees are generally considered to assist, though not to supplant, parliaments' scrutiny and control functions.<sup>3</sup> The European Parliament has been no different in this respect. Hagger and Wing (1979) have described how the European Parliament "has adopted a constructive focus on policy control through its committee system" (117); a system, as will be seen, inherited largely intact by the directly-elected Parliament.

Through generalised convention, permanent committees are usually appointed for the duration of the parliamentary session or term, which may in turn be linked to the term of office of government. Such long and guaranteed terms of office of a committee, it is said, give members an opportunity to acquire great

---

<sup>1</sup> Most Parliaments have between 10 and 20. (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 1986: 626)

<sup>2</sup> "The House as a whole is too unwieldy a body to make full inquiries into matters of interest to it or to consider matters in detail." (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 1976: 625)

<sup>3</sup> For a broad survey of parliamentary committee systems, see Laundry, 1989.

experience of and specialisation in their subject. Direct linkage with governance and the executive is frequently enhanced by the convention<sup>4</sup> whereby the terms of reference of permanent committees correspond in varying degrees to the responsibilities of ministerial departments. As the St. John Stevas reforms of the Commons' Select Committee structures have shown, membership of permanent committees can give otherwise hierarchically undistinguished backbenchers genuine if erratic prominence and occasional and real, if arguably weak, scrutiny powers over ministers and their departments.<sup>5</sup> As Eulau has put it<sup>6</sup>, "committee assignments would seem to be the high road to legislators' influence and success as participants in the governmental process, with important consequences for the functions and performance of committees, for the interests affected by committee decisions inside and outside of government, and for the public policies that emanate from the legislature." (1985: 191)

Yet, as Eulau goes on to point out, intensive, systematic, and theory-driven investigation of 'the complexities involved' is 'of rather recent vintage'; "Moreover, most of the research conducted in the last 20 years has dealt with assignments in the U.S. House of

---

<sup>4</sup> Practiced by 43 out of the 83 parliaments considered by the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Judge, 1981, Drewry, 1985, Norton 1987, and Jogerst, 1991. For more general accounts of the Westminster Select Committees, see, for example, Ryle and Richards, 1988, especially Ch. 9, and Griffith and Ryle, 1989, especially Ch. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Although it should be stressed that he had the powerful and autonomous committees of the House of Representatives principally in mind.

Representatives." (*Ibid.*)<sup>7</sup> By far the biggest lacuna Eulau identifies is the almost total absence of research into committee assignments outside the United States.<sup>8</sup> This absence is puzzling, especially when findings of great relevance and importance surface almost accidentally in other studies.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, many of the findings and tested hypotheses in U.S. studies would clearly be of relevance to Western European legislative studies.<sup>10</sup> There is certainly room to test the mainly impressionistic accounts of the appointments/selection procedure prevalent in the literature.<sup>11</sup> Hagger and Wing (1979) advanced two reasons for this dearth. One was the difficulty of access, with only the Bundestag, the House of Commons, and the Camera dei deputati providing access, either through a public gallery or through

---

<sup>7</sup> He advances a number of reasons for this imbalance. In the U.S. context, research on the Senate has generally been neglected in comparison to the House; the House is more attractive as a subject of study because of, inter alia, the greater number of cases and, with two-year terms, time series available; 'request data' for senatorial assignments has been unavailable; more importantly, the Senate doesn't have the 'size problem' of the House (that is, senators normally enjoy membership of several committees and therefore attach less importance to membership of any particular one).

<sup>8</sup> "There is no research literature to speak of on assignments in non-U.S. legislative bodies." (*Ibid.*)

<sup>9</sup> For example, almost as an aside, Mellors tells us that "...since party whips unofficially apply a seniority principle for select committee appointments, professional MPs frequently occupy key positions in the committee structure of the House (of Commons)." (1978: 22)

<sup>10</sup> For example, if the much-vaunted new House of Commons departmentally-related Select Committees have successfully reasserted a measure of parliamentary scrutiny and control over the executive, might it not be important to know on what basis members exercising those powers were selected to serve, just as the 1970s Congressional reform spawned its own assignment literature; as Smith and Ray put it, "to peer into the 'black box' of the assignment process"? (1983: 220)

<sup>11</sup> On the probable role of the - theoretically excluded - Whips, see, for example, Judge's account of the 'verdict' of the 1990 procedure committee, 1992: 99, and Griffith and Ryle, 1989: 418.

published verbatim records. The second was the "mundane and apparently uninspiring nature of committee work" (118). The modern-day European Parliament would appear to be similar in both respects. Only some of its committees (by their own decisions) are open to the public, and much of the committee work is unavoidably routine or arcane, and therefore in all probability "mundane and uninspiring". Moreover, some of the more interesting committee work (the constitutional deliberations of the Institutional Affairs Committee being a good example) is not open to the public.<sup>12</sup>

In this context, a distinction has to be made between the formal mechanics of appointment, and the underlying reality. The Inter-Parliamentary Union identified three types of formal mechanism<sup>13</sup>, but swiftly went on to declare that "In practice, whichever of these methods is used, the most important influence in most countries are (sic) the political parties or groups." (1986: 628) The U.S. literature has been largely inspired by a general desire to discover and analyse these underlying mechanisms.

There are obvious differences between the cases of the U.S. Congress and the European Parliament. Again, the most prominent of these is the absence, in the European case, of anything approaching a government on the one hand, and a true legislature on the other. The

---

<sup>12</sup> Several British MEPs have remarked upon the inconsistency of a Parliament with closed committee meetings calling for the Council to make its meetings public.

<sup>13</sup> These were; directing authority, special committee of selection, and parliament itself.

European Parliament's committees and, indeed, most Western European parliamentary committees, are far from enjoying the autonomy, power and prestige<sup>14</sup> of their counterparts in the Congress. Moreover, the hybrid nature of the Community's institutions admits of no clean and easy comparisons about the degree, distribution and division of constitutional powers.<sup>15</sup> But it remains undeniably true that amid all the Community institutions the European Parliament is the only one composed of directly-elected representatives. Perhaps because of this, and despite all the differences, the American literature and its findings are of relevance to the case of the European Parliament and may provide a number of useful insights.<sup>16</sup>

## **B. Committee Assignment in The European Parliament**

### **i. Formal and Informal Mechanisms**

The formal mechanism for committee assignments in the European Parliament is simple and apparently

---

<sup>14</sup> Though Congress has been enjoying far less of the latter recently.

<sup>15</sup> As we have seen, some argue that the Council is effectively the Community's legislature, just as, putatively, the Commission is effectively its executive, and the Court of Justice its judiciary. Others argue that this is wishful thinking and even fundamentally misleading. For example, basing his arguments on a 'quadripartite' conception of the Community's structure (see Pescatore, 1978), Ludlow (1991) provides a powerful analysis of an 'intermingled' system. He argues that, "Far from separating the powers of the executive and legislative branches or distinguishing federal and state authorities, the Community system as defined in the Treaties and sanctioned by practice depends for its effectiveness on their intermingling." (87)

<sup>16</sup> As well as pointing the way to further research.

straightforward. The relevant basic provisions have not changed since 1979.<sup>17</sup> However, behind the simplicity of the provisions lay the complexities of their realisation. How is 'fair representation' to be defined and ensured in a Parliamentary Assembly of twelve nations, nine political groups, and 78 political parties? In practice, several calculations are involved. Once again, by common accord of the political groups<sup>18</sup>, it is the ubiquitous d'Hondt system which, based on the number of members returned to each political group, is used to calculate the ratio of political group representation within committees. But this is only half the story.<sup>19</sup> The two largest political groups (Socialist and EPP) use the d'Hondt system to calculate the theoretical ratio of national representatives within their groups' overall allocations of members within any particular committee. Thus, although 'fair representation of Member States' is sought within these groups' representations, no such calculation is made at the level of a committee's overall membership.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Rule 110(1) provides that: "Committee members shall be elected after nominations have been submitted to the Bureau by the political groups, the Non-Attached Members or at least thirteen Members. The Bureau shall submit to Parliament proposals designed to ensure fair representation of Member States and of political views." (European Parliament, 1991)

<sup>18</sup> Another inheritance from the old appointed Parliament.

<sup>19</sup> The overall number of members of a committee is the outcome of a complex series of calculations which will be examined in Section C.iv below.

<sup>20</sup> Because it consisted almost entirely of one nationality, these considerations did not arise within the EDG. Indeed, because of this (and the current numerical strength of the British Labour members within the Socialist Group) the UK has tended to be slightly over-represented in larger committees.

Rule 110(1) speaks of the Bureau and of the Parliament itself but, as in Congress, the Parliament's role is limited simply to approving the lists of nominations put before it and nor, in reality, does the Bureau per se have any distinct role in the process. It is the enlarged Bureau, where the political groups are represented, which oversees the assignment process and provides a forum for discreet brokerage, though it is very much beholden to the machinations of the two largest political groups (particularly where prior deals have been struck) and the workings of the d'Hondt system.<sup>21</sup>

Rule 110 makes no provisions in regard to multiple membership (what the American literature refers to as 'dual assignments'), but the 1979 Parliament adopted the old, nominated Parliament's convention whereby members were restricted to full membership of just one committee. Academically, the convention is still largely respected<sup>22</sup>, particularly by the larger political groups

<sup>21</sup> Jacobs and Corbett (1991) provide an example of such a deal. "Following the 1989 elections...the Socialist Group, which had a large number of members interested in sitting on the Environment and Consumer Committee and the EPP Group, which had a large number interested in the Agriculture Committee, agreed to a trade-off, with the result that these two committees do not so accurately reflect the plenary balance." (1991: 99)

<sup>22</sup> The following table shows one and two full committee assignments in the European Parliament, 1979-1989.

DATE	NUMBER OF MEMBERS	ONE FULL COMMITTEE	TWO FULL COMMITTEES
24.09.79	410	351	53
09.03.82	434	305	99
10.09.84	434	298	122
06.04.87	518	410	81
23.10.89	518	372	131
06.04.92	518	379	143



although, for reasons that will become clear in the next section, it has been emptied of significance. From the outset, the larger political groups made exception to the convention for certain committees, declared 'neutral', or 'neutralised', which might otherwise have been difficult to people with a sufficient and suitably representative number of members.<sup>23</sup> Also, smaller groups have been less likely to respect the convention, since they have to 'spread' smaller numbers of members over a steadily increasing number of committees.

#### ii. The Introduction of Substitute Members

In 1982, the Parliament introduced the concept of supplementary, or substitute, committee membership. Substitute membership has been described as a "safety mechanism for members who are not completely satisfied with their primary committee assignments as full members." (Jacobs and Corbett, 1991: 99) An informal system of substitution had been in effect since 1979; MEPs were free to take the committee places of their absent colleagues as long as their number did not exceed the total number of their Group's allocation. The

---

<sup>23</sup> For example, in 1979, both the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions and the Committee on Budgetary Control were declared neutral by the large political groups.

informal system applied whether committee (or EC-ACP joint assembly, or inter-parliamentary delegation) meetings were taking place in Brussels, Luxembourg, Strasbourg or elsewhere. The unregulated practice was said to have given rise to confusion and, occasionally, unseemly situations, and by 1982 the parliamentary authorities had agreed on the need for rules and guidelines.

At the same time, it was recognised that substitute members were necessary and desirable auxiliaries: necessary, because of the relatively high quora and traditionally low attendance rates accompanying increasing committee size; desirable, because in addition to the flexibility they afforded party managers and the compensatory 'safety mechanism' they provided for frustrated/disgruntled members, the designation of substitute members could bring both a broader degree of expertise and a heightened sense of esprit de corps to committees.<sup>24</sup>

Although provision is made for the President to be notified, appointment of committee substitute members is entirely within the patronage of the political groups and, implicitly, of their leaderships.<sup>25</sup> The powers and privileges of these 'permanent substitutes' are

---

<sup>24</sup> Thus, a rule (currently 111(1)) was adopted which provides that "The political groups may appoint a number of permanent substitutes for each committee equal to the number of full members representing them on the committee. The President shall be informed accordingly. These permanent substitutes shall be entitled to attend and speak at committee meetings and, in the event of the absence of the full member, to take part in the vote.

<sup>25</sup> In practice, though in theory it may be less, the number of substitute members of a committee is almost invariably equal to the number of full members.

considerable, being barely distinguishable from those of full members.<sup>26</sup> In addition, they enjoy the same financial privileges as full members.<sup>27</sup>

From the individual member's point of view, substitute membership can be a welcome adjunct. Substitute committees are for some members "the committee on which they would have preferred to have served as a full member, and they may then spend more time at this committee than on their main one." (Jacobs and Corbett, 1991: 99) Indeed, this practice is so widespread that there seems very little point, for research purposes, in distinguishing between full and substitute membership. From the member's point of view, the only distinguishing advantage is one of slightly increased prestige for full membership.

### iii. Allowances

A non-negligeable factor in examining committee assignments in the European Parliament is the system whereby, in addition to generous travel reimbursement, MEPs benefit from a per diem payment for each day of committee meeting. In a detailed calculation, Butler and

---

<sup>26</sup> "Substitutes in fact suffer very little disadvantage compared to full members. They have full speaking rights, in practice full voting rights (they are only prevented from voting on those limited occasions when all the full members of their Political Group are present and voting: otherwise they can vote in the place of a designated absent full member) and can even be rapporteurs and draftsmen, on occasion drawing up some of the major reports within a committee. Of the full reports drawn up within the Economic Committee in 1984-1989 almost one in seven were drawn up by substitutes." (Jacobs and Corbett, 1991: 99)

<sup>27</sup> A not inconsiderable benefit, as Section C.iii below will describe.

Jowett (1985: 33) have shown that a UK MEP could easily double his/her basic salary through assiduous committee attendance, and there has been anecdotal evidence to suggest that the system, which largely functions on an honesty basis (a day's attendance is recorded by a simple signature in a register in the meeting room), may be open to abuse.

However, such evidence is counter-balanced by the fact that, in the absence of a generalised system for reimbursing MEPs obliged to travel to Brussels for work (non-committee) purposes, many members use the committee attendance per diem system as a substitute. Moreover, members absent from their committees are generally to be found in their offices, from whence they can be rounded up by their group Whips or coordinators when their presence is needed for important votes.

Nevertheless, there is an obvious link between committee assignments and the per diem system. A member assigned to one committee only will be able to benefit from a probable maximum of six per diems per month (though some committees may meet as little as two days per month), whereas a member assigned to two or three committees (whether as a full or a supplementary member) will probably be able to benefit from the maximum possible of ten per diems (two weeks of committee meetings per parliamentary month). It is clearly impossible to quantify the effects the per diem system may have had on the committee assignment process, but it can be plausibly supposed that the system would

encourage three-committee assignments, and this would appear to be borne out by the data in Table 14.

#### iv. Committee Size and Leadership Strategy

Parliament's rules make no explicit mention of numbers, whether of committees or of members of committees.<sup>28</sup> Implicitly, this power devolves through Rule 110(1) upon the Parliament and the Bureau and, through them, as we have seen, upon the political group leaderships. In fact, the only mention of any limitation on members concerns committees of inquiry.<sup>29</sup> The rules also provide for the establishment of temporary committees.<sup>30</sup> Again, there is no explicit provision limiting the size of such temporary committees and, again, the power of appointment implicitly lays with the political groups. The European Parliament's method is therefore similar to that of the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate, where size and numbers are open to adjustment.<sup>31</sup> Where the Parliament differs is in

---

<sup>28</sup> Rule 109(1) provides that; "Parliament shall set up standing committees whose powers shall be defined in an annex to the Rules of Procedure. Their members shall be elected during the first part-session following the re-election of Parliament and again two and a half years thereafter." And Rule 114(1) and (2) provides that; "1. Subject to prior authorisation by the enlarged Bureau a standing or temporary committee may, in the interest of its work, appoint one or more subcommittees, of which it shall at the same time determine the composition...and the competence... "2. The procedure for sub-committees shall be the same as for committees."

<sup>29</sup> Rule 109(3) providing that; "A committee of inquiry shall consist of no more than fifteen members."

<sup>30</sup> Rule 109(2) declares that; "Parliament may at any time set up temporary committees, whose powers, composition and term of office shall be defined at the same time as the decision to set them up is taken; their term of office shall not exceed twelve months..."

<sup>31</sup> "Questions of committee size and the number of Democratic and Republican members are settled by negotiations between the party

the consensual nature of its method. In the Congress, the majority party has a pre-eminent role.<sup>32</sup> In the Parliament, such a system would be all but unthinkable. As was seen, the practical realisation of Rule 110's provision for 'fair representation' is assured through the d'Hondt system of proportional representation, and the continued use of this inherited convention is by common accord of the political groups. Moreover, as Section C below will show, the Parliament's consensual methodology extends to leadership positions. Theoretically, it might be possible for the largest group, currently the Socialist Group, to impose its will and change the rules to create a 'winner-takes-all' system.<sup>33</sup> But another fundamental difference between the two assemblies is the Congress' bi-party and the Parliament's multi-party political systems; since 1957, no single political group has enjoyed an outright majority in the European Parliament. Thus, even the

---

leaders. Both houses can adjust the size of their committees from session to session." (Gitelson *et al*, 1991: 272)

<sup>32</sup> "Determining the ration of majority to minority party members on each committee causes far more controversy than committee size. Generally, the allocations reflect party strength in the full House or Senate. On occasion, however, the majority party may be unwilling to accommodate the opposition." (*Ibid.*, 272) In 1981, for instance, House Democrats refused to readjust the ratio on certain key committees, despite the substantial gains made by the Republicans in the 1980 elections. Although the Democrats held only a 5-to-4 advantage in the 1981-1982 House, they insisted on a 2-to-1 ratio on the all-important Rules Committee ... Fearing that such an unfavourable mix would stifle the Reagan administration's legislative program, Republicans took the matter to the House floor. Their efforts were defeated by a straight party vote, with only one Democrat defecting." (*Ibid.*: 272)

<sup>33</sup> Under such a system, the Socialist Group would have taken all hierarchical positions since 1976, just as the Democrats have dominated the House of Representatives' hierarchy since 1957.

largest political groups could theoretically be outvoted by a coalition of the other groups.<sup>34</sup>

In the American literature a number of intuitively-constructed hypotheses about committee numbers and size have been more or less empirically tested, and for most of these theories there has been a fairly good, albeit frequently partial, 'fit' between the hypotheses and the data. Most of these consider committee assignments in a career context, since committee assignments are frequently considered to be part and parcel or even the whole of a parliamentarian's political career. To the extent that committee assignments are in the gift of the political bosses, so are political careers. In the language of the American literature, committee assignments are a 'currency', and the party group leaderships are the paymasters. A first question to ask, then, is whether there has been the same steady tendency towards a 'devaluation' of that currency as has been noted in the US.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup> The exception is when, an increasingly common occurrence, the two largest groups act together, in which case they cannot be outvoted. In this sense, the Socialist and EPP Groups acting together have as effectively dominated the Parliament as the Democrats have dominated the House.

<sup>35</sup> As Gawthrop (1966), Westefield (1974), Schepsle (1978), Whiteman (1983), and Ray and Smith (1984) have described.

Table 13

YEAR	A	B	C	D
	N° of Standing Committees	N° of Members	N° of full Committee positions	Average N° of Committee positions per Member
1979	15	410	463	1.12
1982	17	434	494	1.13
1984	18	434	552	1.27
1987	18	518	604	1.16
1989	18	518	682	1.31
1992	19	518	659	1.27

Table 13 shows for each two-and-a-half year period the number of permanent committees, and the number of full members in the European Parliament. It might logically have been supposed that successive enlargements would have led to an increase in the number of committees, and such would indeed appear to have been the case. In 1982, the year after the accession of Greece, the number of committees increased from 15 to 17. Similarly, in 1987, the year after Spanish and Portugese accession, the number of committees increased from 17 to 18. Although no accession could explain the increase in committees from 18 to 19 in 1992 (of which more below), there would appear to be a chronological, if not causal, link between committee numbers and enlargements, especially if it is recalled that 1982 and 1987 were both the earliest conventional moments after the respective enlargements at which changes in the number of committees could be undertaken.

However, Column C, showing the overall number of full committee positions, would appear to tell a different story. It shows that the number of full



committee positions crept inexorably upwards on every possible occasion where numbers might have been increased, from 463 in 1979 to 687 in 1992. Is this proof of 'currency inflation'? Column D would appear to contradict this. It shows that the average number of committee positions per member (achieved simply by dividing Column C by Column B) has increased regularly, but only very slightly, from 1.12 in 1979 to 1.32 in 1992; in other words, hardly at all. At a formalistic level, political group leaders would appear to have resisted the temptation to inflate their patronage currency.

However, the statistics in Table 13 are misleading and incomplete. In the first place, because, as we have seen, for research purposes there is little point in maintaining a fictional distinction between full and supplementary committee membership. In reality, the number of committee places doubled by 1984. This sudden increase had nothing to do with enlargements but was, as we have seen, the rationalisation of a previously informal arrangement of substitute membership. A direct consequence was to double, in one fell swoop, the contents of the purse of the political groups' patronage. Thus, in 1992, no less than 1,036 committee membership full and substitute positions were available to the Parliament's 518 members (an average of 2 per member).

In the second place, the table is both misleading and incomplete because it makes no mention of all the

other sorts of committee memberships available (let alone membership of delegations, joint parliamentary committees and joint assemblies). In particular, there have been five sub-committees, five temporary committees, and nine committees of inquiry to date. Like substitute membership, while these committees were no doubt also formed (and no doubt serve) to meet a substantial policy need, their establishment has had as a direct consequence an increase in the purse of the political groups' patronage. Since direct elections there have been few periods when there was not a committee of inquiry or a temporary committee in session, effectively amounting to the existence of another permanent committee. The current full extent of committee assignment patronage in the European Parliament amounts to some 1,266 full and substitute committee positions, an average of 2.44 per member. Including positions in the EC-ACP Joint Assembly<sup>36</sup>, the four joint parliamentary committees, and the 25 inter-parliamentary delegations, the patronage 'kitty' consists of some 2,302 committee and delegation positions, amounting to almost 4.5 positions per member. Here, then, are clear indications of 'currency inflation'.

The point can be made another way. **Table 14** shows the development of main and supplementary committee membership since 1979. Already, in 1982, and despite an

---

<sup>36</sup> Though it should be pointed out that in the particular case of the Joint Assembly the overall number of parliamentarians (though not the composition) is decided by the Council of Ministers.

increase in membership (Greek accession in 1981), there was a trend away from membership of a single committee (70.2 per cent) and towards membership of two (22.8) or even three (2.9) committees. The immediate effect of the introduction of supplementary membership was to drastically reduce the numbers of parliamentarians holding full membership of one, two or three committees only. But immediately, the large majority of members were able to enjoy membership of one full and one supplementary committee (40.5 per cent), one full and two supplementary committees (16.1), two full and one supplementary (19.1), or even two full and two supplementary committees (4.1).<sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> As will be recalled from the discussion in Section iii above, such a development might have been expected for other reasons.

Table 14

THE SPREAD AND MULTIPLICATION OF MAIN AND SUPPLEMENTARY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, 1979-1992

N° of members and year	1 full ctee	2 full ctees	3 full ctees	No full ctee	1 full 1 sub-sit.	2 full 1 sub-sit.	2 full 2 sub-sit.	1 full 2 sub-sit.	1 full 3 sub-sit.	1 sub-sit.	4 full ctees	3 full 1 sub-sit.	2 sub-sit.	3 full 2 sub-sit.	2 full 3 sub-sit.	1 full 4 sub-sit.	4 sub-sit.	3 sub-sit.	2 full 4 sub-sit.
410	351	53	1	1															
24.9/79	85.6%	12.9%	0.25%	0.25%															
9.3.82	30%	99	13	12															
434	70.2%	22.8%	2.9%	2.75%															
434	45	21	4	3	176	83	18	70	7	1	1	3	1						
10.9.84	10.3%	4.8%	0.6%	0.69%	40.5%	19.1%	4.1%	16.1%	1.6%	0.25%	0.25%	0.69%	0.25%						
518	9	9	-	6	321	61	11	76	4	-	-	5	4	1	1	1	1		
6.4.87	1.7%	1.7%		1.15%	61.9%	11.7%	2.1%	14.6%	0.7%			0.6%	0.7%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%		
518	15	10	2	3	227	102	19	108	22	3	-	1	4	1	3	2	-	1	2
23.10.89	2.9%	1.9%	0.4%	0.5%	43.8%	19.6%	3.6%	20.8%	4.2%	0.5%		0.2%	0.7%	0.2%	0.5%	0.4%		0.2%	0.4%
518	12	12	2	7	227	111	16	131	9	3	-	5	-	1	4	-	-	-	-
6.4.92	2.3%	2.3%	0.4%	1.35%	43.8%	21.4%	3.0%	25.2%	1.7%	0.5%		0.6%		0.2%	0.7%				

Source: drawn from European Parliament 'Grey List'

In a sense, because the precise extent of substitute membership prior to 1984 could not be known (its previous ad hoc nature precluded comprehensive records), these apparent trends might in fact have amounted to nothing more than a formalisation of the (previously hidden) status quo ante. But the trend towards ever-greater multiple assignments has continued since then, with the number of members with one main and one supplementary committee dwindling, and the number of members with two main and one supplementary or one main and two supplementary committees increasing. The more outlandish combinations of multiple assignments shown in columns further to the right in **Table 14** are chiefly the result of the smaller groups' attempts to ensure at least academic coverage of the Parliament's inexorably expanding committee structure. But almost half of Parliament's members now enjoy full or supplementary membership of three committees, and these figures exclude temporary committees, sub-committees and committees of inquiry.

It may be concluded with some confidence, then, that there has been a steady inflation both in the number of committees and of committee membership itself, and that this trend is continuing. Some of the probable aspects and consequences of this process, particularly in terms of political careers, can be imagined, and we will return to these below after first having considered the matter of committee stratification.

Table 15

A SUGGESTED COMPOSITE COMMITTEE STRATIFICATION  
FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

LARGER COMMITTEES	POLITICAL AFFAIRS* AGRICULTURE ECONOMIC AND MONETARY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION ENVIRONMENT BUDGETS
MEDIUM COMMITTEES	ENERGY REX LEGAL AFFAIRS SOCIAL AFFAIRS REGIONAL TRANSPORT YOUTH, CULTURE ..
'NEUTRALISED' COMMITTEES	BUDGETARY CONTROL INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS RULES WOMEN'S AFFAIRS PETITIONS

\* From 1992, 'FOREIGN AFFAIRS'

NOT INCLUDED	- COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS (established 1992)  - COMMITTEE ON THE VERIFICATION OF CREDENTIALS (existed 1982-1984)
--------------	--

v. Committee Stratification

From its earliest days, the European Parliament, and before it the Common Assembly, formally ranked its committees (see European Parliament, 1982: 170-174). The pre-1979 literature reveals occasional impressionistic evaluations based on other criteria.<sup>38</sup> Since direct elections, the picture has remained diffuse. Committees

---

<sup>38</sup> For example, Hagger and Wing (1979) recount that "It is commonly accepted by members, staff, and observers that Political Affairs, Legal Affairs, Economic and Monetary Affairs, and Budgets provide a core of committees with a greater status in, and impact on, the European Community." (120)

are still formally ranked in official publications, but this is a purely bureaucratic device and has little if anything to do with members' preferences let alone the career value of committee assignments, and there are a number of other, informal and more plausible, ways in which the process of stratification might be perceived. Westlake (1992) considers the methodological problems involved in trying to discern committee stratification in the absence of assignment and transfer requests, and concludes by formulating a tentative 'composite stratification', based on several different empirical sources. This composite stratification, shown in Table 15, will be used in the analyses that follow.

#### **vi. Committee Stratification in the European Parliament and its Consequences**

Because the overall period under investigation is so short - just twelve years - and includes the introduction of formal substitute membership, this study will restrict itself primarily to the committee assignment records of the 30 'survivors', as set out in Table 16.

Before proceeding to the analyses it should be recalled that the formal notion of substitute membership was introduced in 1982. Prior, informal substitute memberships could not have been recorded. On the other hand, the number of formal membership positions in 1979 was, as is apparent in Table 14, relatively small.

Table 16

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS, 1979-1992, OF THE 30 'SURVIVORS'

A THE TEN SURVIVING EXCEPTIONAL MEPS										
BETHELL, Lord	1979	POL	VP							
	1982	POL	M							
	1984	POL	M	YTH	S					
	1987	POL	M		INST	S				
	1989	POL	M			DEV	S			
	1992	POL	M				CIV	S		
CATHERWOOD, Sir Fred	1979		REX	P						
	1982		REX	P						
	1984	EMAC	S		BUD	M				
	1987	EMAC	S		BUD	S	INST	M		
	1989	EMAC	S				SOC	M		
	1992	EMAC	S					POL	VP	
EWING, Wentred	1979		REG	M						
	1982		REG	M				LEG	S	
	1984	AGRIC	S			YTH	P			
	1987	AGRIC	S		DEV	M	YTH	S		
	1989	AGRIC	S		DEV	M		WOM	S	
	1992				DEV	M		WOM	S	
HUME, John	1979	REG	M							
	1982	REG	M	AGRIC	S					
	1984	REG	M	AGRIC	S	BUD	S			
	1987	REG	S	AGRIC	S		INST	M		
	1989	REG	M	AGRIC	S					
	1992	REG	M	AGRIC	S					
OTHAGAN, Lord	1979				BUD	M				
	1982						POL	M		
	1984		REG	S				LEG	M	
	1987	SOC	M	REG	S				ENV	S
	1989	SOC	M							
	1992	SOC	M					DEV	S	WOM
PAISLEY, Rev. Ian	1979				ENER	M				
	1982	POL	S			REX	M			
	1984	POL	M	AGRIC	S				CRED	S
	1987	POL	M							
	1989	POL	M							
	1992			AGRIC	M			EMAC	S	
PLUMB, Lord	1979	AGRIC	P							
	1982									
	1984	AGRIC	M		TRAN	S				
	1987									
	1989	AGRIC	M	ENV	S					
	1992	AGRIC	M			YTH	S			
SCOTT- HOPKINS, Sir James	1979	POL	M							
	1982	POL	M	BUD	S					
	1984	POL	VP	BUD	S					
	1987	POL	S	BUD	VP					
	1989				ENV	VP	AGRIC	S		
	1992				ENV	M	AGRIC	S		
SELIGMAN, Madron	1979	ENER	M							
	1982	ENER	VP			YTH	S			
	1984	ENER	VP		DEV	S				
	1987	ENER	M		DEV	S				
	1989	ENER	M	ENV	M		YTH	S		
	1992	ENER	M	ENV	S					
STEWART- CLARK, Sir Jack	1979		REX	M						
	1982	EMAC	S	REX	M					
	1984				POL	S	SOC	M		
	1987	EMAC	M					ENV	S	
	1989	EMAC	S						YTH	M
	1992	EMAC	S						YTH	M



B.1. THE TWENTY OTHERS - LABOUR MEPS									
ADAM, Gordon	1979	ENER M							
	1982	ENER M	BUD S						
	1984	ENERVP	BUD S			RULES M	CRED S		
	1987	ENERVP	BUD S		PET S				
	1989	ENERVP	BUD S		PET M				
	1992	ENERVP		POL S					
BALFE, Richard	1979		BUD M						
	1982	POL S	BUD M			BUCO S			
	1984	POL S		DEV M					
	1987	POL S		DEV M			RULESM	PET S	
	1989	POL M		DEV S	INST M				
	1992	POL M			INST S	REX S			
BUCHAN, Janey	1979	YTH M							
	1982	YTH M		REG S			RULES S		
	1984	YTH S	DEV M						
	1987		DEV M		ENER S				
	1989	YTH M	DEV S			WOM S			
	1992	YTH S	DEV M						
COLLINS, Ken	1979	ENV P							
	1982	ENV P	AGRIC S						
	1984	ENV VP		TRAN S				RULES S	
	1987	ENV M			REG S				
	1989	ENV P				BUD S			
	1992	ENV P					EMAC S		
LOMAS, Al	1979	POL M							
	1982	POL M	DEV S						
	1984	POL M	DEV S						
	1987	POL M			REX S				
	1989	POL S	DEV M	BUCO S					
	1992	POL S	DEV M	BUCO S					
MEGAHEY, Tom	1979	LEG M							
	1982	LEG M			BUD S	INST S	CREDVP		
	1984	LEG S	SOC M			INST S			
	1987	LEG S	SOC M						
	1989		SOC M	TRAN S					
	1992		SOC M	TRAN S					

SEAL, Barry	1979		REX VP					
	1982	EMAC S	REX VP					
	1984	EMAC P		POL S				
	1987	EMACVP		POL S			RULES S	
	1989	EMAC M			AGRIC S			BUCO S
	1992	EMAC M				TRANS M		BUCO S
B.2 THE TWENTY OTHERS - CONSERVATIVE MEPs								
BEAZLEY, Peter	1979			ENER M				
	1982	EMAC M		ENER S				
	1984	EMACVP	REX S		RULES S			
	1987	EMACVP	REX S					
	1989	EMAC M	REX S					
	1992	EMAC M	REX S					
HOWELL, Paul	1979	AGRIC M						
	1982	AGRIC S	DEV M			TRANS S		
	1984			POL S			YTH M	
	1987	AGRIC M	DEV S					
	1989	AGRIC M		POL S				
	1992	AGRIC S			REG M			
JACKSON, Christopher	1979			POL M				
	1982	DEV M	INST M	POL S				
	1984	DEV M	INST S		REX S			
	1987	DEV S	INST S			AGRIC M		
	1989	DEV M	INST S	POL S				
	1992	DEV S					EMAC M	
MOORHOUSE, James	1979	TRAN M						
	1982	TRAN M		ENV S	POL S			
	1984	TRAN S	REX M					
	1987	TRAN M	REX S			BUCO S		
	1989	TRAN S	REX VP					
	1992	TRAN S	REX M					
NEWTON- DUNN, Bill	1979				ENV M			
	1982	BUD M				AGRIC S		
	1984	BUD S	INST S					
	1987	BUD S					RULES M	
	1989		INST S	POL M				
	1992		INST S	POL S			DEV M	PET M

PATTERSON, Ben	1979	RULESM		YTH	M								
	1982	RULESM		YTH	S		SOC	M	BUCO	M			
	1984	RULESM	EMAC	M		DEV	S						
	1987	RULESM	EMAC	M		DEV	S						
	1989	RULES	S	EMAC	M			SOC	S				
	1992	RULES	S	EMACVP					ENER	S	PET	M	
PRAG, Derek	1979				SOC	M							
	1982	POL	S	INST	M		ENER	S					
	1984	POL	M	INST	M	SOC	S						
	1987	POL	S	INST	M	SOC	S						
	1989	POL	M	INST	VP								
	1992	POL	S	INST	VP			TRAN	M				
PRICE, Peter	1979	BUCOVP			YTH	M							
	1982	BUCOVP	BUD	M			REG	S	ENER	S	RULES	S	
	1984	BUCO	M	BUD	S	LEG	M				CRED	M	
	1987	BUCO	S	BUD	M	LEG	S						
	1989	BUCO	P	BUD	S	LEG	S						
	1992	BUCO	M	BUD	S					REX	M		
PROUT, Sir Christopher	1979	LEG	M										
	1982	LEG	M	RULESM	INST	S	CRED	P	DEV	S			
	1984	LEG	M	RULESM						BUD	S		
	1987	LEG	S	RULES	S	INST	S						
	1989			RULESM	INST	M							
	1992	LEG	S	RULESM	INST	S					REG	M	
SIMMONDS, Richard	1979					DEV	M						
	1982				BUD	M		YTH	M	REX	S		
	1984	AGRIC	M	BUCO	M			YTH	S				
	1987	AGRIC	M	BUCO	S								
	1989	AGRIC	S	BUCO	S	BUD	S			REX	M		
	1992	AGRIC	M	BUCO	S						ENV	S	
SIMPSON, Anthony	1979								YTH	M			
	1982	BUCO	S			RULES	M		POL	S		SOC	M
	1984	BUCO	S	DEV	M					REX	S		
	1987	BUCO	S	DEV	M			PET	S				
	1989	BUCO	S	DEV	S	RULES	S	PET	S	LEG	M		
	1992	BUCO	S	DEV	S	RULES	S			LEG	M		

TURNER, Amedée	1979	LEG	VP			RULESM			
	1982	LEG	VP			RULESS	EMAC S	TRAN S	
	1984	LEG	S	ENER M					
	1987	LEG	S	ENER M	DEV S				
	1989			ENER S	DEV M				
	1992	CIV	P	ENER S					
WELSH, Michael	1979	REX	M						
	1982	REX	S	EMAC M					
	1984					SOC P	ENER S		
	1987								POL M
	1989			EMAC S	REG M			BUD VP	
	1992				REG S				AGRIC M
C. THE TWO RETURNEES									
KELLETT- BOWMAN, Edward	1979	BUCO	M			REX M			
	1982	BUCOM	BUD M	DEV S			ENER S		
	1984								
	1987								
	1989	BUCO M	BUD M					YTH S	
	1992	BUCO M	BUD S	DEV M					
SPENCER, Tom	1979			SOC M					
	1982	REX M	INST M	SOC S	LEG S				
	1984								
	1987								
	1989						AGRIC M	ENER S	WOM S
	1992	REX S	INST M			ENV M			

Legend

POL	=	Political Affairs
AGRIC	=	Agriculture
EMAC	=	Economic and Monetary Affairs
ENV	=	Environment
DEV	=	Development and Cooperation
BUD	=	Budgets
REX	=	External Economic Relations
CIV	=	Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs
REG	=	Regional
TRAN	=	Transport
ENER	=	Energy and Research
YTH	=	Youth, Culture, etc.
SOC	=	Social Affairs
LEG	=	Legal Affairs
BUCO	=	Budgetary Control
CRED	=	Credentials
INST	=	Institutional Affairs
PET	=	Petitions
RULES	=	Rules of Procedure
WOM	=	Women's Affairs
M	=	Full Member
S	=	Substitute Member
P	=	Chairman
VP	=	Vice-Chairman

Source: drawn from European Parliament "Grey Lists"

Since only 9 of the 1979 UK intake had had any previous experience of the European Parliament, for many members committee assignment requests in 1979 must have been something of a hit-and-miss affair, although some have never moved from their original 1979 choices.<sup>39</sup> Many others moved on to other committees in 1982 or 1984. This phenomenon will be discussed in more detail in another context (committee specialisations) below, but in the meantime it is worth noting that the introduction of substitute membership in 1982 was a watershed in that it created the possibility for all members to be at least partly satisfied with their committee assignments.

A second general comment is also related to the introduction of substitute membership. It was earlier stated that there was little immediate scientific point in distinguishing between full and substitute membership, and this statement remains valid at the simple level of participation and absenteeism. There is no simple way of distinguishing between, say, an active substitute member and an absentee full member of a committee.<sup>40</sup> This distinction is potentially important if it is assumed that committee membership is important in political career terms not in itself so much as in that it provides a forum in which the individual can

---

<sup>39</sup> The unbroken tenures of Gordon Adam and Madron Seligman at the Energy Committee provide good examples.

<sup>40</sup> Committee minutes record attendance but, as was earlier described, attendance is recorded by a simple signature which may be entered in the register at any moment throughout a committee's meeting (though a fresh signature is required for each day). Nor, indeed, can Table 16 record the not unknown phenomenon of the active *ad hoc* committee member. That is, an active member who, benefitting from the provisions of Rule 111, is neither a formal full, nor a formal substitute, member.

display abilities and qualities that (it is hoped) will favourably impress those in the political group hierarchies with their hands on the patronage 'purse'. But such an assumption may well be wrong. This study will later re-consider the political groups' assignment processes and will examine the argument that committee assignments may be more important simply in themselves, as patronage bargaining chips. If this were true, then the premium would shift from displaying abilities and qualities to the avoidance of displaying negative qualities.

**a. Committee Assignments, Committee**

**Stratification, and the Relative Incidence of  
'Exceptional' MEPs**

A first thesis to be examined concerns the particular role, based on an assumed mixture of privilege and authority, of the 'exceptional' MEPs, of whom 10 of the original 24 still sit in the Parliament. In the context of committee stratification, it could be predicted that the exceptional MEPs would tend to be over-represented in the six larger and more prestigious committees and relatively absent from the five 'neutralised' committees. To elaborate, it could be imagined that their privileged status and access would, especially at the outset, result in them being accorded a disproportionately high number of assignments in

Table 17

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS, COMMITTEE STRATIFICATION,  
AND THE RELATIVE INCIDENCE OF "EXCEPTIONAL" MEPS

(Figures rounded to nearest 0.5)

YEAR	1979	1982	1984	1987	1989	1992
24 members as a percentage of all members	28.5	28.5	34.0	34.0	29.5	29.5
POLITICAL AFFAIRS	50.0	50.0	61.5	54.0	33.5	33.5
AGRICULTURE	28.5	21.5	50.0	33.5	43.0	55.5
EMAC	37.5	23.5	22.0	33.5	33.5	37.5
DEVELOPMENT	20.0	8.5	11.0	18.0	25.0	25.0
ENVIRONMENT	0	20.0	0	16.5	80.0	40.0
BUDGETS	14.0	7.0	54.5	55.5	0	0
ENERGY	55.5	21.5	37.5	33.5	25.0	25.0
REX	33.5	16.5	16.5	25.0	0	0
LEGAL AFFAIRS	0	18.0	33.5	20.0	0	0
SOCIAL AFFAIRS	16.5	36.5	20.0	25.0	50.0	50.0
REGIONAL	28.5	27.0	33.5	28.5	50.0	25.0
TRANSPORT	20.0	16.5	33.5	0	0	0
YOUTH, CULTURE	20.0	12.5	33.5	50.0	50.0	65.5
BUDGETARY CONT.	0	0	0	0	0	0
INSTITUTIONAL	-	10.0	0	75.0	0	0
RULES	20.0	20.0	0	0	0	0
WOMEN	-	20.0	33.5	0	33.5	100.0
PETITIONS	-	-	-	0	0	0
NOT INCLUDED:						
Committee on Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs (established 1992)						
Committee on Verification of Credentials (reinstated 1982-84)						

THE "FRESHMAN" HYPOTHESIS: COMMITTEE STRATIFICATION AND NEW MEMBERS'  
COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS, 1984, 1987, 1989, and 1992

(Figures rounded to nearest 0.5)

	Initial	A 1984	B 1987	C 1989	D 1992
New Members as %age of all Members		36.0	36.0 <sup>1</sup>	29.5 <sup>1</sup> 29.5	29.5 29.5
POLITICAL	84 89	7.0	13.6	31.5 21.0	31.5 31.5
AGRICULTURE	84 89	29.5	33.5	23.0 23.0	19.0 25.0
EMAC	84 89	35.0	40.0	26.5 42.0	13.5 32.5
DEVELOPMENT	84 89	35.5	35.5	28.5 14.5	33.5 13.5
ENVIRONMENT	84 89	61.5	50.0	40.0 26.5	50.0 22.0
BUDGETS	84 89	21.5	40.0	36.5 9.0	44.5 33.5
ENERGY	84 89	33.5	40.0	25.0 28.0	33.5 22.0
REX	84 89	40.0	50.0	53.5 9.0	33.5 11.0
LEGAL AFFAIRS	84 89	14.0	16.5	37.5 37.5	37.5 37.5
SOCIAL AFFAIRS	84 89	54.5	55.5	31.0 30.5	50.0 33.5
REGIONAL	84 89	54.0	36.5	36.5 45.5	18.0 45.5
TRANSPORT	84 89	50.0	33.3	33.5 33.5	14.5 26.5
YOUTH, CULTURE	84 89	40.0	56.5	12.5 37.5	33.5 16.5
BUDGETARY CONTROL	84 89	54.5	28.5	33.5 25.0	25.0 12.5
INSTITUTIONAL	84 89	20.0	14.8	20.0 30.0	20.0 20.0
RULES	84 89	0	36.5	25.0 37.5	25.0 33.5
WOMEN	84 89	52.5	60.0	27.5 45.5	33.5 44.5
PETITIONS	84 89		43.0	40.0 30.0	44.5 33.5

<sup>1</sup> 1984 members in 1984, 87, 89 and 92, and 1989 members in 1989 and 92.

<sup>2</sup> Bird replaced Pitt in 1987.

<sup>3</sup> Pitt died in 1987. Faith stood down in 1989. Cyril was elected to the House of Commons in 1987 and stood down in 1989. Huchford was re-elected in 1989. Kiley was defeated in 1989.

Not included: Committee on Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs, and Committee on Verification of Credentials.

'choice' committees (that is, those at the top end of the composite committee stratification), particularly in those with high, or potentially high, profiles (above all, Political Affairs, Agriculture, Budgets).

Table 17 tests this thesis by displaying the relative incidence of exceptional MEP assignments, expressed as a percentage of all assignments of 1979 UK MEPs, to the 18 parliamentary committees. Although in the case of some committees the expected incidences are slight, the overall impression is of a strong degree of correlation.

Exceptional MEPs have been consistently over-represented in the Political Affairs Committee, where the Whips' (and the MEPs') logic is easily imaginable, for it has always been the quintessential committee of the political 'big guns'<sup>41</sup>. Although still evident, the correlation has been less strong in the cases of the Agriculture and Economic and Monetary Affairs Committees. In the case of the Agriculture Committee, exceptional MEPs were even initially under-represented but, since 1984, have taken a disproportionately high number of assignments.<sup>42</sup> In the case of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee, a slight initial over-representation gave way to under- or average representation until 1987, when exceptional MEPs were

---

<sup>41</sup> Even more so now that it has been transformed, along Congress lines, into a 'Foreign Affairs Committee'.

<sup>42</sup> A probable explanation, in the Whips' (at least the EDG Whip's) logic is easily imaginable; in those first four years, the Committee was chaired by Sir (Lord) Henry Plumb and then by David Curry and was probably regarded as being in 'safe hands' and its membership less in need of bolstering up.



again just slightly over-represented. The chief explanatory factor here was the significant number of individuals with distinguished business careers<sup>43</sup> among the EDG membership.

The thesis was not at all true of the Development Committee where, on the contrary, for ten years exceptional MEPs were under-represented. This result is initially puzzling, since the Development Committee has generally been considered as being among the Parliament's more important committees and was certainly highly ranked by 1983 UK MEPs. Once again, the probable explanation is linked to the high incidence of exceptional MEPs among the EDG, and the Group's Whips' perceptions of which committees most required a large number of experienced or distinguished UK members. That is to say, first, that the Development Committee was a far more attractive assignment among Labour MEPs (with few exceptional MEPs among their ranks) and, second, the other larger committees were potentially more important in terms of EP-UK government relations, and therefore more deserving of prestige assignments in the eyes of the EDG Whip.

In the case of the last two larger committees, Environment and Budgets, there was a high incidence of exceptional MEPs but only in certain periods. The most probable explanatory factor in both cases is, as has already been intuited, the historical/political context. Thus, exceptional UK MEPs were over-represented in the

---

<sup>43</sup> For example, Sir Fred Catherwood, Sir Jack Stewart-Clark.

Budgets Committee during the period of the UK Government's struggle to win a more equitable budgetary mechanism to govern British payments to and receipts from the Community budget. Having been consistently under-represented, and in two years entirely absent, in the Environment Committee in the period 1979-1989, exceptional MEPs have since been heavily over-represented. The sudden importance of environmental matters as reflected in the showing of the Green Party in the 1989 UK European Election has already been mentioned. Once again, the Whips' logic seems clear and, in overall terms, consistent: those committees perceived as being politically important attract disproportionately high numbers of assignments of exceptional MEPs.

The statistics in **Table 17** strongly support the second, more negative thesis about exceptional MEPs; they have indeed been almost entirely absent from the neutralised committees. The one exception has been the Institutional Affairs Committee; in all other years exceptional MEPs were entirely absent, but in 1987 three of the six 1979 UK MEPs were from the exceptional category (and one of the others was (Sir) Christopher Prout). This concentration, which disappeared as suddenly as it had appeared, came in the immediate aftermath of the Single European Act. The important role of the Institutional Affairs Committee in the run-up to the SEA has already been mentioned. The anomalous figure for 1987 might represent a reaction to the SEA;

whatever, two-and-a-half years later, all exceptional MEPs quit the committee. Most other 'highs' in Table 17 are distortionate results of the low figures involved.<sup>44</sup> Once again, the relationship between politically important committees and the assignments of exceptional MEPs seems clear. What we cannot know on the basis of these data alone is whether this correlation is simply the result of exceptional MEPs' desires to serve on higher-profile committees, or a more conscious assignment policy on the part of the Whips. The author's (informal and not comprehensive) inquiries suggest a combination of both.

Overall, Table 17 confirms the expectations that the category of exceptional MEPs would enjoy over-representation in the larger committees<sup>45</sup> and would be conspicuous by their absence from the less glamorous, 'neutralised' committees.<sup>46</sup>

#### **b. The 'Freshman' Hypothesis**

A second thesis<sup>47</sup> to be examined concerns the nature of committee assignments to incoming members. Just as the privilege and authority of the exceptional MEPs was expected to result in over-representation in the larger committees, so it could be predicted that

---

<sup>44</sup> For example, the 1992 column for the Social Affairs, Youth, and Women's Affairs Committees

<sup>45</sup> Though this has only consistently been the case with regard to three committees, and was untrue of the Development Committee.

<sup>46</sup> Thus its findings also lend tentative support to the underlying assumption of the composite committee stratification.

<sup>47</sup> Drawing on another theme prevalent in the American literature.

returning incumbent members would enjoy assignment advantages over incoming members elected for the first time. Again, this prediction is based on the implicit assumption of an assignments 'ladder'. In operational terms, the 'freshman' hypothesis would lead us to expect new members to be under-represented among the larger committees, and over-represented on the middle-sized and 'neutralised' committees. Table 17 also tests this hypothesis by displaying the number of new members on each committee, expressed as a percentage of the total number of UK members on each committee.

In the case of the Political Affairs Committee the hypothesis is entirely borne out. New UK members elected in 1984 did not achieve proportionate representation on the Committee until 1989, and 1989 members didn't achieve proportionate representation until 1992.<sup>48</sup>

The hypothesis also holds true for the Agriculture Committee; 1984 members achieved proportionate representation in 1987, and 1989 members' numbers rose towards a more proportionate figure in 1992. However, having once gained proportionate representation, the number of 1984 MEPs promptly dropped off in 1989, and again in 1992. This suggests either that the Committee was perceived as being of diminished importance by the 1984 generation, or that the 1979 intake perceived it as being of particular importance. In fact, the latter would appear to have been the case. Of the seven 1979 UK

---

<sup>48</sup> In other words, 1979 members continued to enjoy a disproportionately high number of assignments to the committee until 1992.

MEPs assigned to the committee in 1989, four were farmers<sup>49</sup>, and three had large and important agricultural interests in their constituencies.<sup>50</sup>

The hypothesis also held true for the Budgets Committee, where the 1984 intake gained a proportionate number of committee assignments by 1987, and the 1989 intake by 1992.

On the other hand, the hypothesis was largely untrue of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee, where the 1984 intake immediately enjoyed a proportionate number of committee assignments, and the 1989 intake was immediately over-represented. Nor does the assignments record of the Development Committee support the thesis for 1984 members, although it does for the 1989 intake. Lastly, the 1984 intake has been consistently over-represented in the Environment Committee. This phenomenon could perhaps best be explained by the committee's perceived lack of importance before 1989 and sudden political importance thereafter, particularly among Labour members. Indeed, six of the seven members of the 1984 intake assigned to the committee were Labour and, even more convincingly, all four of the 1989 assignment were Labour.

The figures in **Table 17** would appear to support the hypothesis in relation to all the medium-sized committees, with the two exceptions of the Energy Committee (immediate proportionate representation) and

---

<sup>49</sup> Howell, Plumb, Scott-Hopkins and Simmonds.

<sup>50</sup> Ewing, Hume and Paisley.

the Legal Affairs Committee (1984 intake under-represented until 1989). A probable explanation for the Energy Committee relates to its particularly marked character as a specialised committee.<sup>51</sup>

The thesis is also borne out in relation to the 'neutralised' committees, with the exception of the Rules Committee for the 1984 intake (no representation at all until 1987), and the Institutional Affairs Committee, again in relation to the 1984 intake. It seems likely that a common explanation lies behind the three exceptions of the Legal Affairs, Rules and Institutional Affairs Committees. For example, there might have been a feeling among the Group Whips that these committees required a degree of in-house experience and that the number of freshmen assigned to them should be kept low. However, if that was the case, the Whips had changed their minds by 1989.

In conclusion, the 'freshman' hypothesis is largely borne out by the freshman assignment records since 1984<sup>52</sup> among all three categories of committee in the composite stratification.

### **c. Stratification and Movement**

A third hypothesis to be examined is the dynamic linked to committee stratification.<sup>53</sup> In particular, we

---

<sup>51</sup> It will be considered further in Section v.d in relation to specialisation among MEPs.

<sup>52</sup> But with significant exceptions, which seem largely explicable on the basis of specific circumstances.

<sup>53</sup> Again, a prevalent theme in the American literature.

would expect to see members' assignments moving 'up' the committee stratification, from the medium-sized to the larger committees. At the same time, we would expect those immediately assigned to the larger committees to hold onto their assignment status by either keeping their initial assignment, or by moving sideways to another larger committee. By the same token, we would not expect to see movement 'down' the stratification, but perhaps a 'bubbling about' at the higher level. Or, alternatively, if such downward movement is observed, we would expect to find specific explanations for each such movement.

Two caveats have to be entered. The first is that the examination will again be restricted to the 30 'survivors' of the 1979 intake. It is simply too early to discern any dynamic assignment patterns among the 1984 and 1989 intakes. On the other hand, the period 1979 to 1992 gives a good 'spread' that includes six new assignment processes. A second caveat is that, as was explained in **Section 1**, a parliamentary career cannot be limited only to committee assignments. Appointments to hierarchical positions within the Parliament, its political groups, its delegations, and even its inter-groups may be of equivalent if not greater importance to the dynamics of a politician's career. By narrowly focussing on committee assignments, the study may be missing significant hierarchical appointments, whether

horizontal or vertical. This is particularly true of the exceptional MEPs.<sup>54</sup>

Turning first to the ten survivors of the 24 exceptional MEPs, it can be seen that 9 of the 10 consistently enjoyed assignments to at least one of the six larger committees, and were virtually absent from the 'neutralised' committees. Of the two exceptions, Madron Seligman (who, with his unbroken 1979-1992 stint of service on the Energy Committee clearly corresponds to the category of 'niche' politician) was twice assigned as a Committee Vice-Chairman.

But the most striking feature in Table 16 is that nine of the ten MEPs enjoyed at least one consistent committee specialisation. The exception, Lord O'Hagan, has specialised in the Social Affairs Committee since 1987. In some cases (for example, Sir Fred Catherwood, Winifred Ewing, Sir (Lord) Henry Plumb, Sir James Scott-Hopkins), shifts or breaks occurred in these specialisations and it is clear they were the result of assignments to hierarchical positions in other committees. This generalised phenomenon of what might be termed assignment inertia meant that there was little sign of the 'bubbling about' at the top that had been predicted. There were two exceptions; Lord O'Hagan and Sir James Scott-Hopkins. The latter was apparently able to shift assignments with ease in 1989 from two of the

---

<sup>54</sup> The analysis reported here is based on the data contained in Table 16.



six larger committees to two others (Political Affairs and Budgets, to Agriculture and Environment).

Sir James Scott-Hopkins' assignment record also displays the phenomenon of two parallel committee specialisations, shared with just one other exceptional MEP, John Hume (Regional Affairs and Agriculture). All the others seem to have been assigned almost randomly to secondary committees; perhaps this was the Whips' quid pro quo for continued specialisation.<sup>55</sup>

In the case of the surviving 20 non-exceptional MEPs, the picture is more complex, but there is some evidence of a dynamic assignment process. In the first place, seven of these MEPs were already assigned in 1979 to one of the six larger committees. Of these, only two<sup>56</sup> have since served uninterruptedly on the same committee. Paul Howell still sits on the same committee (Agriculture), but has not served uninterruptedly. Two<sup>57</sup> shifted to another of the larger committees in 1982 and have since served uninterruptedly. Two<sup>58</sup> 'bubbled about' before settling down to committee specialisations. In short, three of the seven have specialised since 1979, two since 1982, and two since 1984.

A further five MEPs' assignment records displayed no movement 'up' in terms of the composite

---

<sup>55</sup> The phenomenon of committee specialisation will be considered further below.

<sup>56</sup> Ken Collins, Environment, and Alf Lomas, Political Affairs.

<sup>57</sup> Richard Balfe, Budgets to Political Affairs, and Christopher Jackson, Political Affairs to Development.

<sup>58</sup> Bill Newton-Dunn and Richard Simmonds.

stratification<sup>59</sup>, but all have enjoyed important group or committee hierarchical positions and four (the exception being Welsh) have displayed strong committee specialisations. (Indeed, Welsh was the only MEP among the 20 who has not displayed consistent committee specialisation.)

The assignment records of 8 MEPs show evidence of the hypothesised movement 'up' the committee stratification. The most significant movements occurred in 1982<sup>60</sup>, with the big explosion in group assignment patronage occasioned by the introduction of formal substitute membership. Two others occurred in 1984.<sup>61</sup>

In fact, as the data in Table 16 shows, the introduction of substitute membership didn't only expand the 'kitty' of political group patronage but also added a more complex aspect to the structure of committee stratification by introducing an intermediate gradation in committee membership, and gave the Group Whips additional flexibility in the assignment process. Thus, moves 'up' to one of the larger six committees might first have involved the intermediate status of substitute membership, as was indeed the case for four of the eight MEPs whose assignment records did display the expected dynamic<sup>62</sup>.

---

<sup>59</sup> Tom Megahy, James Moorhouse, Sir Christopher Prout, Amédée Turner, and Michael Welsh.

<sup>60</sup> Gordon Adam, Peter Beazley, Derek Prag, Peter Price, Barry Seal and Anthony Simpson

<sup>61</sup> Janey Buchan and Ben Patterson.

<sup>62</sup> Gordon Adam, Budgets; Derek Prag, Political Affairs; Barry Seal, Economic and Monetary Affairs; Anthony Simpson, Political Affairs

Other variations of the substitute/full membership mix were apparent; for example, the slow rise to full membership.<sup>63</sup> Another discernible variation was for well-established full members to shift to substitute membership, whilst keeping their specialisation.<sup>64</sup> Presumably, shifting to substitute membership in this way allows the Whips to assign full membership to new blood. Another variation is alternate full and substitute membership<sup>65</sup>. Presumably, such alternate assignments enable members to retain their specialisations, while allowing the Whips more flexibility on assignments to over-subscribed committees. Lastly, some members have consistently enjoyed full membership status in one committee, and apparently random assignments to other committees<sup>66</sup>. As was earlier remarked in relation to the same phenomenon among several exceptional MEPs, random secondary assignments are probably the Whips' quid pro quo for consistent full membership committee assignments.

#### d. Committee Specialisation

---

<sup>63</sup> For example, Richard Balfe, who was a substitute member of the Political Affairs Committee from 1982 to 1988, and has been a full member since.

<sup>64</sup> For example, Alf Lomas was a full member of the Political Affairs Committee from 1979 to 1988, and has since been a substitute member. Similarly, Amédée Turner was a full member of the Energy Committee from 1984 to 1988, and has since been a substitute member.

<sup>65</sup> For example, Christopher Jackson was assigned as a full member of the Development Committee in 1982, 1984, and 1989, and as a substitute member in 1987 and 1992. Similarly, James Moorhouse was assigned to the Transport Committee as a full member in 1979, 1982, and 1987, and as a substitute member in 1984, 1989, and 1992.

<sup>66</sup> For example, Ken Collins and the Environment Committee.

One of the most evident generalised phenomena among the 30 surviving UK MEPs from the 1979 intake has been specialisation in membership of at least one committee. Only one MEP (Michael Welsh) has not yet displayed any such specialisation (although Lord O'Hagan and Bill Newton-Dunn came relatively late to the phenomenon). Again, several variations on the general theme were discernible.

In the first place, there were those (already referred to) who have consistently specialised in full membership<sup>67</sup>. Another similarly small group of MEPs have consistently specialised in two committees, with full membership of one, and substitute membership of the other<sup>68</sup>. Another, larger, group has similarly specialised in two committees concurrently, but has retained these assignments through a regular mix of full and substitute membership. (The most common 'mix' in terms of the composite stratification among these members was one larger committee and one medium or 'neutralised' committee.) Moreover, more than a dozen of these members displayed brief third committee specialisations; usually, but not necessarily, for the duration of one legislature. Lastly, one MEP, Sir Christopher Prout, has consistently displayed concurrent

---

<sup>67</sup> Ken Collins, Environment; Paul Howell, Agriculture; Barry Seal, Economic and Monetary Affairs.

<sup>68</sup> Gordon Adam - Energy, full, Budgets, substitute; Peter Beazley - Economic and Monetary Affairs, full, REX, substitute; Richard Simmonds - Agriculture, full, Budgetary Control, substitute; and Anthony Simpson - Development, full, Budgetary Control, substitute.

membership of three committees, one medium (Legal Affairs), and two 'neutralised' (Institutional Affairs and Rules). Lest the extent of the phenomenon be doubted, the two MEPs who lost their seats in 1984 and have since been returned to other seats in the European Parliament (Edward Kellett-Bowman and Tom Spencer) have both again taken up their pre-1984 committee specialisations.

Within the general phenomenon, Table 16 displays a particular form of specialisation, in the 'neutralised' committees, specific to Conservative MEPs and almost exclusively concentrated in two committees; the Committee on Budgetary Control, and the Committee on Institutional Affairs. Eight of the 13 surviving Conservative non-exceptional MEPs (nine of the 14 if Edward Kellett-Bowman is included) have displayed specialisations in the 'neutralised' committees.

The Budgetary Control Committee was introduced in 1979 chiefly at the behest of UK Conservative MEPs and it is probable that they have continued to feel a group proprietorial interest in its activities.<sup>69</sup> The Institutional Affairs Committee took on a special importance in the activities that led up to the ratification of the Single European Act<sup>70</sup>, and this would have proved particularly attractive to both the Community enthusiasts and the jurists/constitutionalists within the EDG. For the same reasons, the Committee

---

<sup>69</sup> The ratio of Labour to Conservative members was 1:4 in 1979 and 3:8 in 1984.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, Schmuck, 1989.

would have been fairly unattractive to Labour members, especially in its early (pre-1989) period.<sup>71</sup>

MEPs would probably not remain members of particular committees for very long if they had no interest in those committees' competences and activities. In this sense, substantial interest is the sine qua non of active committee membership, and it is self-evident that such substantial interest is likely to be consistent rather than occasional. On the other hand, there are other plausible reasons why committee specialisation might be so pronounced, particularly specialisation in 'neutralised' committees. Pressure of space in the medium-sized committees and the privileged predominance of the exceptional MEPs in the larger committees are partial explanatory factors. But, as will be seen below, there are also excellent careerist reasons for committee specialisation, even in the 'neutralised' committees; above all, European Parliamentary careers can be made in the 'neutralised' committees.

Sir Christopher Prout provides a good example of just such a career. He was not among the 'exceptional' MEPs elected in 1979, but he had been a barrister and a lecturer in law, and an advisor on EC-related matters. His career has effectively consisted of two parallel tracks. On the one hand, he worked his way up through the EDG hierarchy, starting as a Group Whip. On the

---

<sup>71</sup> Again, the ratio of Labour to Conservative members bears this out; 2:8 in 1982, 2:5 in 1984, 1:7 in 1987.

other, Sir Christopher's specialisation in three committees with closely-related competences (Legal, Institutional, Rules) both built on his previous legal and academic specialisations, and created a new, European Parliament-specific expertise as a Community constitutionalist. His growing stature within his Group and his growing stature within the Parliament (lawyers and constitutionalists frequently command cross-Group respect) made him an obvious choice (both within his Group and within the Parliament) for the important role of Parliament's rapporteur on the major overhaul of its rules of procedure following the ratification of the Single European Act, and his successful performance in what all agreed to have been a highly complex matter made him a powerful and ultimately successful contender to take over from Lord Plumb as Leader of the EDG when the latter was elected as President of the European Parliament in 1987.

#### **e. Three Seniority Principles**

Although there is no formal, U.S.-style seniority rule<sup>72</sup> at work, this survey of the committee assignment process among UK members of the European Parliament has

---

<sup>72</sup> That is, hierarchical positions going automatically to the longest-serving members.

revealed the existence of no less than three informal seniority principles. First, there is the privilege and authority that flows from external experience or status prior to membership of the European Parliament, as exemplified by the different patronage process applied to a majority of the 24 exceptional MEPs<sup>73</sup>. For a number of reasons<sup>74</sup>, most of the 1979 exceptional MEPs were Conservatives, and few similarly exceptional MEPs have been elected to the European Parliament since 1979. Nevertheless, there is good reason to believe that this seniority principle is generally applicable, and that it will continue to be an important, if reduced, factor in the committee assignment process in regard to 'exceptional' individuals.

A second clearly-discernible principle has been that of seniority in the house. This is the reverse of the 'freshman' hypothesis coin. We have seen that longer-serving members enjoy a disproportionately high degree of representation on what are generally considered to be the larger and perhaps the more glamorous committees, and are under-represented on the four (of the six) less glamorous 'neutralised' committees.

A third principle at work, in some ways similar to that governing appointments to Committee posts in the

---

<sup>73</sup> Which, as will be seen, applies also to appointment to committee leadership positions.

<sup>74</sup> As was seen, chief among them were the Labour Party's ban on Commons or Lords dual mandates and the Conservative Party's concern to inject some experience into its first directly-elected European Parliament delegation.



U.S. Congress, is that of length of service on a committee. The old adage about possession being nine-tenths of the law is of particular application here, and goes some way towards explaining the particularly pronounced phenomenon of committee specialisation. At least as far as British members of the Parliament are concerned, prior membership of a committee is the best possible guarantee of future membership of that committee, or of a committee of like standing. Membership can thus be seen as a form of bargaining chip, whereby the incumbent of any particular assignment can only be moved on if he or she receives an equivalent assignment. But there is another, more directly career-related, reason for committee specialisation.

#### **f. The 'Collins/Price' Phenomenon**

The phenomenon has herein been dubbed the 'Collins/Price' phenomenon because the parliamentary careers of these two MEPs from the 1979 UK intake provide classic examples of the process involved. Both MEPs have built up specialisations through constant service on particular committees.<sup>75</sup> Both were immediately appointed to hierarchical positions within their respective committees.<sup>76</sup> Both were later stood down but remained full members of their respective

---

<sup>75</sup> In Peter Price's case, through two complementary committees, Budgetary Control and Budgets.

<sup>76</sup> Ken Collins was Chairman of the Environment Committee, Peter Price was Vice-Chairman of the Budgetary Control Committee.

specialised committees. Both committees grew in importance over the first decade of the directly-elected Parliament. Both MEPs were appointed/elected as Chairmen of their respective committees in 1989.<sup>77</sup>

It should be stressed at the outset that political ability and skills are indispensable prerequisites for such appointments, and what follows is not intended to denigrate or devalue these qualities in the two parliamentarians concerned, nor indeed in any other parliamentarians who have occupied or currently occupy hierarchical positions within committees. To understand the phenomenon requires a brief explanation of the way in which Committee chairmanships and vice-chairmanships are decided<sup>78</sup>. As was seen, the 'possession' of these positions is a function of the numerical strength of the political groups within the parliament and of the national contingents within the groups.

In 1989, the Labour contingent was the largest contingent within the Socialist group, which was the largest group within the Parliament. As largest group, the Socialist Group had first choice of Committee chairmanship and, as largest contingent within the Group, the British Labour contingent had first choice of what that committee would be.<sup>79</sup>

---

<sup>77</sup> Price has since reverted to being a simple full member of the Budgetary Control Committee. Collins remains Chairman of the Environment Committee.

<sup>78</sup> A full explanation of the process is provided below.

<sup>79</sup> The exact 'quotas' of the Group, and of the contingent within the Group, being calculated by the d'Hondt system of proportional representation.

Collins' chairmanship depended first, then, on his membership of the largest Group within the Parliament and, second, on his membership of the largest national contingent within that Group. In the third place, it depended on the EPLP's identification of what it considered to be the most salient committee.<sup>80</sup> In the fourth place, Ken Collins' election could be said to have depended on the Green Party's performance in the European election.

In the fifth place, he owed his election to his previous and continued membership of the Environment Committee. As Table 16 shows, Collins was the only Labour member of the 1979 UK intake assigned to the Committee.<sup>81</sup> When, therefore, the EPLP came to consider who, from among its membership of the Environment Committee, it would nominate as candidate for the Chairmanship of the Committee, Collins was the obvious and, indeed, the only choice. He had been a full member of the Committee from 1979 onwards. He was a former Chairman and Vice-Chairman. He had incomparable experience of the Parliament and of the Committee and its subject matter. Given all these considerations, once the choice of committee had been decided, his selection and election was virtually a foregone conclusion.

---

<sup>80</sup> As has been pointed out above, the Labour Party was shocked by the sudden showing of the British Green Party in the 1989 UK European election and determined to respond rapidly to the UK electorate's sudden concern.

<sup>81</sup> Four Tory 1979 members, and one Tory 1984 member were assigned to the Committee. The other nine UK members of the Committee were either 1984- or 1989-elected Labour members.

Much the same process applied in Peter Price's election to the chairmanship of the Budgetary Control Committee. By 1989, the EDG's numerical strength meant that it was no longer in a position<sup>82</sup> to choose one of the more prestigious of Parliament's committees. Nevertheless, the d'Hondt system still gave it the right to a committee chairmanship. A calculation then took place within the Group's leadership as to which committee chairmanship it most realistically stood a chance of obtaining. The choice fell on the Budgetary Control Committee; a 'neutralised', relatively low-ranking committee but, as has been seen, one of growing importance and of proprietorial interest to British Conservative members. By 1989 the EDG had only four members of the committee (as opposed to the EPLP's eight). Two of these were Price's contemporaries but, although a committee stalwart, Edward Kellett-Bowman had been out of the Parliament for two years, and Simmonds had only been a committee member since 1984. Besides, the only contemporary who could have compared with Price's experience as a former Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Bob Battersby (who had been a continuous member from 1979 to 1989 and a Vice-Chairman from 1984 to 1989), had lost his seat in 1989. Thus, in opting for the chairmanship of the Budgetary Control Committee, the EDG was effectively opting for Peter Price's chairmanship.

---

<sup>82</sup>As it had been in 1979 and 1982 with the Agriculture Committee.

Running counter to this 'Collins/Price' phenomenon is the privileged role of the exceptional MEPs.<sup>83</sup> Nevertheless, a steady diminution in the number of exceptional MEPs among the UK membership has been accompanied by a growing number of examples of the phenomenon at work.<sup>84</sup>

### C. Appointment to Committee Chairmanships and Vice-Chairmanships

#### i. Theory and Practice

---

<sup>83</sup> For example, having never previously been a member, Sir Fred Catherwood was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Political Affairs (now the Foreign Affairs) Committee in 1992. Similarly, having never previously been a member, Winifred Ewing was in 1984 appointed Chairman of the Youth Committee, and in 1989, having never previously been a member, Sir James Scott-Hopkins was appointed a Vice-Chairman of the Environment Committee.

<sup>84</sup> A non-exhaustive list would include Gordon Adam's 1984-1992 appointment as Vice-Chairman of the Energy Committee, Peter Beazley's 1984-1989 stint as Vice-Chairman of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee, David Curry's 1982 election as Henry Plumb's replacement as Chairman of the Agriculture Committee, James Moorhouse's 1989 appointment as a Vice-Chairman of the REX Committee, Ben Patterson's appointment as a Vice-Chairman of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee in 1992, Derek Prag's appointment as a Vice-Chairman of the Institutional Affairs Committee in 1989 and again in 1992, Sir Christopher Prout's appointment as Chairman of the Committee on the Verification of Credentials in 1982, Barry Seal's 1984 appointment as Chairman and 1987 appointment as Vice-Chairman of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee, and Madron Seligman's appointment as Vice-Chairman of the Energy Committee in 1982 and again in 1984. Neither last nor least, such a list would include Amédée Turner's 1992 appointment as Chairman of the new Committee on Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs (Turner having specialised consistently in the Legal Affairs Committee).

Typically, a committee's hierarchy will consist of a chairman and three chairmen<sup>85</sup>. In theory, chairmen and vice-chairmen are elected from among the membership of their committees, and serve for a period of two-and-a-half years. Together, a committee's chairman and vice-chairmen constitute its bureau. In terms of role and powers, committee chairmen are pre-eminent. Vice-chairmen may enjoy external prestige. Their chief internal role is to replace an absent chairman in meetings or represent the chairman at other events. Vice-chairmen are ranked.<sup>86</sup> Committee bureaux have no rule-based, defined role. In most committees they have fallen into disuse<sup>87</sup> and are in any case of far less importance than the increasingly formal meetings of the political group committee coordinators.<sup>88</sup>

Parliament's Rules of Procedure provide that the President and Vice-Presidents shall be elected in separate, secret ballots, by absolute majorities of the votes cast.<sup>89</sup> However, in practice, as has already been

---

<sup>85</sup> Though Rule 115 speaks only of "one, two or three vice-chairmen".

<sup>86</sup> The only apparent functional purpose of this ranking (presumably, a first vice-chairman would enjoy slightly more prestige than a third vice-chairman) is to decide in which order the two or three should replace the chairman. However, since absentee committee chairmen are rare in the Parliament, the distinction is largely academic. (There can in any case be little practical distinction between a second and third vice-chairman. Moreover, an informal convention would appear to have developed whereby in their relations with the public, Vice-Presidents make no mention of their rank.)

<sup>87</sup> Though committee chairmen will consult their bureaux on important or sensitive issues.

<sup>88</sup> See Section 9.iii.b) above.

<sup>89</sup> Rule 115: "1. At the first committee meeting after the election of committee members pursuant to Rule 110, the committee shall elect a Bureau consisting of a chairman and one, two or three vice-chairmen who shall be elected in separate ballots. 2. Without prejudice to the second subparagraph of this paragraph, the Bureau

intimated, the selection/election of committee office-holders is almost always the result of a prior arrangement between all the mainstream political groups. First, on the basis of their d'Hondt- calculated strengths, the political groups 'choose' their committees. Second, on the basis of their numerical strengths, the national contingents within the political groups choose their preferred committees. Lastly, the national contingents choose preferred chairmen from within their ranks.<sup>90</sup>

The joint term 'selection/election' was used advisedly above, for the decisions in committee necessitated by the rules are almost always a formality, and more often than not candidates are elected by

---

shall be elected by secret ballot without discussion. Its election shall require an absolute majority of the votes cast; where, however, a second ballot proves to be necessary, a relative majority shall suffice."

<sup>90</sup> "In practice all these positions are divided by agreement among the Political Groups on the basis of the number of members within each Group. The actual allocation is determined by the d'Hondt system of proportional representation, whereby groups choose which committees to chair in an order determined by the size of the Group. In 1989, for example, the Socialist Group with 180 members had the right to the first, third, fifth and seventh choices, etc., the Group of the European People's Party with 121 members to the second and fourth choices etc., the Liberals with 49 members to the sixth and sixteenth choices, etc." (Jacobs and Corbett, 1990: 96) As was explained in Section C.v.f (the 'Collins/Price' phenomenon), a similar process then occurs within each group. "Once a chairmanship has been allocated to a particular Group the actual choice of chairman also depends on a number of factors, such as the need to take into account size of the national delegations within a Group, and the experience and expertise of their individual candidates...Another key factor is the previous distribution of posts. If a national delegation within a Political Group has already provided a President, Vice-President or Quaestor of Parliament, or the chairmanship of their Political Group, their chances of gaining a major committee chairmanship may diminish since other delegations must also get their turn." (Jacobs and Corbett, 1990: 97)

acclamation.<sup>91</sup> Exceptions, where 'official' candidates have been contested, have been very rare.

**ii. The Appointment Records of the 'Exceptional' MEPs**

We have seen how the exceptional MEPs maintained over-representation in the larger committees and under-representation in most of the medium and 'neutralised' committees throughout the whole of the period under examination. It might be supposed, then, that they had enjoyed a similarly privileged role in relation to appointments to committee hierarchical offices.

Table 18 shows all UK committee chairmen and vice-chairmen since 1979. The data bears out the supposition, but only for the first period, from 1979 to 1982.<sup>92</sup> In 1982, exceptional MEPs occupied only four of the UK membership's 14 committee leadership positions.<sup>93</sup> In

---

<sup>91</sup> As provided for in the 'second subparagraph of Rule 115(2); "If the number of nominations corresponds to the number of seats to be filled, the candidate or candidates may be declared elected without holding the ballot referred to in the first subparagraph."

<sup>92</sup> The 24 'exceptional' MEPs represented 30 per cent of the total UK membership of 81, and yet they enjoyed 45 per cent of all committee leadership appointments, and 62 per cent of all Conservative committee leadership appointments.

<sup>93</sup> i.e., 29 per cent, or 36 per cent of all Conservative committee leadership positions.



Table 10

UK COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND VICE CHAIRMEN,  
1979-1982

(Year of intake in brackets)

YEAR	CHAIRMEN	VICE CHAIRMEN
1979	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Sir Henry PLUMB (79)</li> <li>· Agriculture</li> <li>· Ken COLLINS (79)</li> <li>· Environment</li> <li>· Sir Fred CATHERWOOD (79)</li> <li>· External Economic Relations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Lord BETHELL (79)</li> <li>· Political Affairs</li> <li>· Basil DE FERRANTI (79)</li> <li>· Economic and Monetary</li> <li>· Stanley JOHNSON (79)</li> <li>· Environment</li> <li>· Barry SEAL (79)</li> <li>· External Economic Relations</li> <li>· Amédée TURNER (79)</li> <li>· Legal Affairs</li> <li>· Michael GALLAGHER (79)</li> <li>· Energy</li> <li>· Tom NORMANTON (79)</li> <li>· Energy</li> <li>· Peter PRICE (79)</li> <li>· Budgetary Control</li> </ul>
1982	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· David CURRY (79)</li> <li>· Agriculture</li> <li>· Ken COLLINS (79)</li> <li>· Environment</li> <li>· Sir Fred CATHERWOOD (79)</li> <li>· External Economic Relations</li> <li>· Sir Christopher PROUT (79)</li> <li>· Credentials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Adam FERGUSSON (79)</li> <li>· Political Affairs</li> <li>· William HOPPER (79)</li> <li>· Economic and Monetary</li> <li>· Stanley JOHNSON (79)</li> <li>· Environment</li> <li>· Amédée TURNER (79)</li> <li>· Legal Affairs</li> <li>· Michael GALLAGHER (79)</li> <li>· Energy</li> <li>· Madelon SELIGMAN (79)</li> <li>· Energy</li> <li>· Dame Sheila ROBERTS (79)</li> <li>· Transport</li> <li>· Peter PRICE (79)</li> <li>· Budgetary Control</li> <li>· Tom MCGAHEY (79)</li> <li>· Credentials</li> <li>· Dame Sheila ROBERTS (79)</li> <li>· Women's Rights</li> </ul>

1984	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Barry SEAL (79)</li> <li>· Economic and Monetary</li> <li>· Dame Sheila ROBERTS (79)</li> <li>· External Economic Relations</li> <li>· Michael WELSH (79)</li> <li>· Social Affairs</li> <li>· Winifred EWING (79)</li> <li>· Youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Sir James SCOTT-HOPKINS (79)</li> <li>· Political Affairs</li> <li>· Ken COLLINS (79)</li> <li>· Environment</li> <li>· Peter BEAZLEY (79)</li> <li>· Economic and Monetary</li> <li>· David CURRY (79)</li> <li>· Budgets</li> <li>· John DE COURCY LING (79)</li> <li>· Development</li> <li>· Gordon ADAM (79)</li> <li>· Energy</li> <li>· Madelon SELIGMAN (79)</li> <li>· Robert BATTERSBY (79)</li> <li>· Budgetary Control</li> </ul>
1987	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Baroness ELLES (79)</li> <li>· Legal Affairs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Michael HINDLEY (84)</li> <li>· External Economic Relations</li> <li>· Eddie NEWMAN (84)</li> <li>· Regional Affairs</li> <li>· Les HUCKFIELD (84)</li> <li>· Transport</li> <li>· David MARTIN (84)</li> <li>· Budgetary Control</li> <li>· Christine CRAWLEY (84)</li> <li>· Women's Rights</li> <li>· Geoffrey HOON (84)</li> <li>· Credentials</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Michael MCGOWAN (84)</li> <li>· Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Sir Peter VANECK (79)</li> <li>· Political Affairs</li> <li>· Barry SEAL (79)</li> <li>· Economic and Monetary</li> <li>· Peter BEAZLEY (79)</li> <li>· Economic and Monetary</li> <li>· Sir James SCOTT-HOPKINS (79)</li> <li>· Budgets</li> <li>· Robert BATTERSBY (79)</li> <li>· Budgetary Control</li> <li>· Gordon ADAM (79)</li> <li>· Energy</li> <li>· Margaret DALY (84)</li> <li>· Development</li> <li>· Christine CRAWLEY (84)</li> <li>· Women's Rights</li> </ul>

1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Ken COLLINS (79)</li> <li>· Environment</li> <li>· Peter PRICE (79)</li> <li>· Budgetary Control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Sir James SCOTT-HOPKINS (79)</li> <li>· Environment</li> <li>· Michael WELSH (79)</li> <li>· Budgets</li> <li>· James MOORHOUSE (79)</li> <li>· External Economic Relations</li> <li>· Gordon ADAM (79)</li> <li>· Energy</li> <li>· Derek PRAG (79)</li> <li>· Institutional</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Christine CRAWLEY (84)</li> <li>· Women's Rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Peter CRAWFORD (89)</li> <li>· Political Affairs</li> <li>· Lyndon HARRISON (89)</li> <li>· Rules</li> </ul>
1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Ken COLLINS (79)</li> <li>· Environment</li> <li>· Amédée TURNER (79)</li> <li>· Civil Liberties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Sir Fred CATHERWOOD (79)</li> <li>· Foreign (Political) Affairs</li> <li>· Ben PATTERSON (79)</li> <li>· Economic and Monetary</li> <li>· Gordon ADAM (79)</li> <li>· Energy</li> <li>· Derek PRAG (79)</li> <li>· Institutional Affairs</li> <li>· Hugh McLAUGH (84)</li> <li>· Social Affairs</li> <li>· Christine CRAWLEY (84)</li> <li>· Women's Rights</li> <li>· Peter CRAWFORD (89)</li> <li>· Political Affairs</li> <li>· Wayne DAVIS (89)</li> <li>· Regional Affairs</li> </ul>

Source: drawn from European Parliament (Grey Lists).

1984, there were just four exceptional MEPs occupying such positions (out of a total of 18); in 1987, three (out of 10); and in 1989 and 1992, just one (out of 10 in both years).

The strength of the 1979 finding should not be underestimated, particularly if it is recalled that in the first directly-elected Parliament there were both less committees and less committee positions. What, then, happened in 1982? It is at this juncture that the caveat about too narrow a focus becomes pertinent. If the field of inquiry were broadened to include such matters as Group/Contingent leadership (Plumb and Castle, for example), delegation positions and Parliamentary positions (particularly Vice-Presidents), then the apparent decline in privilege would be less clear. (Nevertheless, relative decline would still have been discernible.) The second explanatory factor is the relatively high concentration of exceptional MEPs among the Conservatives, and the sharp declines in Conservative numbers in 1984 and 1989.<sup>94</sup>

The conclusion must partly be that an apparently privileged role for exceptional MEPs was soon obscured by the decline in their number, and in the overall number of Conservative MEPs, together with a steady increase in the number of Labour MEPs. Nevertheless, there is also some evidence to suggest that the non-

---

<sup>94</sup> In 1979, of the 11 UK committee chairmen and vice-chairmen, 8 were Conservative, and 3 Labour. In 1984, the Conservatives still had 8 such positions, but Labour members occupied 9 (and Winifred Ewing another). By 1992, Labour occupied 6 such positions to the Conservative's 4.

exceptional MEPs soon began to encroach on the privileged role of their exceptional peers. Here, the explanatory factor is bound up with the 'Collins/Price' phenomenon; that is, since the exceptional MEPs were highly over-represented on the few larger committees (where the premium on leadership positions was higher), the non-exceptional MEPs were obliged to specialise in the larger number of medium and 'neutralised' committees, where there was a lower premium on a larger number of positions.<sup>95</sup> Put another way, the exceptional MEPs' disproportionate membership of the more glamorous committees prevented them from occupying more committee chairmanships and vice-chairmanships.

### **iii) The 'Freshman' Hypothesis Again**

We have seen how new members tended to be initially under-represented on the committees higher-placed in the composite stratification and over-represented on the lower-placed committees. Intuitively, we would expect the same process to hold true for appointments to committee chairmanships and vice-chairmanships, and this has indeed been the case, but has only really been apparent since 1989. Table 18 shows that, of the 18 chairmanships and vice-chairmanships occupied by UK members in 1984, six went to members elected for the first time in 1984 (all of them Labour) which

---

<sup>95</sup> Hence, for example, (Sir) Christopher Prout's early chairmanship of the small and neutralised Committee on the Verification of Credentials.

corresponded almost exactly to the 1984 intake's 'entitlement'. Again, in 1987, 1984 intake MEPs occupied three of the 10 UK posts, roughly equivalent to their proportion of the total UK membership.

But in the squeeze on the occupancy of such positions occasioned by the arrival of a large number of new MEPs (principally Labour) in 1989, the 1979 intake held onto 6 of the 10 positions, leaving just 2 each for the 1984 and the 1989 intakes. Although by 1992 there were just 32<sup>96</sup> surviving UK MEPs from the 1979 intake (about 40 per cent), 1979 intake MEPs accounted for 6 of the 10 UK committee chairmanships and vice-chairmanships (i.e., 60 per cent).

#### **d. Inter-Parliamentary Delegations and Delegation Positions**

The European Parliament's inter-parliamentary delegations were originally established "to enable Parliament to increase international awareness of its work and keep suitably abreast of progress when negotiations were taking place between the Commission and third countries or regional groups..." (European Parliament, 1989: 199), but their main task now is "to consolidate inter-parliamentary relations" (*Ibid.*).

Exactly the same assignment procedures apply, mutatis mutandis to delegation membership as for committee membership, and delegations have the same

---

<sup>96</sup> This including Kellett-Bowman and Spencer.

hierarchical structure (that is, one chairman and three vice-chairmen) and selection/election procedures.

Whatever the functional justification for the inter-parliamentary delegations, and whatever the practical reason for appointing three or four officers per delegation, it is clear that their existence provides further patronage capital for the political groups. As with the committee assignment 'currency', there have been distinct signs of inflation<sup>97</sup> and, again, whatever the underlying substantial policy reasons, the inexorable increase in the number of delegations has continually added to the contents of the patronage purse.

#### **e) Other Potentially Career-Related Positions**

##### **i. 'Niche' Politicians**

In effect, the hidden hand of the three informal seniority principles, together with that of the 'Collins/Price' phenomenon, has made virtually every surviving UK MEP from the 1979 intake into a 'niche' politician of some sort. The tendency is reinforced by two further generalised, principles. One, already encountered, is that success begets success.<sup>98</sup> The

---

<sup>97</sup> In 1979, there were two joint parliamentary committees, and the EC-ACP Parliamentary Assembly. By 1983, there were, in addition, 20 Inter-Parliamentary delegations. In September, 1992, there were four joint parliamentary committees and 26 Inter-Parliamentary delegations. National contingents' 'quotas' of hierarchical positions increased accordingly. In 1979, there were two UK Vice-Chairmen. In 1983, there were 4 Chairmen and 9 Vice-Chairmen, and by 1992 4 Chairmen and 11 Vice-Chairmen.

<sup>98</sup> Or, perhaps more aptly, that in the absence of failure, success, or competence at least, is assumed.

second, similar, principle is that specialisation begets specialisation. The longer a member follows a particular committee or occupies a certain post, the more expert he or she becomes. The more expert he or she is, the more difficult it becomes for the assigner(s) to dislodge the member from his or her 'niche'.

All of this raises the question as to whether such assignment inertia is a generalised phenomenon in parliamentary committees or particular to the European Parliament. Unfortunately, there are few studies of any other parliamentary assemblies which might enable any valid comparisons to be made; the American case is excluded because of the explicit seniority principle at work in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

The rise of committee specialisation in the directly-elected Parliament can be contrasted with the lack of such specialisation in its nominated predecessor. In 1979, for example, Hagger and Wing sounded a note of alarm. Basing themselves on Polsby's concept of 'institutionalisation', and arguing in particular that "the existence of a stable, experienced, and expert membership increases the efficacy of the committee as an instrument of innovation and control" (126), their study found that "European Parliament committees appear(ed) not to show the level of membership stability that is conducive to the development of such efficacy." (*ibid.*) Whatever the teleological weaknesses of Polsby's theory, and the

erroneousness of Hagger and Wing's comparison<sup>99</sup>, it is clear that post-direct election membership of the European Parliament's committees has displayed a higher degree of stabilisation.<sup>100</sup>

This examination of the committee assignment process has been narrow in its scope; in particular, committee specialisation has been considered almost exclusively as a strategy for advancement, although it might also be a strategy for enhancement, and no attempt has been made to draw a line between the contented backbencher, happy with expertise in a particular field, and the ambitious achiever<sup>101</sup>, aiming for leadership positions. In empirical terms, it is perhaps impossible to draw such a line. In any case, as this account of the assignment process has shown, members may frequently change from one category to another.

At least as far as the British members of the European Parliament are concerned, there is one other principle at work which runs counter to assignment inertia, and this will be examined in **Section 10** below.

## **ii) Budget, and Other, Rapporteurs**

Having once been assigned to the competent committee by the Enlarged Bureau, responsibility for

---

<sup>99</sup> They cited Fenno's (1973: 112-113) study on the very low levels of turnover in six U.S. Congressional committees, but fail to take the seniority rule into account.

<sup>100</sup> See also Jacobs and Corbett, 1990: 93.

<sup>101</sup> What Wing, Hagger and Atkinson have referred to as the "executive-ambitious politician" - 1980: 12.

reports ('rapporteurships') are assigned to particular political groups through a points system. For most reports, and certainly for all low-profile reports, the political group coordinators in committee distribute rapporteurships among the group's committee members on a consensual basis.

However, in the case of certain higher-profile, and generally recurrent, reports (for example, the agricultural prices package, the Commission's Annual Economic Report), the larger political groups normally work out a multi-annual and rotational distribution of rapporteurships among themselves. This process explains the frequently-observed phenomenon whereby the most obvious candidate for a rapporteurship (say, an individual with a pronounced expertise in the field) is passed over in favour of a more obscure and less expert committee colleague (who happens to belong to the right political group).

A few reports are considered to be of such importance that the distribution of competences is worked out at a high level within the political groups. Incontestably, the annual rapporteurship enjoying the highest profile and importance is that of the following year's budget for the European Community. The role is considered to have a distinguished pedigree, following on from the first post direct elections rapporteur, Piet Dankert, who presided over Parliament's unprecedented rejection of the budget, and has retained its prestige, despite the temporary diminution in the importance of



the budget following the 1988 Inter-Institutional Agreement.

The budget rapporteurship is like no other. If successfully accomplished, it confers a mark of competence and respectability on the individual that can be of great importance to his or her future parliamentary career. To some extent, it reveals the 'success begets success' principle at work.<sup>102</sup>

But the rapporteurship has also led on to greater things. In no small part, Piet Dankert, who is now a Dutch minister, owed his Presidency of the Parliament to his role as budget rapporteur in 1979-1980. Three other budget rapporteurs -Robert Jackson, Efthymios Christodoulou, and David Curry- went on to become ministers, Scrivener became a member of the 1988-1992 Commission, and two others, Von der Vring and Lamassoure, consequently became committee chairmen (of the Budgets Committee and of the Committee on Budgetary Control respectively).

In terms of prestige and influence, only some of the rapporteurships in the temporary committees and committees of inquiry come close to the budget rapporteurship in importance. Thus, for example, it is commonly believed that Glyn Ford's high-profile stance as rapporteur in the first Committee of Inquiry into the Rise of Racism and Xenophobia in the European Community

---

<sup>102</sup> Scrivener (budget for 1984)) and Tomlinson (budget for 1990) had both previously been ministers; Spinelli (appointed for the 1982 budget) had previously been a Commissioner; Adonnino (budget for 1981) was a former Chairman of Italian Radio and Television (RAI); Christodoulou (budget for 1986) had briefly been a Governor and President of the Greek Bank.

greatly contributed to the stature he enjoyed within the BLG/EPLP that led to his election to the leadership of the contingent in 1989. Similarly, Sir Christopher Prout's rapporteurship on the 1986, post-SEA, wholesale rule change is commonly believed to have contributed significantly to the stature he enjoyed within the EDG that enabled him to capture its leadership when Sir Henry Plumb was elected to the Presidency of the Parliament.

#### **f. Methodological Consequences and Considerations**

Any attempt to gauge the success of individual parliamentarians in parliamentary career terms will necessitate a prior exercise in which parliamentary career pathways are mapped out and evaluated, and such an exercise will necessarily involve value judgements. This does not mean that no independent, 'objective', empirically accessible indicators exist.<sup>103</sup>

Closer to home, Jogerst's 1991 survey of 84 members of the House of Commons highlighted two phenomena which indicate just how difficult it may be to map out and evaluate parliamentary career pathways. Jogerst's frontbench MPs all argued "that a successful parliamentary career was defined by getting to the frontbench". (1991: 33) At the same time, less than a

---

<sup>103</sup> Two such indicators in the American literature are the growing role of the Senate as a stepping stone to the Presidency; and, based on assignment and transfer requests, the career ladder within the Congressional committee structure. However, these are partial indicators, and the public availability of assignment and transfer requests is particular, if not unique, to Congress.

third of all the MPs he interviewed thought that acquiring frontbench status made for a successful parliamentary career. (35) This led him to conclude that "Select committees can...be viewed as alternative 'career structures', allowing Members to specialize and therefore removing them, to a degree, from the dictates of party leaders" (*Ibid.*) and, again, "committee service can also guarantee parliamentary careers to those persons for whom the call to executive office will never come." (36) Here, then, is evidence of the possibility of parallel, or perhaps even multiple, career structures.

The foregoing study of the European Parliament's hierarchical structure would appear to throw up a number of other potentially confusing considerations. In the first place, relative scarcity is not necessarily an indication of 'career value' (however, in overall terms, such a concept might be calculated). The relatively rare but not generally valued position of quaestor is a good example, although this is not to say that the same position cannot have a very high value for any particular individual (the 'niche' politician, for example). In the second place, and as has been repeatedly stressed, the European Parliament has no direct links to any executive. Marquand has argued that Parliament's Bureau (nowadays he would probably speak of the Enlarged Bureau) might be envisaged as an embryonic executive (1979: 106), but even from this perspective it is clear that the manner of appointment (bottom up

rather than top down) is very different from typical cabinet formation. The differences are less extenuated in the case of coalition cabinet formation, but the literature on cabinet formation displays precisely the same problematique of finding truly quantifiable, comparable career indicators.<sup>104</sup>

Broader studies of ministerial careers may provide useful insights. But the most pertinent insight gained is that such studies face exactly the same problems in tracing and evaluating career dynamics.<sup>105</sup>

An example of an attempted evaluation, and hence an illustration of all the pitfalls involved, is provided by Gene Frankland (1977), who attempted a comparative study over a twenty year period of parliamentary career achievement in the House of Commons and the Bundestag. At the heart of his study is an 'operationalised' evaluation of parliamentary career ladders for the two parliaments. The 'operationalisation' consists of ranking hierarchical positions and awarding them 'career achievement scores'. A large number of questions flow

---

<sup>104</sup> See, for example, Blondel, 1986: 9-10; "it does not seem possible...to discover precise and readily quantifiable indicators". Blondel goes on to discuss (13-14) the relevance of the internal structure of parties to cabinet structure. In this context, Parliament's political groups, composed as they are of national contingents, clearly correspond to Blondel's 'highly factionalised parties' - he cites the Italian DC. He hypothesises, with obvious relevance to the European Parliament's hierarchical structure, that "the more the 'factions' or 'wings' of the party...are clearly defined, the less...it will be possible for the prime minister to take decisions in a hierarchical manner."

<sup>105</sup> For example, in his extremely large-scale comparative study of ministerial careers, de Winter (1991: 60-68) restricts his examination of the career dynamic to static indicators (for example, length of service, age) and the phenomenon of the 'circulation' of politicians from one ministry to another, but he does not attempt any judgement as to the 'worth' or 'value' of particular appointments.

from the analysis.<sup>106</sup> One of the purposes of Gene Frankland's study was precisely to raise such questions and put them in relief. The general point is that all of these questions would apply to any similar 'operationalisation' in the case of the European Parliament. Does this mean, then, that parliamentary career mechanisms must largely remain beyond the realm of scientific inquiry? Clearly not; for example, the studies of committee assignments and of Westminsterite MEPs above show that empirical tools can be brought to bear in some areas. But the many problems briefly considered in this section underline the need for pragmatic, qualified approaches.

#### 9. The Assignment Process - II. Career Pathways in the European Parliament?

The full extent of the political groups' appointment patronage in the current 1992 European

---

<sup>106</sup> Bearing Jogerst's findings in mind, is there one career ladder, or several? If there are several, can the same positions appear in more than one and, if so, would they have the same score? Does that ladder, or do those ladders, remain the same over time? Is that ladder (or are those ladders) the same for each individual? Is a static position necessarily unsuccessful? More fundamentally, can an objective career achievement value, as opposed to a simple ranking, be assigned to each position? Again, supposing it can, will that value remain the same over time? Also supposing it can, has Gene Frankland got the values right? At the comparative level, is it possible to compare career pathways in different parliaments, and if it is, again, has Gene Frankland got the values and correspondences right? Lastly, why should delegation to the European Parliament count for the Bundestag but not for the House of Commons? And if delegation to the EP merited a value, then why not delegation to the Parliamentary Assemblies of the Council of Europe and Western European Union, or the North Atlantic Assembly?

Parliament is vast.<sup>107</sup> Beneath the Parliament's external image lays a complex lattice-work structure of appointments and assignments, reminiscent of the fibrous skeleton revealed in autumn leaves. And, like all political organisms, this network rests in turn on what has been called "a web of gratitudes and resentments". (Mount, 1992) From this vast network of agreed occupancies it will be seen that little is left to chance (although this does not mean that merit cannot shine through). Rather, all devolves from the numerical ratio of the political groups' and parties' relative power and, increasingly, a political agreement among the largest political groups as to the exact composition of the Bureau and, at the pinnacle of the patronage pyramid, the occupancy of the post of President.<sup>108</sup> Under these circumstances, and given the analysis that has gone before, it is valid to ask whether it is possible to follow a classic political career (in the sense of continuous advancement) in the European Parliament.

A teleological definition of the term 'career', and a retrospective, descriptive view on the activities of the surviving MEPs, would obviously result in an affirmative answer to the question. In other words,

---

<sup>107</sup> It consists of 1,036 standing committee, 170 sub-committee, and 60 temporary committee places, making a grand total of 1,266 committee positions. In addition, there are 1,036 delegation places. In terms of hierarchical positions, there are 54 chairmanships, 63 1st Vice-Chairmanships, 53 2nd Vice-Chairmanships, and 20 3rd Vice-Chairmanships, making a grand total of 190.

<sup>108</sup> Where completely extraneous and unpredictable considerations (above all, the desires of the Heads of State and Government and domestic party bosses) come into play. See Westlake, 1992.

careers can be discerned in what the surviving MEPs have done to date, whatever that may have been. (In effect, 'survival' becomes synonymous with 'career'.) But we are clearly seeking more than self-fulfilling tautologies. The question could be re-phrased into two subsidiary questions. First, is it possible to discern any logical progression, or lack of progression, in the activities of surviving MEPs to date and, secondly, does it seem as though MEPs have been able to exert influence on the direction and pace of that progression (or the lack of it)? Table 19 shows the main activities of the 30 surviving 1979 MEPs to date.

Is specialisation tantamount to career? There can be no comprehensively applicable answer. For example, in the case of Ken Collins' long stint on the Environment Committee, or Peter Price's equally long stint on the

TABLE 19

MEP	Closest corresponding stereotype
Gordon ADAM	European Political Careerist or Stepping Stone (Closed Door)* or Public Servant/Technician
Richard BALFE	European Political Careerist or Stepping Stone (Closed Door)*
Janey BUCHAN	European Political Careerist or Public Servant/Technician
Ken COLLINS	European Political Careerist
Alf LOMAS	European Political Careerist or Stepping Stone (Closed Door)*
Tom MEGAW	European Political Careerist
Barry SEAL	European Political Careerist or Stepping Stone (Closed Door)*
Peter BEAZLEY	European Political Careerist or Public Servant/Technician
Paul BOWELL	European Political Careerist or Public Servant/Technician

Christ- opher JACKSON	European Political Careerist
James MOOR- HOUSE	European Political Careerist
William KEWTON- DUNN	European Political Careerist
Bill PATTER- SON	European Political Careerist
Derek PRAG	European Political Careerist
Peter PRICE	European Political Careerist
Sir Christ- opher PROUT	European Political Careerist
Richard SIMMONDS	European Political Careerist
Anthony SIMPSON	European Political Careerist

Aedee TURNER	European Political Careerist
Michael WELSH	European Political Careerist
Lord BETHELL	European Political Careerist or Public Servant/Technician
Sir Fred CATHER- WOOD	European Political Careerist
Lord O'HAGAN	European Political Careerist
Lord PLUMB	European Political Careerist
Sir James SCOTT- HOPKINS	European Political Careerist or Public Servant/Technician
Madron SELIGMAN	European Political Careerist
Sir Jack STEWART- CLARE	European Political Careerist
Winifred EWING	European Political Careerist or Stepping Stone (Closed Door)* or Public Servant/Technician
John HUME	Public Servant/Technician
Rev Ian PAISLEY	Public Servant/Technician

TABLE 19

## Political Careers of the Thirty 'Survivors'

Member	Group/ Party Hierarchy	EP Hierarchy	Committee Position	Committee Special- isation	Delegat- ion Position
ADAM Gordon (LAB)	None	None	Energy Vice- Chairman 1984-1992	Energy 1979-1992	EFTA Vice- Chairman 1983-1984
BALFE Richard (LAB)	BLG/EPLP Treasurer 1979-1986 and 1991- Secretary 1987-1988	None	None	Political Affairs 1982-1992 Develop- ment 1984-1989	None
BUCHAN, Janey (LAB)	BLG/EPLP Press Officer 1983-1984 Secretary 1984-1986 Chair 1988	None	None	Youth 1979-1992 Develop- ment 1984-1992	None
COLLINS, Ken (LAB)	BLG/EPLP Deputy Leader 1979-1983	None	Environ- ment Chairman 1979-1984 and 1989- Vice- Chairman 1984-1987	Environ- ment 1979-	None
LOHAS, All (LAB)	BLG/EPLP Deputy Leader 1984 Leader 1985-1986	None	None	Political Affairs 1979- Develop- ment 1982-	Chairman CONTADORA 1984-1987
HEGARTY, Tom (LAB)	BLG/EPLP Chair 1984 Deputy Leader 1985-1986	Vice- President 1987-1989	Creden- tials Vice- Chairman 1982-1984	Legal Affairs 1979-1989 Social Affairs 1984-	Vice- Chairman Gulf States 1989-
SEAL, Barry (LAB)	BLG/EPLP Socialist Group Bureau Member 1980-1986 BLG/EPLP Leader 1988	None	EHAC Chairman 1984-1987 Vice- Chairman 1987-1989 REX Vice- Chairman 1979-1984	EHAC 1982-	None
BEAZLEY, Peter (CON)	EDG Bureau Member 1982	None	EHAC Vice- Chairman 1984-1989	EHAC 1982-	None
ROVELL, Paul (CON)	None	None	None	Agric- ulture 1979-	None
JACKSON, Christ- opher (CON)	EDG Bureau Member 1985-1989 Vice- Chairman 1990	None	None	Develop- ment 1982- Institit- utional 1982-1992	None
MOORHOUSE, James (CON)	None	None	REX Vice- Chairman 1989-1992	Transport 1979- REX 1984-	Chairman NORDIC 1983-1984 Vice- Chairman EFTA 1984-1987
NEWTON- DOWN, Bill (CON)	EDG Bureau Member 1990-1991 Vice- Chairman 1992	None	None	Budgets 1982-1989 Institit- utional Affairs 1984-	Vice- Chairman Gulf States 1984-1987
PATTERSON, Bill (CON)	EDG Bureau Member 1992	None	EHAC Vice- Chairman 1992-1994	Rules 1979- EHAC 1984-	None
FRAG, Derek (CON)	None	None	Instit- utional Affairs Vice- Chairman 1989-	Political Affairs 1982- Instit- utional Affairs 1982-	Vice- Chairman ASEAN 1982-1984 Vice- Chairman Malta 1984-1987
PRICE, Peter (CON)	EDG Bureau Member 1990-1992	None	Budgetary Control Chairman 1989-1992 Vice- Chairman 1979-1984	Budgetary Control Chairman 1989-1992 Vice- Chairman 1979-1984	None
PROUT, Christ- opher, Sir (CON)	EDG Deputy Whip 1979-1982 Chief Whip 1983-1984 Bureau Member 1983-1986 Leader 1987-1992	None	Creden- tials Chairman 1982-1984	Legal Affairs 1979- Rules 1979- Instit- utional Affairs 1982-	None
SIMPSON, Richard (CON)	EDG Bureau Member 1987	None	None	None	None
SIMPSON, Anthony (CON)	EDG Bureau Member 1987	Quartermaster 1979-1987 and 1989-	None	Budgetary Control 1982- Develop- ment 1984-	None
TURNER, Annette (CON)	EDG Bureau Member 1990	None	Legal Affairs Vice- Chairman 1979-1984 Civil Liberties Vice- Chairman 1992-	Legal Affairs 1979-1989 Energy 1984-	None
WELSH, Michael (CON)	EDG Bureau Member 1983-1984	None	Social Affairs Chairman 1984-1987 Budgets Vice- Chairman 1989-1992	Regional Affairs 1989-	None
METHELL, Lord (CON)	None	None	Political Affairs Vice- Chairman 1979-1982	Political Affairs, 1979-	Vice- Chairman Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania 1992-
CAYNER- WOOD, Sir Fred (CON)	EDG Vice- Chairman 1983-1986 Bureau Member 1990	Vice- President 1989-1992	REX 1979-1984 Political Affairs Vice- Chairman 1992-	EHAC 1984-	None
O'HAGAN, Lord (CON)	EDG Bureau Member 1980-1981	None	Social Affairs 1987-1989	Social Affairs 1987-1989	None
PLUMB, Lord (CON)	EDG Leader 1982-1987	President 1987-1989	Agric- ulture Chairman 1979-1982	Agric- ulture 1979-1992	None
SCOTT- WOPKINS, Sir James (CON)	EDG Leader 1979-1982 Bureau Member 1985	Candidate for Pres- idency 1982	Political Affairs Vice- Chairman 1984-1987 Budgets Vice- Chairman 1987-1989 Environ- ment 1989-1992	Political Affairs 1979-1989 Environ- ment 1989-	Chairman Canada 1982-1984 Chairman Cyprus 1985-
SELIGMAN, Madron (CON)	None	None	Energy Vice- Chairman 1982-1987	Energy 1979-	None
STEWART- CLARK, Sir Jack (CON)	EDG Treasurer 1979-1990 Bureau Member 1991	Vice- President 1992-	None	EHAC 1982-	Vice- Chairman Japan 1987-1989
EVING, Winifred (SNP)	EDA Group Vice- Chair- woman 1979-1989	Attempted Presid- ency 1989	Youth Chair- woman 1984-1987	Agric- ulture 1984-1992 Develop- ment 1987-1992	None
HUNE, John (SDLP)	Socialist Group Treasurer 1979-1981 Bureau Member 1981-	None	None	Regional Affairs 1979- Agric- ulture 1982-	None
PAISLEY, Rev Ian (DU)	None	None	None	Political Affairs 1982-1992	None



Budgetary Control Committee, the answer is clearly 'yes'. But in the case of, say, John Hume's equally long stint on the Regional Affairs Committee, or that of Sir Fred Catherwood on the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, the answer is just as clearly 'no', although both men have followed successful political careers, Catherwood in the Parliament, and Hume outside it.

The process of committee assignment raises a second question. In the American literature, various theories consider the intentions and strategies of the assigners (that is, the political group hierarchies). All theorists subscribe to the basic rules of supply and demand. But some argue that the assigners normatively restrict supply and even manipulate demand in order to punish and reward group members. Another school imagines a more passive and reactive role for the assigners, committee assignments being made to please and placate group members, to 'keep them sweet' This constant tendency to open the tap of group patronage would, this theory argues, lead to inexorable increases in the number and size of committees, leading in turn to inflation and devaluation of the patronage 'currency', and so on, in a vicious circle of depreciation. From what has been seen of the assignment process in the European Parliament, the second school of thought would

seem more relevant; indeed, we know committee size to be a direct function of demand.<sup>109</sup>

Returning to the first of the two fundamental questions, it does seem possible to discern in the data contained in **Table 19** logical progression in at least some of the careers summarised there. But it seems that each progression is idiosyncratic and has been largely unpredictable.<sup>110</sup> To address the second fundamental question, it seems MEPs may have influence on their careers, but in a reactive sense of recognising and seizing opportunities.<sup>111</sup> **Table 19** applies what has been learnt about the 30 surviving MEPs' activities in order to assign closest-corresponding stereotypes. The exercise does reveal the existence of careers, but it does not reveal standard career pathways.

It seems that no pre-determined, permanent, well-beaten career pathways exist in the European Parliament, as they do in, say, the U.K. House of Commons.<sup>112</sup>

---

<sup>109</sup> On the other hand, as has already been reported, in 1992, the BLG/EPLP Whip (Brian Simpson) had been proud of the fact that "everybody had got the main committee they wanted", a claim echoing the theory of the pleasing/placating school outlined above. Anecdotal evidence from the Commons would suggest some similarity. For example, Jogerst cites Kevin McNamara, MP, as saying "You are making sure everybody is doing something." (1991: 32)

<sup>110</sup> This was a point the author put in private conversations to several of the more ambitious MEPs concerned. All stressed that (unlike the European Stint Westminsterites) they had come to the Parliament without any game play or general strategy in mind, nor had they come to formulate one later on, although they had come to recognise where power and influence lay. All admitted to the large part played by chance, and the importance of 'being in the right place at the right time'.

<sup>111</sup> Both quintessentially politicians' qualities!

<sup>112</sup> For example; PPS, Secretary of State, Minister, Cabinet Minister, Minister at one of the 'four great ministries of state', Prime Minister or, alternatively perhaps; backbencher, select committee membership and, perhaps, committee chairmanship.

Moreover, with the exception of positions within the political groups, all offices and roles within the European Parliament are either ad hoc, temporary, or limited to one two-and-a-half year spell.<sup>113</sup> As Jacobs and Corbett have noted, "A really long-serving chairman is the exception rather than the rule". (1991: 98)<sup>114</sup>

All of these observations, the absence of clearly-delineated career pathways, the pre-eminent role of political group patronage, the emphasis on consensual prior arrangements, the 'Collins/Price' phenomenon, and the limited duration and rotational nature of appointments, beg another fundamental question; are MEPs, particularly ambitious MEPs, happy with the system, or are they frustrated by it?

## 10. MEPs' Views

### i. Absence

In its daily work, its committee meetings and its plenary sessions, the European Parliament suffers from a high level of absenteeism. The geographical dispersion of the Parliament's working places and the regular travel involved cannot encourage conscientious

---

<sup>113</sup> Though this may be renewable.

<sup>114</sup> The closest parallel in member state political systems to these short, repeated 'bursts' of power is Bakema's second (of three) typology of ministerial careers, as characterised by 'rotation' and 'change'; "Cabinet members stay in office for a short period, they come to office more than once and they occupy more than one post in succession." (1991: 97) It is no surprise that this typology is, in Bakema's opinion, particularly applicable to the Belgian and Italian systems, which are consensual and 'partitocratic' systems par excellence. Indeed, it could be argued that the European Parliament largely shares these characteristics.

attendance. The problem is partly bound up with the phenomenon of 'loss leaders' on group electoral lists.<sup>115</sup> The problem is also bound up with the existence of dual mandates; members who are also actively involved in national or regional politics and are therefore subject to the pulls of more than one centre of gravity. More fundamentally, perhaps, the problem is bound up with the nature of the list system itself, since what determines an individual's position on the party's list is not that individual's standing with his or her fellows in the Parliament, but his or her standing with the national party hierarchy.<sup>116</sup>

So rife was absenteeism in the European Parliament that many observers warned that the new cooperation procedure introduced by the Single European Act<sup>117</sup> was likely to fail because of it.<sup>118</sup> MEPs' neglect of some of the Parliament's procedures can give rise to embarrassing situations.<sup>119</sup> An informal justification for the introduction of substitute committee membership was the need to assure sufficient attendance and active participation.

---

<sup>115</sup> These are typically big names in the domestic politics of their Member States who agree to head their parties' lists, though they have little or no intention of taking an active part in the Parliament's work.

<sup>116</sup> Anecdotes abound in the Parliament of conscientious parliamentarians who found themselves low on their parties' lists because they had neglected national party headquarters on the one hand, and on the other, 'absentee' MEPs who are, on the strength of their domestic party contacts, regularly returned.

<sup>117</sup> Which, like the budget procedure, requires an absolute majority of Parliament's membership.

<sup>118</sup> Parliament has overcome the problem by organising its work in such a way that all SEA votes take place together.

<sup>119</sup> Where, for example, more Commissioners than Parliamentarians are present in the hemicycle. (Westlake, 1990: 1)

For a number of practical reasons, there is no way of quantifying real absenteeism, nor its effects on MEPs' views, but it can be fairly safely assumed that absentee members are unlikely to have strong feelings about the way in which appointments inside the Parliament are made (not least because they are probably beneficiaries of the system), and so implicitly acquiesce in the current system's continuation.

## **ii. Protest**

From the outset of the directly-elected Parliament, smaller political groups and non-aligned members stood to suffer from a patronage system that was established and dominated by the larger political groups, and they have been its chief critics. In the 1979 Parliament, a 'Technical Group for the Coordination and Defence of Members' Rights' and its leader, Marco Pannella, were vociferous critics of what they saw as deliberate exclusion and suffocation, but they ended up acquiescing in the system's preservation.<sup>120</sup> However, since 1984, two more coherent groups of MEPs have coalesced within the Parliament, the Greens, and the European Right, and they have become the system's chief critics. The European Right has been particularly assiduous in claiming its rights as a political group, and this assiduousness, combined with a certain nonchalance on the part of the

---

<sup>120</sup> Their decision to establish a political group was in itself explicit recognition of the system.

larger political groups, has led to several politically awkward situations.<sup>121</sup> On several occasions problems have only been resolved by retroactive changes in Parliament's Rules of Procedure, possible only because of the oligopolistic power of the largest political groups. In effect, the European Right has been repeatedly penalised for having sought to buck the system.<sup>122</sup>

Ironically, the 'outsider' status of the European Right may have discouraged other members and groups disadvantaged by the system, who would not have wished to have risked being associated with the European Right's political views. By 1991, among these groups was the EDG, which by then was only slightly larger than the Green Group, where once it had been third largest group in the whole Parliament. The EDG's dwindling numbers meant a similarly dwindling share of the patronage kitty, and this impoverished condition was undoubtedly

---

<sup>121</sup> For example; "In 1989 ... there was intense controversy over (the) system of appointment of delegation chairmen and vice-chairmen, after members of the Technical Group of the Right were chosen to be chairman of the delegation to Switzerland and vice-chairman of the delegation to Israel (with the Technical Group of the Right itself putting forward a German Republikaner nominee for the latter post)." (Jacobs and Corbett, 1990: 121)

<sup>122</sup> "After the 1989 elections the whole system of distribution of chairmanships and vice-chairmanships was subjected to a more fundamental challenge by the Group of the European Right, which put up candidates against the other groups' nominees in the vast majority of committees (in one or two committees the Greens also challenged official candidates). Not only were all these challenges unsuccessful ... but the one "official" nominee from the Group of the European Right ... was himself challenged and defeated, and the Group remained without a single chairman or vice-chairman." However, a decisive factor has been "the 'outsider' position that the Group has tended to have in the political decision-making structure of the Parliament". (Jacobs and Corbett, 1991: 98)

an additional factor in the EDG's attempts to woo the EPP into allowing the two groups to join together.

Apart from appointments to committee and delegation offices, there is one other forum in which protest may be registered. This is in the elections of the Parliament's highest office holders, its President and Vice-Presidents, where the ballot is secret, and participation rates have been consistently very high. No protest vote has been apparent in any of the presidential elections so far.<sup>123</sup> A system that produces 5.4 per cent spoilt or blank ballot papers in a 97 per cent turnout (1992 figures) would not appear to be under concerted attack.

### iii. Mr. Buggins and M. d'Hondt

Aquiescence need not necessarily imply enthusiastic embrace; a point graphically borne out by data from the 1983 EUI Survey of the European Parliament. Respondents were asked "If you think of the way appointments for leadership positions are actually made, which tend to be the most important?" They were then shown a response set of nine factors, and asked to say whether each was, or

---

<sup>123</sup> Although relatively large numbers of members from political groups participating compromise agreements over presidential candidates do not respect those compromises, their objections seem more likely to be towards the system's candidate than towards the system itself.

Table 20

MEP's OPINIONS ON THE MOST IMPORTANT CRITERIA  
TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN SELECTING MEPs  
FOR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

	UK		ALL	
	IS	IS NOT	IS	IS NOT
Attitude towards Europe	21.0%	79.0%	32.0%	68.0%
Commitment to work within the EP	21.5%	78.5%	40.0%	60.0%
Seniority in European offices	50.0%	50.0%	53.0%	47.0%
Ideological views	29.5%	70.5%	37.0%	63.0%
Nationality	81.0%	19.0%	81.0%	19.0%
Seniority in national offices	32.5%	67.5%	39.5%	60.5%
Party or group membership	81.0%	19.0%	88.0%	12.0%
Personal standing	34.5%	65.5%	57.5%	42.5%
Specialised knowledge	11.5%	88.5%	23.0%	77.0%

Source: EUI Survey

MEP's OPINIONS ON THE MOST IMPORTANT CRITERIA  
WHICH OUGHT TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT  
IN SELECTING MEPs FOR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

	UK		ALL	
	SHOULD BE	SHOULD NOT BE	SHOULD BE	SHOULD NOT BE
Attitude towards Europe	68.5%	31.5%	85.5%	14.5%
Commitment to work within the EP	91.0%	9.0%	96.0%	4.0%
Seniority in European offices	16.5%	83.5%	18.0%	82.0%
Ideological views	42.5%	57.5%	40.5%	59.5%
Nationality	22.0%	78.0%	24.0%	76.0%
Seniority in national offices	11.0%	89.0%	14.5%	85.5%
Party or group membership	54.5%	45.5%	60.0%	40.0%
Personal standing	91.0%	9.0%	87.0%	13.0%
Specialised knowledge	64.0%	36.0%	76.5%	23.5%

Source: EUI Survey



was not, taken into account. Results, expressed in percentage terms, are shown in Table 20.

With one exception, UK MEPs' responses largely accorded with the general trends in all MEPs' responses<sup>124</sup> and, with the exception of "personal standing" and "seniority in European offices", all response sets showed a broad degree of consensus, with most falling in the 65 per cent to 35 per cent range.<sup>125</sup> The overall results are clear and what would be expected, given the way that the system works: nationality and party group membership are the two chief factors taken into account; specialised knowledge, ideological views, attitude towards Europe and, above all, commitment to work in the European Parliament, count for little.

The EUI Survey went on to ask MEPs what factors they thought ought or ought not to be taken into account. The results are also shown in Table 20. Again, on most factors there was broad consensus and UK responses were close to those of their continental colleagues. Above all, there was virtual unanimity among

---

<sup>124</sup> The exception was the response "personal standing". Majorities of Danish and Italian MEPs agreed with a majority (34 out of 52) of UK MEPs that personal standing was not taken into account. Irish members were equally divided in opinion. On the other hand, large majorities of Belgian, German, French, Luxembourgish, Dutch and Greek members thought personal standing was taken into account. UK responses would appear to confirm the apparent automaticity of the Whips' decision-making on assignments.

<sup>125</sup> In regard to "seniority in European offices", MEPs' were almost equally divided in opinion. UK MEPs' opinions were similarly, in fact perfectly, divided (26:26). Apart from its significance in itself, this broad consensus also indicates that UK MEPs largely shared their opinions with those of their colleagues, in turn implying that, although they have not been examined in this study, the underlying experiences that led to the formulation of those opinions might also have been shared.

MEPs that commitment to work within the European Parliament and personal standing ought to be taken into account, and that factors like nationality and seniority in national offices ought not to be taken into account - a mirror image of responses to the first question.

Thus, MEPs acquiesce in the system, but they do not like it. Perhaps the single most impressive finding of the EUI Survey, at least as far as the UK MEPs were concerned, was the near-unanimous mention of 'Buggins' in relation to the above two questions.<sup>126</sup> Typical comments were: "You know; it's Buggins' turn"; or "It's all down to Buggins".

'Buggins' is "a 'typical' name used generically".<sup>127</sup> "Buggins' Turn" is defined as "the principle of assigning an appointment to persons in rotation rather than according to merit". As far as UK MEPs were concerned, it was the single most important guiding principle in decisions about appointments to leadership positions, and they made no attempt to hide their dislike for the principle and its consequences. As one MEP put it, "It puts a premium on time-serving and discounts merit".

Second only to Mr. Buggins in UK MEPs' unpopularity stakes was M. d'Hondt. M. d'Hondt was an otherwise obscure<sup>128</sup> nineteenth century Belgian mathematician who

---

<sup>126</sup> Respondents in the EUI Survey were encouraged to break out of the response sets on closed questions, and such additional comment was carefully noted.

<sup>127</sup> Oxford English Dictionary (1972)

<sup>128</sup> He cannot be found in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, for example.

elaborated the system of proportional representation which the Parliament has unofficially adopted<sup>129</sup> as its method of sharing out everything, from money to fight election campaigns to seats on the inter-parliamentary delegation with, say, Malta. The d'Hondt method is not a simple one<sup>130</sup>, and its workings in the Parliament are only properly understood by the d'Hondt experts within each group.<sup>131</sup>

There is more than a slight irony in the fact that the two most important individuals involved in the determination of MEPs' careers are an apocryphally 'typical' man and an obscure and long-dead nineteenth century Belgian politician. Yet there has never been any groundswell of argument for change among the Parliament's membership, and the d'Hondt system continues to be unquestioningly accepted by the political group leaders as being the most equitable tried-and-tested method for assuring all nationalities and political persuasions a fair share of seats and positions of office.

Further proof of the latent nature of any dissatisfaction MEPs may feel with the system was revealed by responses to another question in the EUI

---

<sup>129</sup> The d'Hondt method is mentioned nowhere in Parliament's rules of procedure.

<sup>130</sup> Under the highest-average, d'Hondt rule, seats are assigned one at a time to the group with the highest total. After each seat is assigned, the winning group's total is adjusted, the original total vote being divided by the number of seats it has won plus one, and the exercise is then repeated.

<sup>131</sup> The role of the political groups' d'Hondt specialists is reminiscent of that of the one teacher - usually the mathematics master - in every school's staffroom responsible for the timetable.

Survey. MEPs were asked "What changes in the way the European Parliament is organised would increase your personal effectiveness as an MEP?" Clearly, 'personal effectiveness' is not the same as 'career prospects'. Nevertheless if, as the responses in Table 20 seemed to show, MEPs were largely unhappy with the patronage system, then we might have expected criticism of it or suggestions as to how it might be changed to have figured in the responses to this question. In the event, just two UK MEPs (out of 63 respondents) mentioned the system in any way. One suggested that the d'Hondt system should be restricted to appointments to committees and delegations, and another argued in more general terms that the powers of the political groups should be reduced.<sup>132</sup> From all of the foregoing, it would seem that MEPs are prepared to put up with the system, or are they?

#### iv. Exit?

Hirschman (1970) foresaw three basic modes of behaviour in regard to an organisation; loyalty, insider criticism with a view to reform, or exit. If the vast majority of MEPs accept any particular system, it must be because its essentially consensual nature guarantees

---

<sup>132</sup> Chief among UK MEPs' concerns were: a move to Brussels (36); better information and personal back-up (11); simultaneous committee and plenary sessions (11); voting after each debate (11); better media facilities (5); reducing the number of amendments (8); tightening up institutional control over the Council and the Commission (16); and doing away with surplus speeches and documents (36).

a fair share (or, perhaps more realistically, a sufficient share to discourage protest). But is a fair share a sufficient share as far as a young and ambitious MEP, an "executive-ambitious" individual, is concerned? To give a particular example, is it worth an individual's while to strive for a committee chairmanship, if that chairmanship will probably not last for more than two-and-a-half years? There is here an implicit distinction to be made between an individual's pragmatic acceptance of a system as functionally necessary and therefore desirable<sup>133</sup>, and that individual's decision as to where his or her future should lay.

In these circumstances, the clearest indication that exit may have been a considered option is contained in the stark fact, as revealed by Table 6, that 26 of the 73 eligible<sup>134</sup> UK MEPs elected in 1979 have since tried for a Westminster seat, that most of these have ultimately been successful, and that, a clear revelation of ambition, a majority of the successful Labour and Conservative Westminsterites have since occupied shadow or Government posts.

## 11. Conclusions and Suggestions

---

<sup>133</sup> Or, it should be stressed, the least undesirable; for example, the US and Westminster majority-party-takes-all and decides-all systems would clearly be less desirable or more undesirable in Strasbourg's multi-party, multi-national context.

<sup>134</sup> That is, excluding dual mandates and peers.

1992 is a good moment to take stock. 12 years after the 1979-84 intake was first elected, there have been two further rounds of European elections and three further national elections. Court revolutions have taken place in the BLG<sup>135</sup> and in a sense in the EDG, with Sir Christopher Prout claiming the succession and ultimately leading the group into merger with the EPP. From all that has gone before, it would seem that two opposing tendencies may be observed at work among the British membership of the European Parliament. On the one hand, there is a process of consolidation and evolution, which is illustrated both by the existence of a number of what have been here termed European political careerists, and by the fact that the British contingent is now the most experienced, in European Parliamentary terms, of all national contingents. Of the 81 UK MEPs elected in 1979, 30 remain (32 including Edward Kellest-Bowman and Tom Spencer). Of those, 28 have been identified as corresponding fairly closely to the stereotype of 'European Political Careerist', and 9 to the stereotype of 'Public Servant/Technician' (which, as has been seen, could be considered as a variant on the role of committed backbencher). Of the 29 new UK MEPs elected in 1984, 25 still remain. Of those, 24 currently correspond to the two stereotypes of the 'European Political Careerist' or the 'Public Servant/Technician'. Of the 23 new UK MEPs elected in 1989, all currently correspond fairly closely to those two conceptualisations. These

---

<sup>135</sup> which, with a self-conscious gesture, has become the EPLP.

statistics reveal a trend reassuring for those who accept a prescriptive version of Cotta's thesis (i.e., the need to establish or the desirability of establishing a European political elite), since they would seem to indicate that an increasing number of new MEPs are opting to remain in the European Parliament and pursue their careers there.

However, an equally strong case for an opposite trend can be made. Eight of the 1979 intake successfully sought Westminster seats in the 1983 General Election, and another four in 1987.<sup>136</sup> Already, three of the 1984 intake have been elected to Westminster seats in the 1992 General Election. Moreover, this study revealed a number of MEPs among the 1979 intake, still in the European Parliament, who may seek a Westminster nomination at a later date. The 1991 Labour Party Conference decision to ban sitting MEPs from seeking Westminster nominations may put a temporary spoke in the wheel as far as Labour MEPs are concerned, but as one Labour MEP with openly-admitted Westminster ambitions gnomically put it to the author, "rules change".

That same MEP also pointed out the opposite trend, which first appeared in 1984, when five unseated MPs<sup>137</sup> came to the European Parliament. Even if two of these (Newens and Tomlinson) now seem set on a European career, the other three clearly saw the Parliament as nothing more than a place of transit. Some MPs unseated

---

<sup>136</sup> Though the two contesting Westminster seats in the 1992 General Election were not returned.

<sup>137</sup> Cryer, Faith, Huckfield, Newens, and Tomlinson.

in 1992 (as well as unsuccessful first time candidates) may be tempted to use the European Parliament in a similar way, just as Labour MEPs unseated in 1994 may go on to seek Westminster nominations.

As Section 6 established, an indicatory factor of probable future intentions has been previous attempts to win a Westminster seat. Here again, in terms of stability of European Parliamentary membership, the omens are not good. Eight (out of 29 - 27.5 per cent) of the 1984 and nine (out of 23 - 39 per cent) of the 1989 intakes had previously fought Westminster elections or by-elections.

This study has found high levels of latent frustration among UK MEPs at both the institutional and the organisational level. According to Cotta's thesis, institutional frustration will lead to constant agitation for constitutional reform, and Part IV will test this proposition empirically. But it could also be argued that organisational frustration will lead to disaffection and perhaps ultimately exit to domestic politics or out of politics altogether. This is the crux of the matter; necessary, but mutually contradictory, forces would appear to be at work. It is impossible to quantify these latent tendencies, but their explicit consequences - Westminsterite MEPs - suggest that at least one of the two tendencies is widespread within the British contingent.

At an institutional level, some degree of osmosis between the two parliamentary contexts, national and



European, would seem desirable but, as was illustrated in **Typology VI**, the Cotta thesis would have a line drawn somewhere, after which 'desertions' from the European Parliament would become debilitatingly disproportionate, eroding the Parliament's membership stability and undermining the evolution of an independent European political elite. On one side of that line is a degree of immigration from one forum to another which may be acting as a substitute for what Van Schendelen has dubbed the "osmotic connection with government" found in most Western parliaments. (1988: 11, and see below) On the other side of that line, to borrow a phrase from Julian Critchley, MP, is what might be described as a "Parliament of the Skimmed Milk".<sup>138</sup> Where that line might be, and whether it risks being passed, are not questions that this study can answer.

However, it is clear that the Parliament could go some way towards reversing the trend to erosion (were it so to wish), regardless of its constitutional powers, by revising its internal structures to create a more meritocratic and less automatic, rotational career structure. Some possible revisions could be easily achieved, and without any fundamental changes to the system.

For example, the sheer number of committee members could be reduced. In the House of Commons, which has a far larger membership, departmentally-related select

---

<sup>138</sup> The Observer, 24.5.92. He was describing the 1922 Committee when the Conservative Party is in government.

committees have a maximum of just 11 members, and a quorum of 3. Compare this with the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee; 56 full members, and the same number again of substitute members (and a quorum of 14). Gilbert and Ryle calculated the total number of select and ad hoc committee places in the 1987-88 House of Commons at about 170 for a total membership of 651 (about 0.25 of a position per member). Again, this can be contrasted with the European Parliament's 1,266 committee positions for a total membership of 518 (about 2.5 positions per member). Also, committee assignments could be unhooked from the convoluted logic of the per diem system; members could, for example, sign a general, rather than committee-related, attendance register. Committee chairmen and the President and Vice-Presidents could be paid<sup>139</sup>, or otherwise distinguished. Committee vice-chairmen could be done away with altogether, and the current committee bureaux reconstituted with one chairman and the political group coordinators, which would be a far more realistic reflection of the power structure in committee. At the higher political level, Parliament could extend the Presidential term, and perhaps that of the Vice-Presidents and committee chairmen, to five years.

In relation to committee assignments, the American literature speculates that the 'currency' might ultimately become so 'devalued' that a wholesale

---

<sup>139</sup> A perennial suggestion in the Commons; see, for example, the First Report from the Select Committee on Procedure, 1978.

revision would inevitably take place. No such revision has taken place in the post-war Congress, and despite two major revisions of its rules (after direct elections and after the Single European Act) and another in the offing (if the Maastricht Treaty is implemented), there have been no signs of any moves towards a major revision of the assignment mechanisms in the European Parliament.<sup>140</sup> In organisations with bureaucratic characteristics, incrementalism will always be more attractive than revolution.

Lesser changes could theoretically be effectuated at the midway turnover point in Parliament's five-year terms, but in practice this would involve upsetting the carefully-wrought agreements between the political groups. A larger window of opportunity opens immediately after elections but, as Jacobs and Corbett have pointed out, "this only leaves a four-week period between direct elections and the first plenary of the newly-elected Parliament, when there are many new members unfamiliar with the workings of the old Parliament and when there are many other key decisions which need to be taken." (1990: 93) As has already been intimated, high and increasing turnover and large-scale absenteeism can only serve to consolidate institutional and organisational inertia.

---

<sup>140</sup> Even supposing the will were there, Marquand points out that "it is almost always more difficult to agree on a completely new structure than on modifications to an old one, if only because a proposal to modify an old one raises fewer questions of principle and entails considering a narrower range of options." (1979: 83)

Nevertheless, the underlying problem rests in the twin strangleholds of, first, the obligation to assure national and political proportionality (a fundamental aspect of the European Parliament's consensual nature), and, second, the pre-eminent powers of the larger political groups, as chiefly expressed through the Enlarged Bureau. Again, tinkering at the edges might bring some relief; the d'Hondt system could be restricted to chairmanships alone, for example, leaving vice-chairmanships to true committee or delegation ballots. Similarly, the vice-presidents could be elected without the prior use of the d'Hondt system (as is currently the case for the election of the quaestors). Changing the system itself would require a more thorough-going reform which would in turn require consensus within the political groups, a consensus which seems highly unlikely. Moreover, even where reforms have taken place, as in the St. John Stevas reforms of the committee structure in the Commons, the literature suggests that the political parties have been swift in re-establishing their grip (Griffith and Ryle, 1989: 418), and there is no reason to suppose that the political groups in the European Parliament would behave any differently in this regard. Nevertheless, all of these changes would remain within the Parliament's current powers; that is, there would be no need (with the possible exception of paying office-holders) for an Inter-Governmental Conference to draft Treaty amendments.

But the fundamental problem is constitutional. Most parliamentary assemblies have some relationship to government, even if not all extend to Max Weber's conception of parliament as a vehicle for the recruitment and training of political leaders (Beecham, 1974: 150-182), or the virtually monopolistic position of Westminster. By contrast, and as has been repeatedly stressed, the European Parliament has very little relationship to government, and most of what it does have is indirect. Deprived of this link, its political groups are perhaps disproportionately concerned with the introspective management of the patronage powers that have been examined so far in this study. Policy can sometimes seem very far away.

The Maastricht Treaty on European Union began to recognise the lack of control over the Community's policy formation and implementation (and heeded Parliament's calls - see Martin, 1991), by inter alia synchronising the terms of office of the Parliament and the Commission, and by allowing for the Member States' choice of Commission President to be approved by Parliament.<sup>141</sup> In granting this power, the European Council was finally agreeing to the sort of suggestion that had been in circulation since the Community's earliest days.<sup>142</sup> The 1983 Stuttgart 'Solemn Declaration

---

<sup>141</sup> Art. 127, Treaty on European Union, 1992: 110.

<sup>142</sup> For example, in an early article, Pryce had speculated that "The Parliament might, for instance, either be given or acquire the right to confirm in office - or to reject - the Council's nominees." (1962: 72) More recently, proposals for Parliamentary control over the nomination of the Commission were made in the

on European Union' nodded in the direction of these calls by providing a weak power of consultation to Parliament's Enlarged Bureau before appointment of the Commission President.<sup>143</sup>

The recurrence of these proposals, and the Council's recent acquiescence, suggests that something more profound than the career considerations of politicians is at stake. Indeed, the issue has not changed since Pryce wrote in 1962 that "the composition of the executive could be re-shaped to reflect not only the will of the member governments but also the political choice of the elected representatives of their citizens." (*Ibid.*) The normative logic behind it has been spelt out by *inter alia* Coombes (1979) and Marquand (1979); the only way in which the Commission can be held to account before the European people is by making it dependent on the support of a majority in the directly-elected European Parliament, and the right to confirm appointments is a logical first step in this direction.

Perhaps inevitably, the European Council fell short of providing one further step that would both galvanise the Parliament's political groups and revolutionise its

---

April 1972 Vedel Report and later in the December 1975 Tindemans Report and the 1981 Genscher-Colombo Plan.

<sup>143</sup> Note that this consultation power was granted to the increasingly important Enlarged Bureau, a body which includes the leaders of the political groups but does not figure in the Treaties, rather than the sovereign assembly, which does figure in the Treaties, or the theoretically more important Bureau. In this respect, the Maastricht Treaty was seen as an important re-assertion of the assembly's sovereignty. Article 16 of Parliament's Draft Treaty envisaged the power both to invest and to dismiss the Commission, and after his nomination Jacques Delors, a former MEP, displayed his sympathy for the Parliament's position by awaiting Parliamentary 'ratification', both in 1984 and in 1988, before taking his oath before the Court of Justice.

career structure. This simple further step<sup>144</sup> would be to leave the Member States with their right to nominate a candidate of their choosing for the Presidency of the Commission, but to oblige them to name that candidate from among the Parliament's membership. Thus would an organic link and direct osmosis be forged between the European Community's nascent legislature and its nascent executive, and real significance introduced into the Parliament's right to ratify the Commission President.

One potential objection to such a change is that the Member States would be obliged to choose from a pool of indifferent talent, but there are several counter-arguments to this. The first is that Parliament's talent is not particularly indifferent, as has been shown in the case of the 1979 UK intake, with a number of ministers and shadow ministers, MPs, committee chairmen and a Parliament President having issued from the 81 MEPs. The second counter-argument is that such arguments are of the chicken-and-egg variety; in particular, if Parliament had more significant powers it would attract more politicians of a higher calibre, and those it has would be more likely to stay. The third counter-argument is that, with several honorable exceptions, the Council's choice of Commission Presidents has not been particularly noteworthy, even given the supposedly larger pool of talent on which the Heads of State and Government have been able to draw.<sup>145</sup>

---

<sup>144</sup> Espoused, as Section 13 will show, by a number of UK MEPs.

<sup>145</sup> Jacques Delors' reappointment in 1988 was the exception to a generally-recognised rule that the combined affects of the

But there are two more fundamental reasons why the Heads of State and Government would be unlikely to agree to such a move. In the first place, and as Coombes has pointed out (1979: 86), a Commission President with direct legitimacy drawn from the European people (in this case, via the Parliament) would be a threat and rival to every head of government in the Community. With a powerful and high-profile President of the Commission having been in place for almost two-and-a-half terms, it is possible that some, if not all, government heads have by now got used to such an idea, but a second fundamental objection is that such a move would pre-empt and effectively pre-dispose the constitutional development of the European Community. To decide that the President should be drawn from the Parliament would be to opt in favour of something like the Anglo-Saxon or German 'gubernatorial' model of executive-legislative relations rather than the United States model of a strict division of powers, or the French Fifth Republic's strong presidency.<sup>146</sup>

Some observers favour the 'quadripartite' view of the Community's institutional development, whereby the mix of institutions and competences is not only desirable but necessary and efficient.<sup>147</sup> Others argue

---

unanimity principle ("common accord") implicit in EEC Art.158 and the jealousies of the Heads of State and Government will tend to favour the least unacceptable candidate, rather than individuals noted for their strengths.

<sup>146</sup> See TEPSA, 1988, for a general discussion of 'role models', and Coombes, Pinder, Wessels, and Van Schendelen, all 1988, for various discussions on the possible constitutional roles and development of the Parliament in this context.

<sup>147</sup> See, for example, Ludlow, 1991: 85-87, and Pescatore, 1978.



for the resolution of what they see as contradictory tendencies in the Community's institutional organisation.<sup>148</sup> If past evolution is a reliable guide, the Community's institutions will not evolve according to some neat, pre-determined constitutional blueprint, however desirable in terms of democracy and efficiency it may be. But it is difficult not to concur with Marquand's expression of the common, modern, party-based understanding of parliamentary democracy.<sup>149</sup>

For the moment, the European Parliament is party political, but largely devoid of power, whereas the European Commission is powerful, but apolitical. But whatever model, old, or new and unfamiliar, evolves, it is difficult to imagine the continued absence of an explicit link<sup>150</sup> in political power between the Parliament and the Commission. The lack of such a link may go some way towards explaining the high levels of absenteeism, lax voting, and weak party discipline prevalent in the Parliament, despite its steady accrual of powers.<sup>151</sup>

---

<sup>148</sup> For example, Marquand has argued passionately for a resolution of the "latent contradiction between the 'American' and 'European' elements" (1979:85), believing that the introduction of direct elections would force the issue. He favoured the American, presidential model, but recognised that the only politically acceptable and practically realisable model was that of the 'West European parliamentary norm'. (*Ibid.*, 86)

<sup>149</sup> "Whatever else national Parliaments may or may not do, they are first and foremost where political parties fight for power. Voters vote for political parties, and Members are elected as representatives of political parties ... The parties are the instruments through which decision-makers can be held to account before the people for decisions taken in the people's name." (Marquand, 1979: 114-115)

<sup>150</sup> The unwieldy and never exercised censure motion excepted.

<sup>151</sup> All of the foregoing is not meant to imply that the European Parliament is somehow exceptional in regard to the emphasis it puts on political patronage and assignments. In 1988, Riddell

There is a second, perhaps slightly more subtle, means of attracting political talent to the Parliament, and of retaining it. In a sense, this means could be seen as Cotta's thesis in reverse. As Sweeney, addressing the matter from a neo-functionalist point of view, has put it; "It is possible that spillover is not occurring, that political elites are not turning to Europe to work out their problems, because elected parliamentarians have been accorded such a minor role within the European institutions." (1984: 174) Increase the Parliament's powers, she argues, and you increase its attractiveness as a place of work. This, it will be recalled, is the trade-off in **Typologies I and II** (attractiveness of legislatures). "This is not to argue that the Parliament would make better decisions than the Commission and the Council. The problem is the effect of Parliament's relative impotence on the dynamic of elite integration." (*Ibid.*) And this impotence, she believes, goes a long way towards explaining the continued absence of European political parties. "There do not exist centripetal forces - concrete political rewards - to bring political groups together as cohesive units. A comparison with American political parties is

---

calculated the Conservative 'payroll vote' in the House of Commons at 'between 120 and 130' - about a third of the total number of Tory MPs at the time. 'Indeed,' he continued, 'if ex-ministers, the wholly inexperienced, the very old, the personally unsuitable and the extremists are excluded, then one in two remaining MPs must be given jobs.' Similarly, in 1992, Peter Hennessy reported that one in three Conservative MPs had an official position of some sort. (BBC: 24.4.92) Although the Labour Party's arrangements make appointment to shadow cabinet positions very different, the underlying process is similar. Witness Kevin McNamara's statement, cited above, about giving everybody something to do.

illustrative...fifty independent state parties...do not compromise out of an altruistic wish to integrate the nation, but out of a pragmatic desire to reap the spoils of victory." (Ibid.) As the President of the Belgian Parliament's lower chamber has put it; "People vote for parties, not parliaments." (Nothomb, 1988)

The Community's institutions may not evolve according to a pre-determined blueprint and, as it transpired, direct elections did not immediately force the constitutional issue, as Marquand had hoped it might. At the time of writing, the future of the Maastricht Treaty, which gives heavy hints as to the Community's future constitutional direction, is still in doubt. Nevertheless, there is good reason to suppose that the die has already been cast. De Winter's large-scale survey found that "three-quarters of all Western European ministers were members of parliament before joining the government" (1991: 44), and Cotta points out that the parliamentary emphasis is true even of basically presidential European political systems such as the French and the Finnish (Cotta, 1991: 179) In any event, the current nature of the Commission as a collegiate entity (still governed by a principle of unanimity akin to that of collective cabinet responsibility) suggests it is more likely to develop along what Cotta has called "the parliamentary solution", in which "the executive (the cabinet) has been made directly accountable to and dependent for its survival on parliament", rather than the "presidential

solution", in which "the executive (the president) is subjected to direct elections and to the oversight and limiting powers of parliament." (Cotta, 1991: 176) The many constitutional thinkers who see the powers and role of the Parliament developing along the lines of the US House of Representatives can do so only by ignoring the bulk of European parliamentary tradition. Certainly, Noel sees the Maastricht provisions as a clear political signal in that direction. (1992: 155)

This study identified two significant groupings within the 1979 intake of UK MEPs. On the one hand, there was a large (24) group of 'exceptional' MEPs. They tended to be older and more experienced and, as this Section has shown, they have generally enjoyed privileged status, particularly in relation to the more prestigious hierarchical positions within the Parliament. On the other hand, there was a similarly large (26) group of 'Westminsterite' MEPs. They tended to be younger and less experienced, but many of them had already shown signs of political ambition.

It would appear from the foregoing analysis that the behaviour of these two groups of individuals is significantly related. In particular, it is no coincidence that there is a very high degree of correspondence with the European Political Careerist stereotype among the group of 'exceptional' MEPs. Indeed, exceptional MEPs have been the prime beneficiaries of the Parliament's consensual patronage

mechanism, sharing out between themselves the lion's share of prestigious chairmanships and vice-chairmanships. Moreover, the short-term nature of these positions and assignments has been compensated for by the knowledge that they would be followed by other, similar-valued, positions and assignments.

As far as the non-exceptional MEPs were concerned, the analysis has shown a very different, more fragmented situation. True, many of those still remaining in the Parliament have managed to carve out careers of a sort for themselves. A few were able to use distinctive and high-profile rapporteurships to rise to a higher level of assignment (Prout being a good example). The 'Collins/Price' phenomenon resulted in higher profiles and positions for some, and others have contented themselves with specialisations in the lesser-prestige, middle-ranking and 'neutralised' committees. Others seem content with committee specialisations and spokesmanships. But a sizeable minority (26 of the 57) have tried, with varying degrees of success, to leave Strasbourg for the Commons, and it must be strongly supposed that frustrated political ambition was a motive force.

Cotta's thesis argues a causal relationship between institutional frustration and constitutional reform, but it also requires stability over time. However, as was earlier pointed out, one of these necessary conditions -institutional frustration- may undermine another -stability over time. Indeed, although the UK membership

has experienced relatively less (though still high) turnover, our analysis has shown that Parliament's membership is becoming more, and not less, volatile. This brings the discussion back to the related concepts of the attractiveness of legislatures (**Typology II**) and equilibrium/optimal constitutional professionalisation (**Typology VI**). Paradoxically, it would appear that the Parliament is simultaneously gaining in attractiveness (the SEA, Maastricht), and losing membership stability.<sup>152</sup> Has membership instability reached a level sufficient to undermine Cotta's causal relationship and weaken the desire for constitutional reform? To answer this question we must turn to the attitudinal side of the equation.

---

<sup>152</sup> If the foregoing analysis is correct, then the only certain way to reverse this trend would be to forge, through constitutional reform, a direct relationship between nascent parliament and embryonic executive.

PART IV: CHANGING ATTITUDES TO INSTITUTIONAL  
REFORM

12. Introduction: Cotta's Thesis Re-Visited

The study will now turn to another, equally behavioural, side of Cotta's thesis. His observation will be recalled that;

"We have now for the first time a political elite that is not based in national political institutions but in a supranational institution. A political class that has therefore a vested interest...in the promotion of European integration."

(1984: 126) (Author's emphasis)

So far, this study has concentrated on examining to what extent two of the underlying conditions of Cotta's thesis -stability over time and distinctiveness- have existed. Degrees of stability (the 32 surviving 1979 UK MEPs) and distinctiveness (the high correspondence with the European Political Careerist stereotype) have been identified. But if the basic conditions have been met, have they been met sufficiently? Has the causal relationship, the logic of Cotta's thesis, worked; has this 'European political class' developed the expected 'vested interest' in the promotion of European

integration? This section will attempt to answer these questions.

Since the establishment of direct elections, the European Parliament has undeniably militated in favour of integrationist institutional reform, but this is not in itself proof of Cotta's thesis, for it is an equally undeniable truth that, since its very earliest days, the European Parliament has always militated in favour of such reform.<sup>1</sup> When, in 1952, Konrad Adenauer invited it to draft a Treaty for a European Political Community, the Assembly responded with alacrity, establishing itself as an 'ad hoc assembly'.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps this very early experience was formative; Parliament's 11.7.90 Resolution on Guidelines for the European Union represents the fifth full-blown European constitution drawn up in Parliament<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> In institutional terms, the Parliament is in any case situated within a constantly changing system. "One of the features that distinguishes the European Parliament from most national parliaments is that it does not regard itself as part of a finished institutional system, but as part of one requiring evolution or even transformation into something different." (Jacobs and Corbett, 1990: 248) However, change and evolution are not necessarily synonymous with progress and reform.

<sup>2</sup> Though it shied away from the word 'constituent'. The resulting proposal, the 10 March 1953 Draft Treaty on the Statute of the European Community, though its letter was not taken on board by the Member State governments, was highly influential, and that influence only finally fell with the demise of the initiative for a European Defence Community in 1954. Indeed, one of the chief innovatory aspects of the project for a Political Community was precisely that it was drawn up by a parliamentary assembly rather than a diplomatic conference. (See Cardozo, 1989, for a full account of the negotiations for a European Political Community, and Capotorti et al (1986: 2-5) for a brief account of the general context.)

<sup>3</sup> Though only four were adopted.



In this sense, the institution of direct elections did not mark the beginning of a political process, but was part of a continuum which, with a 1996 Intergovernmental Conference possibly in the offing, is still unfolding.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, in a majority of the Member States most candidates in the first direct elections not only favoured constitutional reform, but believed the Parliament should become a constituent assembly; their constitutional militancy pre-dated their membership of the Parliament.<sup>5</sup>

Clearly, in the case of European parliamentarians from those Member States, it would be a mistake to ascribe their constitutional militancy (though not their continuing resolve) to the experience of being directly-

---

<sup>4</sup> In other words, direct elections brought about a change in degree rather than principle. Even the legislation for direct elections was itself the result of Parliament's pressure (combined with Giscard d'Estaing's initiative) upon the Member State governments to honour the legal commitment, by then twenty years old, in EEC Article 138.

<sup>5</sup> A survey asked candidates whether "The Parliament should have power to sit as a Constituent Assembly for the purpose of amending the Treaties establishing the European Communities." Responses were as follows.

COUNTRY	FOR	DONT KNOW	AGAINST
BELGIUM	88	3	9
DENMARK	11	16	74
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY	89	6	5
FRANCE	3	3	94
IRELAND	20	10	70
ITALY	93	3	4
LUXEMBOURG	93	7	0
NETHERLANDS	65	14	21
UNITED KINGDOM	29	11	60

Source: Adapted from Inglehart, R. et al (1980) and Schmuck (1989)

elected members of the European Parliament. However, this is not a disproof of the Cotta thesis; such pre-election reformists might not have had their views shaped by the experience, but they could nevertheless have had those views confirmed and reinforced through subsequent institutional frustration.<sup>6</sup>

Unfortunately, though this aspect of the Cotta thesis is intuitively more than plausible, it is difficult to imagine how these effects of direct elections could be measured. Fortunately, from the point of view of empirical research, not all successfully elected candidates came to the Parliament with their hearts set on reform. Large majorities of candidates in several Member States, among them the United Kingdom, were against any role for the Parliament as a constituent assembly. Here might be a more acid test of the thesis. Clearly, it would have been too much to expect died-in-the-wool anti-Marketeters to change their views overnight, but some change in the attitudes of those negative views less strongly held might have been expected to manifest itself over time, creating the sort of dynamic (that is, lessening opposition to and growing support for integrative institutional reform) Cotta's analysis would suggest should occur.

---

<sup>6</sup> As Jacobs and Corbett have observed, "...direct elections were a step forward. In transforming the Parliament into a full-time body it (sic) created a new class of politicians in Europe. Within almost every significant political party, there was now a small but not insignificant number of politicians whose career depended on making something of the European dimension." (1990: 249) As Marquand put it, direct elections would increase Parliament's "weight" and its "appetite". (1979: 67)

### 13. The 1983 Survey Results: Static Indications

Though there was no earlier survey with which to compare its results, the EUI's 1983 Survey would appear to have discovered indications that the views Cotta's thesis would have led us to expect were already prevalent.<sup>7</sup> For example, almost 90 per cent of the European Parliament's membership wished to see its influence increased vis-à-vis the other institutions.<sup>8</sup>

The EUI Survey also found evidence that a sea-change in attitudes was under way at the level of the national contingents. One of the questions put to MEPs concerned the sort of organisational changes they might like to see introduced to improve their, as it was put, 'personal effectiveness as an MEP'. The question was

---

<sup>7</sup> MEPs were asked "Given the present overall balance of influence among the following bodies, do you think their influence on policy formation should be increased, decreased or remain the same?" Overall responses were as follows.

(Percentage of respondents)

BODY	DECREASED	REMAIN SAME	INCREASED
European Council (Summits)	37.8	38.8	23.5
Council of Ministers	57.1	27.3	17.5
Commission	14.1	28.3	56.6
European Parliament	2.5	8.6	88.9
European Court of Justice	2.3	65.6	32.1
European political cooperation	3.3	17.6	78.7

Source: Adapted from Bardi (1984: 108)

<sup>8</sup> This was not only self interest; European Political Cooperation came a close second and, perhaps surprisingly, 57 per cent felt the European Commission should have more influence on policy formation.

designed simply to elicit responses about MEPs' working conditions.<sup>9</sup>

But in addition to organisational problems, a quarter of respondents felt encouraged to make observations on possible or desirable institutional changes.<sup>10</sup> That is, a quarter of respondents implicitly equated organisational efficiency with institutional change.

This implicit relationship was spelt out in a later question in the EUI Survey, which asked directly if respondents were in favour of constitutional reform. Of

---

<sup>9</sup> For example, many of the responses confirm potential discontent (though low key) over the way committees are organised, a matter discussed at some length in the previous section: lack of effective chairmanship, to take one bone of contention, must be linked to the (essentially non-meritocratic) way in which committee chairmanships are assigned; the 'tie' of committee attendance is, as was explained above, as much a matter of patronage and reimbursement as it is of group Whipping; and the number of committees and delegations is equally tied up with group patronage.

<sup>10</sup> MEPs were asked "What changes in the way the European Parliament is organised would increase your personal effectiveness as an MEP?" Two responses were of particular interest in the light of the conclusions in Section 11; one argued the power to 'sack' the Commission should be swapped in favour of vetting appointments to it, and another even envisaged members of the Commission being elected from Parliament's membership.

(Total number of respondents = 63)

N° of respondents	Category of response
36	One location, single seat, move to Brussels
26	Sessions, speeches, agenda, voting
16	Institutional relations
11	Relationship voting and debates
11	Concurrent, consecutive, longer plenary sessions
10	Documents, documentation
10	More conscientiousness, seriousness
8	Treatment/limitation of amendments
8	Committee procedures, powers, competences
6	Personal back-up, secretariat
5	Stick to Parliament's competences
5	Political groups
5	Media: facilities and contact
5	Information, telex, data
4	Chairmanship
3	Rules of procedures
12	Miscellaneous

the 58 UK respondents, 39 unhesitatingly said they were in favour, and went on to explain what they felt those changes should be. Of the 19 who said they were against constitutional change, five gave conditional responses, which suggested they were not so much against the principle as the timing. Of the 39 respondents in favour of constitutional change, no less than 31 saw this as primarily a matter of enhancing the Parliament's role and powers vis-à-vis the other institutions.<sup>11</sup>

In overall terms, in 1983, at least 50 per cent of the 81 UK Members of the Parliament were in favour of constitutional change, and almost 40 per cent equated such change with an enhanced role for the European Parliament. But although the Survey results provide a fascinating snapshot of the sort of views among MEPs that the thesis would expect us to find, there is no possibility of comparison with later or earlier surveys, and thus no means of discovering any dynamic element.

#### 14. Parliament's Constitutional Strategy and Voting Records

---

<sup>11</sup> Again, several responses were of particular interest in the light of the conclusions in Section 12. One spoke of the Commission President being elected by the Parliament, while another argued that all Members of the Commission should come from the Parliament, and another took these two arguments to their logical conclusion and called for a European executive to be created from within the European Parliament. (Such views clearly owe much to the United Kingdom's constitutional arrangement.)

There is another way of testing for such a dynamic element. Early on in its life, the first directly-elected European Parliament decided<sup>12</sup> that it should play a role as a motor for constitutional change, both by exploiting all its existing powers and any lacunae within current institutional arrangements under the existing Treaties, and by actively militating in favour of constitutional reform through Treaty amendments, which it would itself undertake to draft. Parliament thus opted for the role of 'permanent constituent', foreseen by Willy Brandt in 1976.<sup>13</sup>

This logic of 'small' and 'big' steps, which was later adopted by the second (1984-89) and third (1989-94) legislatures, necessitated the largest possible consensus within the Parliament. Two observations flow from this. The first is that the consensus could not extend to all British MEPs and certainly did not extend to the received wisdom current at that time in Downing Street, Smith Square, and Walworth Road.<sup>14</sup> The second is that on the matter of fundamental constitutional reform

---

<sup>12</sup> The decision itself almost a general vindication of Cotta's theory.

<sup>13</sup> Majocchi and Rossolillo, 1979: 219. For accounts of Parliament's constitutional strategy, particularly the 'Crocodile initiative' and the Draft Treaty, see; Burgess (1984), Corbett (1984), Hänsch (1984), Jacobs and Corbett, (1990: 150-151, and 248-253), Jacqué (1983), Lodge (1984, 1986, 1989), Louis and Waelbroeck (1986), Capotorti *et al* (1986), Palmer (1983), Schmuck (1984), Spinelli (1984), and Crocodile - various.)

<sup>14</sup> As Butler and Marquand had earlier put it, 'The British contingent at Strasbourg are not likely to vote solidly for all assertions of Parliament's rights.' (1980: 162) However, the same authors noted that 'Strasbourg perceptions could differ quite sharply from Westminster perceptions, that Strasbourg experiences could quickly modify pre-Strasbourg assumptions and that the Strasbourg Groups were determined to be masters in their own house.' (*Ibid.*: 163)

Parliament was concerned to register the breadth of its consensus, principally through calling roll-call votes on all relevant resolutions. Since Parliament's strategy has remained essentially the same since July 1982, these voting records provide exactly the sort of data over time necessary to test the Cotta thesis against the attitudes of UK MEPs.

#### 15. 14 Reformist Resolutions

14 Resolutions adopted by the European Parliament on European Union and on Parliament's constitutional strategy have been selected for this study.<sup>15</sup> They begin

---

<sup>15</sup> They are: 9.7.81 Resolution Setting Up a Committee on Institutional Problems, OJ N° C 234, 14.9.81, 48-49; 6.7.82 Resolution on the European Parliament's Position Concerning the Reform of the Treaties and the Achievements of European Union, OJ N° C 238, 13.9.82, 25-28; 14.9.83 Resolution Concerning the Substance of the Preliminary Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union, OJ N° C 277, 17.10.83, 95-116; 14.2.84 Resolution on the Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union, OJ N° C 77, 19.3.84, 53-54; 17.4.85 Resolution on the European Parliament's Position on the Deliberations of the European Council on the European Union, OJ N° C 122, 20.5.85, 88-90; 9.7.85 Resolution Embodying the Opinion of the European Parliament on the Convening of a Conference of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States as Decided by the European Council in Milan on 29 June 1985, OJ N° C 229, 9.9.85, 29-30; 11.12.85 Resolution Following the Debate on the Statements by the Council and the Commission after the Meeting of the European Council on 2 and 3 December 1985 in Luxembourg, OJ N° C 352, 31.12.85, 60-61; 16.1.86 Resolution on the Position of the European Parliament on the Single Act Approved by the Intergovernmental Conference on 16 and 17 December 1985, OJ N° C 36, 17.2.86, 144-145; 16.2.89 Resolution on the Strategy of the European Parliament for Achieving European Union, OJ N° C 69, 20.3.89, 145-149; 23.11.89 Resolution on the Intergovernmental Conference Decided on at the European Council in Madrid, OJ N° C 323, 27.12.89, 111-113; 14.3.90 Resolution on the Intergovernmental Conference in the Context of Parliament's Strategy for European Union, OJ N° C 96, 17.4.90, 114-118; 11.7.90 Resolution on the European Parliament's Guidelines for a Draft Constitution for the European Union, OJ N° C 231, 17.9.90, 91-105; 22.11.90 Resolution on the Intergovernmental Conferences in the Context of the European Parliament's Strategy for European Union, OJ N° C 324, 24.12.90, 219-238; 7.4.92 Resolution on the Results of the Intergovernmental Conferences, Minutes of the Proceedings of the 7.4.92 Sitting (PE 160.902), 42-51.

with Parliament's 9.7.81 decision to set up a committee on institutional problems, a decision which has since underpinned all of Parliament's efforts to bring about constitutional change. Until then, institutional problems had been addressed by a short-lived sub-committee of the Institutional Affairs Committee.<sup>16</sup> Thereafter, a full standing committee existed whose raison d'être was, in the words of the resolution (adopted 145:18:11), 'to take full initiative in giving fresh impetus to the establishment of European Union', and whose task was 'to draw up amendments to the existing Treaties'. (OJ N° C 234, 14.9.81: 49)<sup>17</sup>

Parliament's second resolution, adopted 6.7.82 (258:35:23), confirmed its earlier resolve that Treaty amendments were necessary and decided on its basic strategy of 'small' steps<sup>18</sup> and 'large steps'.<sup>19</sup>

Parliament's third resolution, adopted 14.9.83 (202:37:71), established the 'substance of the preliminary Draft Treaty', which became the official Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union with the adoption (237:32:34) of Parliament's fourth (14:2:84) resolution. The 1979-84 legislature's last act in the

---

<sup>16</sup> And before that by regular meetings of like-minded individuals in a Strasbourg restaurant.

<sup>17</sup> The Institutional Affairs Committee is, it could be argued, a microcosmic example of the Cotta mechanism at work, since it represents a significant grouping within the Parliament with an obvious vested interest in continued change.

<sup>18</sup> By exploiting existing powers; that is, 'current efforts to achieve a better functioning of the institutions under the existing Treaties should be tenaciously pursued'.

<sup>19</sup> Principally, 'to draw up a preliminary Draft Treaty'.



institutional sphere was to bequeath this Draft Treaty to its successor.

Parliament's next (12.12.84) resolution (OJ N° C 12, 14.1.84: 47), excluded from consideration here, was a reasoned opinion on the deliberations of the Dublin European Council in the light of the Ad Hoc Committee on Institutional Affairs (otherwise known as the 'Dooge Committee'). The Dooge Committee's report was published on 25.3.85 and was swiftly followed by another Parliamentary resolution (17.4.85 - OJ N° C 122, 20.5.85: 88-90), which is included in the analysis, urging the Member States to convene an intergovernmental conference, basing its deliberations on the Dooge Committee's recommendations and the Parliament's Draft Treaty.

The 29.6.85 Milan Council duly decided, though only by a majority decision (the British Government being among those outvoted), to convene an Intergovernmental Conference 'with a view to achieving concrete progress on European union'. To avoid the slightest risk of delay or diversion, Parliament swiftly rendered a favourable opinion on the convening of the Intergovernmental Conference (9.7.85 Resolution, adopted 196:72:21), urging the Conference to base its deliberations on Parliament's Draft Treaty, and calling for acceptance of the Parliament 'as an equal partner of the conference...in the work of preparing and approving the draft Treaty'. (OJ N° C 229: 30)

Following the deliberations of the 2-3.12.85 Luxembourg European Council, Parliament adopted a simultaneously apprehensive and defiant resolution (11.12.85) in which it declared the results of the European Council unsatisfactory and itself 'unable to accept in their present form the proposed modifications to the EEC Treaty, particularly as regards the powers of the European Parliament', and reaffirmed 'its attachment to the spirit and method of the its draft Treaty'. (OJ N° C 352: 61)

At the 16-17.12.85 session of the Intergovernmental Conference, the Single European Act was adopted. Parliament expressed its opinion on the Act in its 16.1.86 Resolution (OJ N° C 36: 144-145). Parliament was highly critical of the Act's shortcomings and painfully aware of its own lack of direct leverage. The resolution backed down from the combatative language of the 11.12.85 resolution (which had implicitly threatened a (non-binding) veto), but reaffirmed that it would 'pursue its endeavours in the spirit of its draft Treaty'.

After the implementation of the Single European Act, there was a hiatus in the Parliament's constitutional militancy. Parliament had resolved to exploit its new powers and any loopholes in the Act to the full, and this required it to engage in a fundamental reform of its rules of procedure, to instil new voting discipline in its members, and to reorganise its priorities. For several years, the other

institutions were engaged in a similar 'running-in' period. But by the summer of 1987 the European Parliament had had time to take stock of the new procedures and had again become convinced of the need for further constitutional reform.

On 17.6.87, it adopted a resolution (OJ N° C 190, 20.7.87: 71), not included in this analysis, in which it once more set out its frustrations and confirmed its resolve to pursue its strategy of Treaty reform. This general resolution was followed up by a series of specific resolutions.<sup>20</sup>

Parliament reflected much on how renewed Treaty reform could be brought about, including consideration of a plebiscite 'on the political Union of Europe and the constituent powers of the European Parliament' (OJ N° C 187, 18.7.88: 200), and the Italian Camera dei Deputati's suggestion of the convening of a 'European States-General' (OJ N° C 167, 27.6.88: 19) But, by early 1989, Parliament's renewed constitutional militancy had been encouraged by two concrete developments. In the June 1989 European elections, 88 per cent of the Italian electorate voted in favour of a motion (a referendum had been held simultaneously) to give the European Parliament powers to draw up a constitution for European

---

<sup>20</sup> On: (17.7.88) the cost of 'non-Europe' (OJ N° C 187, 18.7.88: 244); (17.7.88) the democratic deficit (OJ N° C 187, 18.7.88: 229); (17.7.88) the procedures for consulting European citizens on European political unification (OJ N° C 187, 18.7.88: 231); (27.10.88) the first year of application of the Single European Act (OJ N° C 309, 5.12.88: 93); and (12.4.89) on Fundamental Rights and Freedoms (OJ N° C 120, 16.5.89: 51). Because of their specificity, none of these resolutions is included in this analysis.

Union<sup>21</sup>, and on 17 January 1989, in an address to the Parliament, President Delors, in his guise as Chairman of a working group on Economic and Monetary Union, voiced his opinion on the need for a new Intergovernmental Conference to draft Treaty amendments on the institutional changes necessary in the context of Economic and Monetary Union. Thus, Parliament again began to feel that it had both popular and pragmatic wind in its sails.

On 16.2.89, Parliament adopted a new resolution on its strategy for achieving European Union, declaring its intention to continue its old strategy by 'making maximum use of the possibilities offered by the Single Act', and by 'starting work on preparing proposals for transition to European Union'. (OJ N° C 69, 20.3.89: 148)

The working party headed by Delors duly reported to the June 1989 Madrid Council, where a decision was taken in principle to convene an Intergovernmental Conference in the course of 1990 on Economic and Monetary Union. Parliament subsequently adopted a resolution (23.11.89) on this decision in which, having once more referred to its 1984 draft Treaty, it called for the Intergovernmental Conference's scope to be extended to providing for 'more efficient and more democratic decision-making in the Community, including...the enlargement of the Parliament's powers'. (OJ N° C 323,

---

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, Binyon, 1989: 28-29.

27.12.89: 113) The resolution went on to set out areas where specific Treaty amendments would be necessary.

Following the December 1989 Strasbourg Council's confirmation that an Intergovernmental Conference would be held the following year, Parliament adopted a further resolution (14.3.90) - the 'Martin I' Report - in which it once again reiterated those areas where it felt Treaty amendments should take place, including the political sphere, and asserted its right to have the final say in drafting the constitution of the European Union.

Bowing to the political pressures that had followed the hectic unification of Germany and the general ouverture to the East, the 25-26.6.90 Dublin Council decided that the Intergovernmental Conference on Economic and Monetary Union would open in December, 1990, and that it would be accompanied by a second Intergovernmental Conference on Political Union. On 11.7.90, the Parliament adopted a first resolution setting out its detailed views (over twenty pages!) on Treaty amendments in the political sphere - the 'Martin II' Report. In the same resolution the Parliament decided 'to draw up a draft constitution for the European Union on the basis of the following guidelines and main points of the draft treaty of 1984'. (OJ N° C 231, 17.9.90: 93)

With the assistance of four legal experts, the Institutional Affairs Committee then translated those proposals into concrete draft amendments to the Treaty.

Parliament adopted the proposals in its 22.11.90 resolution (OJ N° C 324, 24.12.90: 220), having earlier (10.10.90) adopted proposals in the sphere of Economic and Monetary Union (OJ N° C 284, 12.11.90: 62).<sup>22</sup>

Finally, after the 7.2.92 signing of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union, Parliament adopted a resolution (7.4.92) in which it grudgingly recommended that the Treaty be ratified by the Member State parliaments while drawing attention to what it considered to be the Treaty's many failures and shortcomings. As with the Single Act, the Parliament inter alia declared its determination to 'exploit to the very limit the possibilities offered by the Treaty', while instructing its responsible committee to 'complete its preparation of a draft constitution'.<sup>23</sup>

The chief purpose of this potted and in many important respects incomplete history of Parliament's constitutional strategy has been to emphasise the continuity and consistency in the position of the Parliament, now spread over three different legislatures, throughout this period. Moreover, all of the resolutions considered in this analysis have been consistent with one another, providing a constant yardstick against which to measure voting behaviour. Before analysing UK MEPs' voting records, we must

---

<sup>22</sup> At the same and other plenary sessions Parliament adopted a number of complementary reports, notably concerning; parliamentary assent (OJ N° C 96, 17.4.90: 114), the subsidiarity principle, the Commission's powers, and the constitutional basis of European Union. But these were all subsidiary to the basic strategy set out in the 22.11.90 - 'Martin III' - resolution.

<sup>23</sup> Minutes of the Proceedings of the 7.4.92 Sitting - PE 160.902: 49, 51.

briefly consider the manner in which such votes are held.

#### 16. Whipping and Voting

Although both the European Democratic Group and the British Labour Group introduced Whipping immediately after the first direct elections, the result has been a far cry from the Westminster model. There have been many reasons for this difference, some structural, and some more political.

A first, structural, reason is that the the EDG and the BLG are not the only parties in the Parliament and are not even the major parties, as they are at Westminster. Both live in the shadow of major consensual groupings; in the case of the EDG, the EPP (with which it has now merged) and for the BLG, where it chose to differ with its continental cousins (as was frequently the case on integration matters), the Socialist Group.<sup>24</sup> One evident practical consequence of these minority positions, together with the potentially anti-consensual tendency within both national contingents, is that even a solid group (EDG or BLG) vote could make little impact on a typical Parliament consensus vote (which would normally involve majorities of the EPP and Socialist Groups' membership). Moreover, even a solid 'United

---

<sup>24</sup> Ironically, the Danish referendum result on the Maastricht Treaty may soon create the sort of tensions between the EDG and the EPP which have long characterised BLG/EPLP-Socialist Group relations; see the Postscript.

Kingdom' vote (a theoretical maximum of 81 members) would make little difference to an EPP-Socialist Group coalition (at the moment 133 and 136 votes respectively, not counting the 29 Conservative and 45 Labour MEPs). This de facto powerlessness has been a powerful potential incitement to, and justification for, non-participation in votes.

An equally important structural reason has been that no government business stands or falls on the result of European Parliament votes and, partly as a consequence of this, members frequently find it difficult to attach the same level of importance to the vote on a consensual motion as they probably instinctively would to a Westminster division. It is true that, if it is to wield its budgetary powers effectively, the Parliament needs to muster absolute majorities of its membership, but such occasions are relatively rare (perhaps two or three voting sessions each year). Latterly, the cooperation and assent procedures introduced by the Single Act, both of which require absolute majorities, have put more of a premium on parliamentary attendance, but as has already been pointed out so uncertain are the party/group managers about the reliability of attendance that such votes are always, and only ever, grouped together on one evening of the plenary session (currently the Wednesday). In any case, the budgetary, cooperation, and assent procedures are more matters of institutional, rather than party-political, interest. On the specific matter of



institutional and constitutional change Parliament has only weak powers; EEC Art. 236 speaks only of 'consultation', and the two Intergovernmental Conferences that have taken place since the first direct elections have both refused Parliament's demand that it be granted assent powers in such matters. Thus, what would normally be the Whips' chief potential moral device - knowledge that each vote might be decisive in passing or blocking legislation or in supporting or demolishing a government - is simply not available to them in Strasbourg.<sup>25</sup>

MEPs' peripatetic life- and work-styles reinforce these two structural factors. In particular, the hectic and over-charged nature of the plenary working week<sup>26</sup>, and even the design of the Strasbourg hemicycle<sup>27</sup>, makes it easy for them to claim distraction, unavoidable absence, or even that they have more important business.

In terms of mechanics, the 'Whip' is normally nothing more than a list, prepared by the group secretariats and circulated to members' benches in the hemicycle before voting periods, setting out the recommended group position on each amendment as well as on final resolutions and reports.<sup>28</sup> On most

---

<sup>25</sup> These factors also explain why the Westminster practice of 'pairing' has proved both impracticable and unnecessary.

<sup>26</sup> With all manner of 'side-shows' taking place, from visiting groups of constituents to committee, delegation and inter-group meetings.

<sup>27</sup> Some MEPs' offices are literally over a kilometer away from the chamber.

<sup>28</sup> The written Whip thus amounts to more, in procedural terms, than its Commons weekly counterpart. In committee, political group coordinators frequently take on the Whips' role of getting out the vote, but consideration here is restricted to plenary voting.

uncontroversial business the group position is that of the group's spokesman.<sup>29</sup> More controversial business would normally be taken to a discussion in the group, and a group line decided, frequently by a vote. As will be seen below, it has been when that group position (in the case of the BLG) or the British Government position (in the case of the EDG) has differed substantially from the position of the contingent/group that institutionalised schizophrenia and controversy have traditionally crept in. Such confusion (from the Whips' point of view) was further exacerbated by the EDG and BLG tendencies to slip back into the domestic adversarial model of 'government' and 'opposition'. The BLG in particular did not sink easily into the Continental consensual model, frequently voting against its own, Socialist, Group in order to vote against the EDG and/or the British Government position.<sup>30</sup>

Returning to the mechanics, the very way in which votes are carried out makes the Whips' job more difficult. Votes are normally by show of hands. Where the result is unclear, the President may call for an electronic 'check'.<sup>31</sup> Where a straightforward electronic

---

<sup>29</sup> That is, the members sitting in the competent committee and designated as being responsible for coordinating the group's work on that particular subject matter.

<sup>30</sup> This is really a more general, and still pertinent, observation about Labour and Conservative MEPs, who still have a tendency, much to the bemusement or resigned familiarity of their continental colleagues, to indulge in the sort of cross-chamber badinage that would pass unremarked in Westminster but frequently seems out of place in the Strasbourg hemicycle.

<sup>31</sup> At the outset of the legislature, each MEP is issued with a credit card-sized voting card. On each MEPs' bench in the hemicycle is a slot, into which the personalised card must be inserted, and a small cowling, open only to the MEP's side, designed to ensure confidentiality. Under the cowling are three

vote is used by the President simply to provide a precise result, the numerical tally is not recorded, and the minutes merely record that a text was adopted or rejected by electronic vote. However, if a roll call vote has been requested, the result is formally recorded and published in a special annex to the minutes and in the Official Journal.<sup>32</sup>

It will be seen that voting conditions in the Strasbourg hemicycle are very different from those pertaining at Westminster, particularly where roll call votes are concerned. In the first place, the member is not obliged to move and the vote is, temporarily, confidential. Clearly, there can be none of the odium that might attach to a member walking through the Opposition lobby in a Westminster division. At the moment of the vote the Whips cannot know which way their members are voting, or even if they are voting.<sup>33</sup> By the time the voting record is published, the heat of the moment will normally have dissipated, and the member may even have departed for home or constituency, perhaps not

---

coloured buttons and four corresponding lights: a green button and light for a 'yes' vote; a red button and light for a 'no' vote; a yellow button and light for an abstention; and a blue light to show whether the vote is open or has been closed. This ensemble, which has been in use in the Parliament since May, 1980, is known as the 'voting machine', and has become an indispensable aid to the Parliament's procedure.

<sup>32</sup> As Jacobs and Corbett explain, 'Roll call votes tend to be called by Political Groups for three main reasons; firstly, to put that Group's position on an issue firmly on record; secondly, to embarrass another Group by forcing the latter to take a specific stance on an issue; and thirdly to keep a check on their own members' participation in a vote and voting stance.' (1990: 136) All 14 of the resolutions selected for this analysis were the subject of roll call votes.

<sup>33</sup> To paraphrase the adage, you can take a member to the hemicycle, but you cannot make him or her vote.

to be seen till the following week or even later. Moreover, beyond moral disapproval, the Whips have only very limited sanctions at their disposal and, on constitutional matters, not even necessarily moral disapproval. Whips are not pre-eminent in determining in which committees their group members will sit, and the principle of 'Buggin's turn' ensures that even the (extremely rare) sanction of a poor committee assignment will be only temporary. As at Westminster, the party mechanisms wield little if any influence over an unambitious or indifferent member.

The absence of government and opposition and the frequent occurrence of votes where loyalties are torn between the different instances and interests of group, contingent, government, and Member State has made abstention a common device among British members.<sup>34</sup> Members Whipped into the Chamber can abstain (unseen by the Whips) on the vote, later arguing that the registered absence of opposition is a good second-best to the active registration of support. Another apparently popular but unmeasurable device (remarked upon further in the analysis below) is that of what might be described as technical absence. Members who are Whipped into the chamber behave as though they are voting, perhaps even putting their hand in the voting

---

<sup>34</sup> Perhaps particularly because "They have proved to be the most diligent of all national contingents in attending to their parliamentary duties." (Clark, 1984: 233)

machine, but fail to register a vote.<sup>35</sup> The first great advantage, of both abstention and technical absence, is that the member is physically present in the chamber, so that the Whip feels both his and the member's duty has been done. The second great advantage is that both abstention and technical absence are ambiguously neutral in their effects.<sup>36</sup>

Another structural difference between Strasbourg and Westminster concerns the differing positions and powers of the Whips. As in the House of Commons, the Labour Whip is an elected position, a factor which in itself weakens the individual's authority, since unpopular Whips can simply be voted out at the end of the parliamentary year. (BBC: 24.4.92) At Westminster, both government and opposition Whips have the ear of their respective party leaders, but this can conspicuously not be the case at Strasbourg, where neither the EDG nor the BLG Bureau membership extends to the Whips, and nor do the Strasbourg Whips have the same role and powers in the ordering of parliamentary business, which is largely settled between the Socialist

---

<sup>35</sup> Although this is to speculate, vexed Whips studying the next day's voting lists may be placated with stories (common in the hemicycle) of malfunctioning voting machines.

<sup>36</sup> As the ideological heat was gradually drawn out of both the anti- and the pro-Market camps and as the British Government has recently adopted a less openly adversarial stance to 'national interest' dossiers, technical absence is probably a rarer event, but there can be no doubt that it was fairly prevalent at one stage. Analysis of the voting records on some of the earlier resolutions reveals the presence of many members who were present and voted on individual amendments, but whose names do not figure in the roll call votes. Some of these may genuinely have been absent at the moment of the final vote, but others were most probably at their benches in the hemicycle. This would be an interesting phenomenon for further research if it were not for the fact that it is impossible to measure and observe.

and EPP groups in the Parliament's Enlarged Bureau. Moreover, for most of the life of the directly-elected Parliament, neither the EDG nor the BLG Whip has had much, if any, influence on the domestic political party organisations.

On the other hand, both contingents have at times been regarded as outposts of the national political parties. As has already been seen in the discussion of the appointment of Group leaders, for much of the first Parliament the position was particularly difficult for the EDG. Relations between the EDG Chief Whip, Christopher Prout, and his Downing Street contact, John Biffen, were said to be amiable and cooperative, but there was a fundamental difference between the Government and the Group of tone and approach.<sup>37</sup>

Government and European Democratic Group relations met their apogée in the 1984 vote on the Draft Treaty establishing the European Union. An omen had come in May 1982 in another (from the Prime Minister's point of view) provocative incident in which not only did a Conservative MEP (William Newton Dunn) table an implicitly government-hostile amendment (calling for a majority vote in the Council on the farm price settlement), but despite heavy Whipping the EDG vote on it split 11:10:13, with 26 Tory MEPs abstaining. (See Clark, 1984: 235) A similar split in the vote occurred

---

<sup>37</sup> In particular, "there was no mistaking the hard line which was pressed on the MEPs from the Whips Office in Downing Street; Mr. Prout was put under great pressure (certainly by comparison with his counterparts in other groups) trying to get his men to vote the right way on matters in which the government had an interest." (Butler and Jowett, 1985: 26)

in the February, 1984 vote on the Spinelli (Draft Treaty) Report. Conservative MEPs voted 21:6:5, with 28 absent from the chamber. As Clark put it, with admirable understatement, 'This divided approach to a resolution which incorporated three key proposals to which Mrs. Thatcher and her Government were bitterly opposed - ending the veto, adding to Parliament's powers, and the Community raising taxation - was not warmly welcomed in London.' (1984: 236)

In fact, the fundamental matter at issue in May 1982 and February 1984, from the points of view of both sides, was the matter of the veto in the Council. Clark suggested that, within the European Parliament, 'Support for a majority system of voting in the Council had become almost a test of virility.' (*Ibid.*) Both Conservative and Labour MEPs found themselves almost unwittingly bound up in an inter-institutional struggle. Indeed, several prescient observers had already noted signs of impending institutional clashes in Parliament's decision to reject the 1980 budget, a decision in which many British Conservative members were involved.<sup>38</sup> As Butler and Jowett put it, 'Both of these acts...were highly provocative from the Government's point of view...Mrs. Thatcher was incensed that Conservatives in the European Parliament could get away with voting against the government's line at Westminster. She was also concerned that there were few means for her to control the MEPs' behaviour.' (1985: 26) Notwithstanding

---

<sup>38</sup> See, for example, Butler and Marquand, 1981: 160-162.

the message from its Strasbourg confrères, the Conservative Party's manifesto for the European elections held just four months after the February plenary baldly declared that '...we do not support attempts to force the pace of institutional reform, especially in ways which might jeopardise the defence of genuinely vital national interests...' (Wood, 1984: 267)

Nevertheless, the experience of the Spinelli resolution led to more understanding and a more respectful stand-off on both sides. Those in Downing Street, though perhaps not Mrs. Thatcher herself, realised that 'While the EDG had fewer splits than the Labour Group, the fact that the EDG actually had a Whipping system and was being watched carefully by the party at home made any divisions more serious.' (Butler and Jowett, 1985: 26) Indeed, the Labour Party was able to use the EDG's highly-publicised disarray over the Spinelli Report as a weapon in the European elections campaign. (*Ibid.*: 100) Thereafter, potentially diverging opinions were played down, and the EDG habitually allowed its members a free vote on institutional affairs resolutions.<sup>39</sup> Whitehall, too, came to have a better understanding of the EDG's position.<sup>40</sup> Partly as a result of this new understanding, and partly because of

---

<sup>39</sup> A decision which explains Attinà's finding, in his roll-call vote analysis, that the normally highly disciplined EDG displayed little 'conformity' on institutional matters - 1990: 575.

<sup>40</sup> 'The EDG had only 63 votes in a Parliament of 434 members. In order to have any influence, its members had to co-operate with other political groups. Such co-operation inevitably required horse-trading over votes and policies: MEPs had to support motions not wholly acceptable to their government at home if they were to retain any influence within the Parliament, and particularly within its centre-right majority.' (Butler and Jowett, 1985: 21)



its continuing 'national interest' approach to Community affairs, the Government increasingly resorted to general lobbying of all UK MEPs, appealing to their better, patriotic, natures.<sup>41</sup> In fact, where important issues are thought to be at stake (nowadays more likely to be a technical issue under the cooperation procedure than a broad brush matter of principle), UKREP can sometimes be seen to act as a form of informal Whip.

The shifting majority within the BLG, from anti- to pro-Market, has already been considered at some length.<sup>42</sup> This shift can be partly explained in terms of the (Conservative) government's increasing discomfiture at the speed and direction of events in the Community after the collapse of the Berlin Wall; a vote for Treaty

---

<sup>41</sup> From the outset of the directly-elected European Parliament, a desk-officer has been assigned to such duties from within UKREP (to date, William Marsden, Vincent Feen, and currently Richard Makepeace), and the system of regular briefings and meetings with visiting ministers and delegations from the Commons or Lords is generally reckoned to be extremely effective in creating pro-national interest (and hence almost inevitably pro-government) majorities (or at least avoiding anti-government majorities) from within the overall British contingent.

<sup>42</sup> A lot of mythology now surrounds the early history of the BLG, and it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between correct, as opposed to pious, recollections. For example, at least two MEPs told this author that, as a result of having voted for the Resolution to establish a Committee on Institutional Affairs (known as the 'Crocodile initiative'), they were discreetly threatened with de-selection, and that as a result they thereafter voted with the anti-Spinelli bloc. However, checking the voting records revealed that both MEPs had simply not participated in the initial vote. (Although it may well have been the case that they were threatened with de-selection before the vote.) The sea-change in the BLG's attitude is characterised by the voting record of David Martin, a young Scottish MEP first elected to the European Parliament in 1984. He followed the Labour Group 'Whip' by voting against the three 1985 and one 1986 resolutions bound up with the Intergovernmental Conference leading to the Single European Act. By early 1989, he was abstaining in votes on institutional affairs resolutions, and when the 1989 Madrid Council decided to convene an Intergovernmental Conference on Economic and Monetary Union the following year, he was part of the large Labour Group majority that voted in favour of a resolution calling, inter alia, for Treaty amendments in the political union sphere.

change was a vote against the Government. Thereafter, the BLG/EPLP found itself effectively locked into a reformist stance, with its spokesman on institutional affairs, David Martin, becoming the Socialist Group's spokesman and Parliament's rapporteur on the three following reports, which as has been seen included a complete volume of draft integrationist Treaty amendments. The old and the new anti-Marketeters within the Group, together with a handful of agnostics, could no longer vote against what had now become not only the Socialist Group, but also the British Labour Group, line. The voting figures in the analysis below show how this (sizeable) minority lapsed from abstention into absence from the vote.

This cannot be the place for a history of the two parties' divided stances over the whole subject matter of the European Community and European integration.<sup>43</sup> By its very nature, integration is an apolitical and constitutional matter falling outside and beyond the normal United Kingdom political party divide, as was graphically illustrated during the 1975 referendum campaign.<sup>44</sup> But it should be pointed out that in the case of some of the resolutions considered in the analysis, particular interests bound up with the broader theme of sovereignty or the narrower theme of criticism of the United Kingdom government surfaced in the accompanying debates.

---

<sup>43</sup> See the Bibliographical Preamble.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, Butler and Kitzinger, 1976, and King, 1977.

It could be argued that UK MEPs' positions vis-à-vis further-reaching European integration have been largely determined by the majority views of the domestic political parties at Westminster. It is certainly true that pro-integrationists in the European Parliament have felt more comfortable since the demise, respectively, of the Labour Party's commitment to withdrawal, and of Mrs. Thatcher as leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister. Above all, abandonment (with the ratification of the Single European Act) of the shibboleth of the veto in Council, and the Fontainebleau solution to the problem of the British budgetary rebate<sup>45</sup> removed two of the primary sources of friction between London and Strasbourg. However, the Strasbourg Parliament possesses a logic all of its own.<sup>46</sup> The ensuing analysis will show

---

<sup>45</sup> Mrs. Thatcher, it should be noted, was responsible for both of these.

<sup>46</sup> As Butler and Marquand put it, British MEPs soon realised that '...the future of the institution to which they belong, as well as their personal futures, (was) in their own hands.' (Butler and Marquand, 1981: 166)

VOTING FIGURES FOR THE UK CONSERVATIVE MEPs  
ON THE 14 RESOLUTIONS

N°	RESOLUTION	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAINED	ABSENT
60	09.07.81	34 GP		5	21
60	06.07.82	38	4	3	15
60	14.09.83			49 GP	11
60	14.02.84	21 FV	6 FV	5 FV	28 FV
45	17.04.85	28	3	5	8
45	09.07.85	15 FV	8 FV	6 FV	18 FV
45	11.12.85	26	1	5	13
45	16.01.86	3	4	14	24
45	16.02.89	3 FV	10 FV	6 FV	26 FV
32	23.11.89	18 GP			13
32	14.03.90	21 GP	1	2	8
32	11.07.90	21 GP			11
32	22.11.90	11 GP	1	1	19
32	07.04.92		1	12 GP	19

GP = Group Position  
FV = Free Vote

Note

GPs and FVs are only noted where these were specifically referred to in the accompanying debates

VOTING FIGURES FOR THE UK LABOUR MEPs  
ON THE 14 RESOLUTIONS

N°	RESOLUTION	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAINED	ABSENT
17	06.07.81	2	2		13
17	06.07.82	1	6	7	3
17	14.09.83		12 GP	1	4
17	14.02.84	1	6	2	8
32	17.04.85		27 GP	1	4
32	09.07.85		28 GP		4
32	11.12.85		27 GP		5
32	16.01.86		17	1	14
32	16.02.89		6	11	15
45	23.11.89	28 GP		2	15
45	14.03.90	30 GP	8	1	6
45	11.07.90	23 GP	2	20	
45	22.11.90	20 GP			25
45	07.04.92	15 GP			30

GP = Group Position

Note

GPs and FVs are only noted where these were specifically referred to in the accompanying debates

VOTING FIGURES FOR THE 81 UK MEPs  
ON THE 14 RESOLUTIONS

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAINED	ABSENT
36	2	5	38
40	12	10	19
1	14	51	15
22	12	8	39
30	30	7	14
16	37	6	22
26	28	5	22
3	21	15	42
3	17	18	43
47	1	2	31
52	9	3	17
44	2	0	35
30	2	1	48
15	1	12	53

to what extent that logic has led them to support the Parliament's efforts to transform itself into Willy Brandt's vision of a 'permanent constituent'.

## **17. The Results: Changing Attitudes as Seen Through Voting Records**

### **i. Overall Figures**

The votes of all British MEPs on each of the 14 Resolutions are summarised, and broken down into Labour and Conservative votes in **Table 21**. The most striking features, in line with what might have been expected from the foregoing analysis, are the high levels of absence and abstentions. In half of the 14 votes under consideration, abstentions and absence combined outnumbered 'yes' and 'no' votes<sup>47</sup>

To highlight this feature, abstentions and absence have been combined and this figure, together with 'yes' and 'no' votes is shown, for all UK MEPs, in graph form in **Table 22**. It will be seen immediately that, with the exception of the three resolutions voted in 1985, there is a clear inverse relationship between 'yes' votes and combined abstention/absence. That is, low 'yes' votes<sup>48</sup> are invariably accompanied by high abstention/absence, and low abstention/absence<sup>49</sup> by high 'yes' votes. This

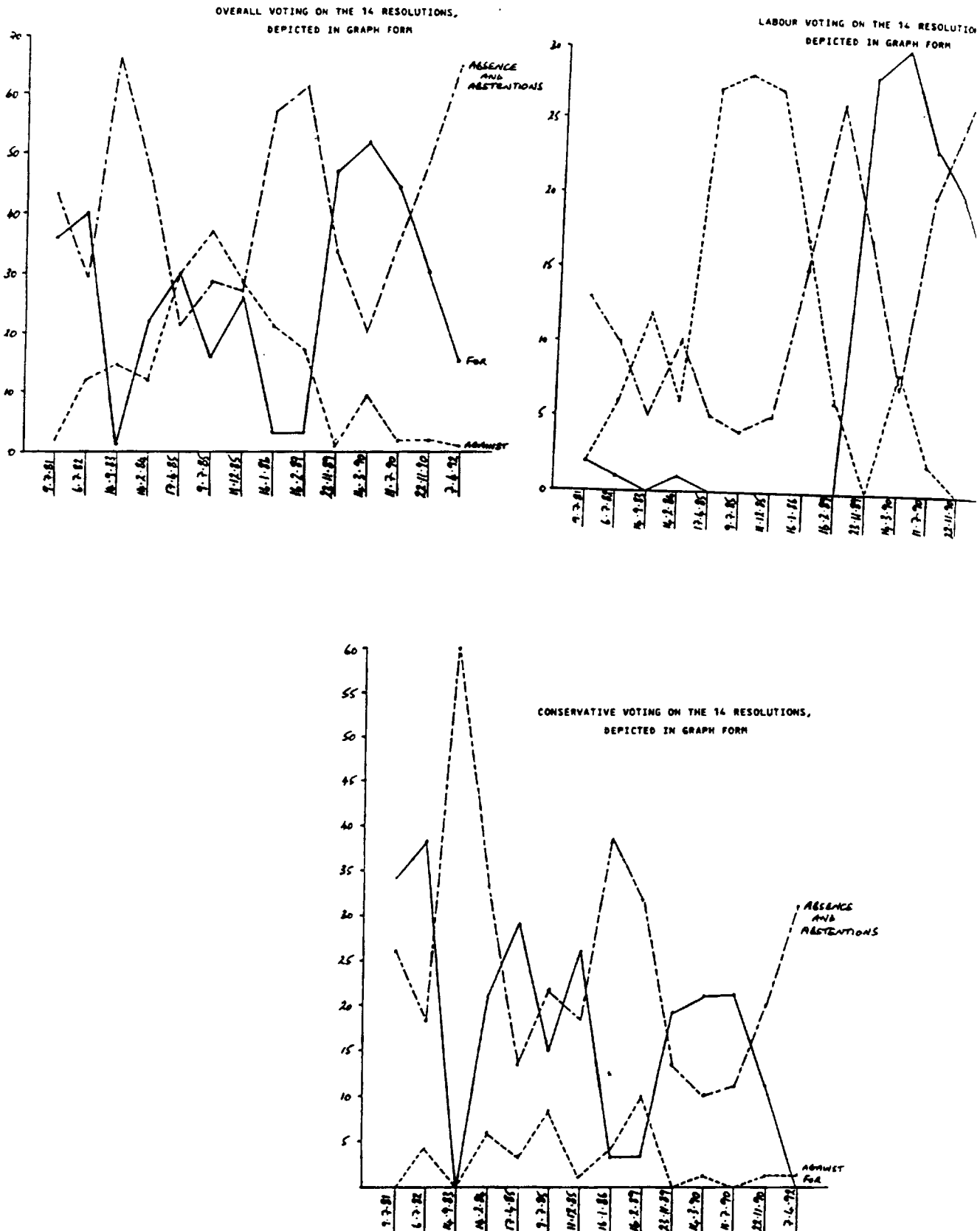
---

<sup>47</sup> In the case of four resolutions - 6.7.82, 23.11.89, 14.3.90, and 11.7.90 - 'yes' votes were higher, and in the case of three resolutions - 17.4.85, 9.7.85, and 11.12.85 - 'no' votes were higher.

<sup>48</sup> As in 14.9.83, 9.7.85, 17.2.86, 23.11.89, and 22.11.90.

<sup>49</sup> As in 6.7.82, 17.4.85, 27.12.89, 14.3.90 and 11.7.90.

Table 22



phenomenon seems to confirm the contention that absence is potentially at least as significant as an active vote.

The reasons for this phenomenon, and for the exception in 1985, become clear when the figures are broken down into Labour and Conservative voting figures, as shown in **Table 22**. For the Labour Whips, 1985 was their best year. The humiliation of the 1983 General Election had been obscured by the successes of the 1984 European election, in which the Labour Group almost doubled its number of seats, from 17 to 32. On the policy front, the British Government had found itself outvoted at the Milan Council, which decided to convene the Intergovernmental Conference that would lead to the Single Act. At the same time, the British Government's taste for Lord Cockfield's White Paper on the Internal Market gave the BLG a good ideological target at which to aim. As **Table 22** shows, the BLG had never before been so united on an institutional matter.

Thereafter, by way of a clearly discernible triple scissors action, 'no' votes were transformed gradually into, first, abstentions, and then, by 1990, 'yes' votes.<sup>50</sup>

**Table 22** demonstrates that the inverse relationship between 'yes' votes and abstention/absence has been largely a Conservative phenomenon. Leaving aside the abnormally high absence in the 7.4.92 vote

---

<sup>50</sup> The 'scissors' are squashed in the Table because of the absence of resolutions considered between 1986 and 1989.

(caused primarily by the proximity of the British General Election), these switchbacks have become less extreme. This is partly because of the decrease in the overall numbers of Conservative MEPs, but also because the EDG is nowadays more likely to abstain or allow a free vote where resolutions contain 'difficult' clauses or even, as was the case in the 11.7.90 and 22.11.90 votes, vote 'yes' despite such difficult clauses.

Bearing in mind what has been learnt about the position of the UK domestic parties, and from the point of view of Cotta's thesis, the absence of active opposition is as significant as the existence of support. In that sense, the 'no' votes also command attention, and they do not disappoint. 'No' votes have steadily declined from their peak in 1985. Table 21 displays a low, zig-zag ridgeback of 'no' votes on the EDG side, but by 1989 this has dwindled to insignificance. And, on the Labour side, Table 22 shows how 'no' votes have declined from their 1985 high to the same level of insignificance.

## ii. The 30 Surviving 1979 MEPs

We might expect the dynamic of movement away from active opposition to, or even towards active support for, integrationist constitutional reform to be more prevalent among the 1979 intake of UK MEPs many of whom it could be argued, have had furthest to travel, and many of whom have now had 13 years of experience in



directly-elected Parliament. A number of factors obscure the picture. Chief among these is the political group imbalance among survivors, closely reflecting the initial imbalance among the 1979 membership. Thus, although there are still 20 (out of 60) Conservative 1979 MEPs in the Parliament, there are just 7 (out of 17) Labour MEPs.<sup>51</sup>

Another factor which may serve to obscure any emerging pattern (or, more probably, may be part of that pattern), is the differential in participation rates.<sup>52</sup> Whereas 16 of the 20 Conservative MEPs participated in more than half of the 14 votes, 6 of the 7 Labour MEPs voted in half or less. This finding is significant in itself, but it does make direct comparisons more difficult.

The probable significance of low participation can perhaps best be understood by looking at the other side of the coin. The three EDG pro-integration 'musketees',

---

<sup>51</sup> And four of these (Buchan, Lomas, Megahy, and Seal) have remained unconverted anti-Marketees.

<sup>52</sup> Participation rates for the 30 were as follows.

14	PROUT		
13	NEWTON-DUNN PRAG		
12	BEAZLEY, P. JACKSON, Ch. PRICE SELIGMAN TURNER		
11	STEWART-CLARK		
10	CATHERWOOD SIMMONDS WELSH		
9	PATTERSON SCOTT-HOPKINS		
8	O'HAGAN SIMPSON	ADAM	
7		BALFE COLLINS LOMAS MEGAHY SEAL	
6	PLUMB		
5	BETHELL MOWELL		EWING HUME
4	MOORHOUSE	BUCHAN	PAISLEY

Christopher Jackson, William Newton-Dunn, and De Prag, all figure among the group boasting the high levels of participation, and this in itself is indication of active interest.<sup>53</sup> Conversely, low levels of participation might be expected to indicate lower levels of interest.

However, this correlation does not necessarily hold in the case of BLG members. It will be seen from their individual voting records that known pro-Marketee members such as Adam and Collins, have generally preferred abstention or absence to the group Whip. As previously stated, the advantage of abstention or absence stems from their fundamental ambiguity. On the other hand, it can be seen that the participation rate of known anti-Marketees, such as Buchan, Lomas, Megahy and Seal, has dropped off as their majority within BLG has disappeared: Buchan has not voted in any of the seven last votes; Lomas and Megahy, two out of seven; Seal, three. Overall, then, low participation rates among Labour MEPs can be explained by a mixture of discretion and disinterest.

Table 23 shows the overall voting record for the 30 MEPs in graph form.<sup>54</sup> It will be seen that, in almost

---

<sup>53</sup> Prout's exceptional 100 per cent participation rate can be partly explained by his keen interest in such matters, but also by the fact that for all of the period under review he had been either his group's leader or, more importantly, its chief Whip.

<sup>54</sup> As in the previous section, abstentions and absences have been summed. The figures are as follows.

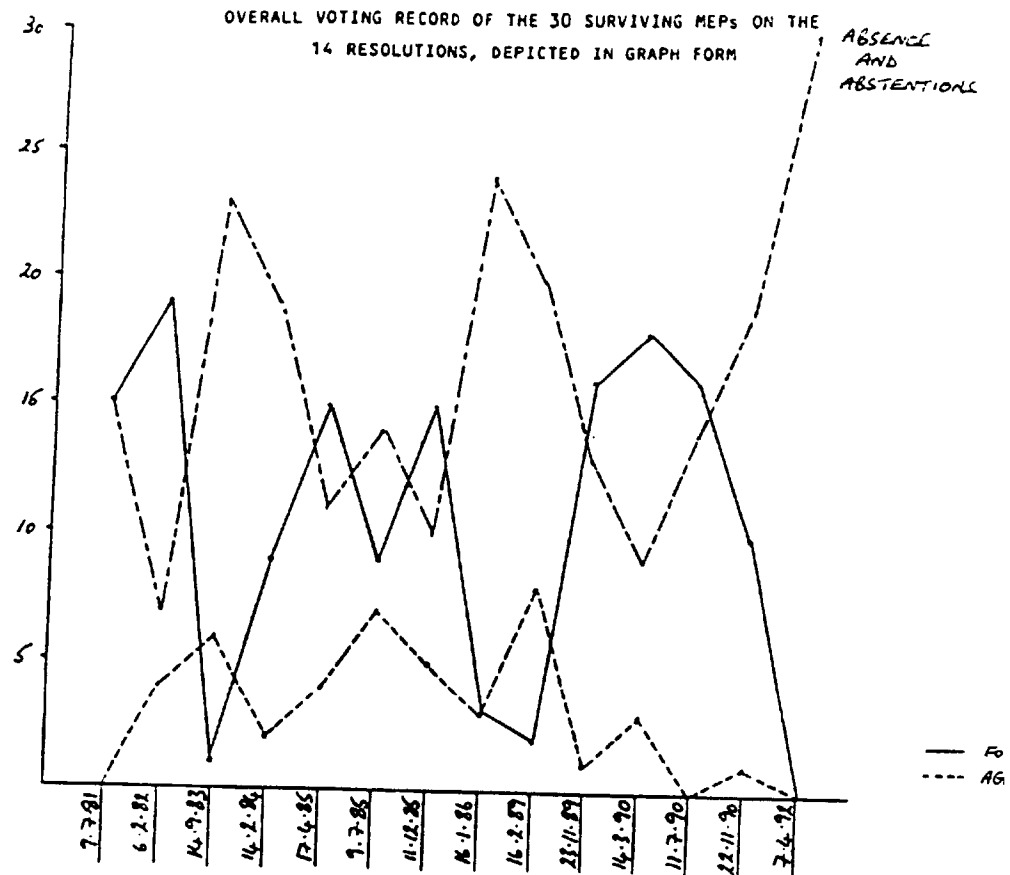
all respects, the graphs in Table 23 are mirror images of the graphs in Table 22; the views of the 30 surviving MEPs are a microcosm of the views of the UK membership as a whole. The only significant difference between the two diagrams is that the solidly anti-Market majority in the BLG in 1985 is less pronounced.<sup>55</sup>

---

OVERALL VOTING RECORD OF THE 30 SURVIVING  
MEMBERS: ABSTENTION AND ABSENCE  
COMBINED

	+	-	O/Ab
09.07.81	15	0	15
06.02.82	19	4	7
14.09.83	1	6	23
14.02.84	9	2	19
17.04.85	15	4	11
09.07.85	9	7	14
11.12.85	15	5	10
16.01.86	3	3	24
16.02.89	2	8	20
23.11.89	16	1	13
14.03.90	18	3	9
11.07.90	16	0	14
22.11.90	10	1	19
07.04.92	0	0	30

<sup>55</sup> Primarily because, as has already been remarked, the two noted pro-Marketeers, Adam and Collins, have preferred to abstain or absent themselves from votes on controversial institutional resolutions. There remains the case of Richard Balfe who, as has already been pointed out, was one of the nine original members of the 'Crocodile Group'. In his case, initial absence turned to opposition. He followed the BLG anti-Market Whip throughout 1985 and into early 1986, but by 1989 he was voting with the new, pro-reform, majority in the BLG. By 1992, Balfe was speaking of the need to construct a 'Euro-left' within the Labour Party, and signing letters together with the bulk of the pro-reform majority within the BLG/EPLP. (*The Independent*: 30.4.92) Here, perhaps, is an example of one of Cotta's converts.



Analysis of the overall voting records of the s surviving 1979 BLG members<sup>56</sup> reveals that a s occurred in late 1989, after the pro-reform lobby wi the group had been bolstered by new MEPs elected to

<sup>56</sup> The figures were as follows.

	+	-	0	Ab
09.07.81	2	0	0	5
06.02.82	1	3	1	2
14.09.83	0	5	0	2
14.02.84	0	1	1	5
17.04.85	0	4	1	2
09.07.85	0	5	0	2
11.12.85	0	5	0	2
16.01.86	0	2	1	4
16.02.89	0	2	2	3
23.11.89	3	0	0	4
14.03.90	2	3	0	2
11.07.90	2	0	0	5
22.11.90	1	0	0	6
07.04.92	0	0	0	7

group in the June 1989 European elections. Until then, votes in favour of reformist resolutions were non-existent, with abstainers and absentees regularly outnumbering 'no' voters. After that date, and with the 'blip' of three 'no' votes in the 14.3.90 vote, the 'no' and 'abstention' columns were empty, and the two pro-reform MEPs finally felt free to vote with the reform camp. The habitual 'no' voters.<sup>57</sup> were siphoned off into absenteeism.

iii. The Changing Views of the 1984 intake of Labour MEPs

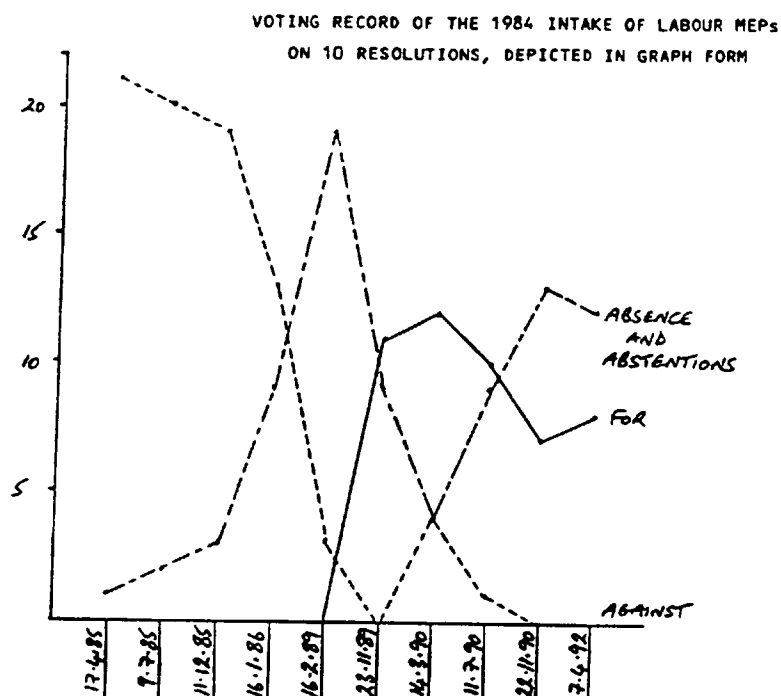
The most remarkable feature in this analysis from the point of view of Cotta's thesis has been the steady decline of active opposition, accompanied by, in the first instance, a rise in abstention or absenteeism and then, in the longer term, a gentle rise in active support. For the reasons described in the preceding section, other patterns are less clear than might have been desired. But those reasons<sup>58</sup> were much less in evidence in the case of the 1984 intake of UK MEPs.

---

<sup>57</sup> Buchan, Lomas, Megahy and Seal.

<sup>58</sup> In particular, political party imbalance and differentiated participation levels.

Table 24



In fact, the voting record of the 1984 intake of Labour MEPs<sup>59</sup> (Table 24<sup>60</sup>) provides not only an ele

<sup>59</sup> On the 10 of the 14 resolutions that have been voted their election. The figures were as follows.

N°	RESOLUTION	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAINED	ABSENT
22	17.04.85		21		1
22	09.07.85		20		2
22	11.12.85		19		3
22	16.01.86		13		9
22	16.02.89		3	7	12
20	23.11.89	11		1	8
20	14.03.90	12	4	1	3
20	11.07.90	10	1		9
20	22.11.90	7			13
20	07.04.92	8			12

example of Cotta's thesis at work but also of the way the process typically unfolds. The initial very high 'no' vote (21 out of 22) slowly declines, to be overtaken by the slowly increasing numbers of those abstaining or absenting themselves from the vote. In its turn, the figure for abstention/absence gradually declines and is itself overtaken by the numbers of those voting 'yes'. The 'no' vote, meanwhile, has dwindled to nought.

## 18. Conclusions

In overall terms, this analysis of the voting records of all UK MEPs on 14 pro-integration, pro-Parliament reformist resolutions has shown: a general and continuing decline in the level of active opposition; a general, though slightly more volatile, increase in the level of active support; and the widespread use, by pro- and anti- camps alike, of abstention and absenteeism as tactical devices. The marked decline in opposition and increase in support are

---

<sup>60</sup> Once again, abstentions (which occurred only in three votes in late 1989 and early 1990) and absence have been summed.

clearly in line with the behaviour Cotta's thesis would lead us to expect, and must therefore be seen as evidence in support of the theory.

A possible objection to this claim is that MEP attitudes towards institutional reform cannot only be influenced by their experiences in that institution. Surely, it might be argued, the changes wrought by N. Kinnock and John Major to the stances of the respective parties have had a knock-on effect on the respective party contingents in the European Parliament. One counter-argument might, in chicken-and-egg style, point out that the party contingents in the European Parliament have in no small way changed the attitudes of the domestic parties, and there is, in the author's view, more than a grain of truth in this, particularly since the election of MEPs personally close to N. Kinnock and John Major.<sup>61</sup>

But there is a more straightforward counter-argument, and that is that large numbers of MEPs have, from the inception of the directly-elected European Parliament, frequently demonstrated independence from the domestic party line, whether in government or opposition, and relative imperviousness to the imprecations of the Whips to boot. This independence largely explains why tactical abstention and technical absence have been so prevalent. In short, voting records on institutional resolutions provide strong evidence

---

<sup>61</sup> See, for example, Thomas (1992), and the accompanying commentaries by Elles (1992) and Martin (1992). (This, if it is true, would all be grist to Cotta's mill.)



suggest that membership of the directly-elected European Parliament has led even those members who were initially opposed or sceptical to embrace the reformist camp or, at the least, acquiesce by refraining from actively opposing it.

## PART V: CONCLUSIONS

### a. Professionalisation and Membership Stability

One of Cotta's necessary conditions is stability membership over time. The first part of this study considered a number of indicators which, taken together, strongly suggest that the European Parliament suffered a general decline in membership stability and professionalisation since the first direct elections in 1979. Inter-election turnover was apparent among all contingents elected by a version of the list system (that is, all but the United Kingdom), and particularly pronounced in the case of certain Member State contingents (Belgium, France, Italy). Members without any previous experience of the European Parliament represent a relatively large proportion of each electoral intake; more than 50 per cent in the case of France, Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands, and 45 per cent in the case of Belgium. Further, the overall proportion of inexperienced members increased in 1984 and few members of the 1979 intake remain, and the study has discovered a shrinking pool of members with both international parliamentary experience or of previous national parliamentary experience. One of the principal reasons for this growing inexperience is that first-time members are becoming younger, which in turn means that they are more likely to be career politicians.

The study found that the UK contingent - the least experienced in 1979 - is now, in terms of length of membership, the most experienced. However, the same tendency towards decreasing stability was also evident.

**b. 'Westminsterite' and 'exceptional' MEPs**

The study found two significant groupings within the UK contingent. In the first place, departure for Westminster was the second most important factor for electoral turnover after electoral defeat. 30 of the 57 1979 MEPs who participated in the EUI Survey admitted to a longer-term elective ambition outside the European Parliament. Few respondents recorded any European ambitions. A quarter of the 1979 intake have so far tried to win nomination to a Westminster seat, and an eighth have been successful. These 'Westminsterite' MEPs tend to be younger, and there are higher concentrations of them among those who either have previous political experience or have made previous attempts to gain parliamentary office. The 'local element' was found to be an important explanatory factor, with most successful Westminsterite MEPs nominated to constituencies within, or adjoining, their Euro-constituencies. This led to the observation that, for many MEPs, membership of the European Parliament represented a continuation, and not the beginning, of their elected political careers. Membership of the European Parliament could act as a 'stepping stone' to

Westminster. There was little evidence to suggest that membership of the European Parliament hindered a move to Westminster.

The study found that, although Westminster was perhaps not particularly well represented in the European Parliament after direct elections, Strasbourg (in the form of former MEPs) was certainly well represented in Westminster. Many successful Westminster MEPs have since gone on to successful front bench careers. However, the existence in the European Parliament of this significant minority of Ministers, shadow ministers, MPs and peers with previous experience of the European Parliament would appear to have made little qualitative difference (in the sense of bringing that experience to bear when relevant) to the Westminster policy process. Nevertheless, it was clear that Westminster continued to act as a considerable drain on youthful talent first elected to Strasbourg.

In the second place, the contingent also contained a significant group of older, more experienced, MEPs, some with regional (Northern Ireland, the Highlands and Islands) bases. As a consequence of the two parties' differing recruitment procedures and attitudes, together with the disproportionate effects of the first-past-the-post system and differential turnout, most of the 'exceptional' MEPs were to be found in the EEC. Exceptional Conservative MEPs enjoyed privileged positions within the EDG which, in turn, enjoyed considerable patronage powers as a result of

numerical strength. The EDG's numbers, and hence its patronage powers, gradually dwindled, but the still numerous exceptional MEPs continued to occupy a disproportionate share of hierarchical positions within the Group and the Parliament. Exceptional MEPs, perhaps because most of them were older and had already enjoyed previous careers, were more likely to correspond to the stereotype of the 'European Political Careerist'.

Overall, the intuitive exercise of constructing a number of stereotypes on the basis of career aims and motivations was successful in identifying the major groupings within the UK contingent. Westminsterite and exceptional MEPs were the two most significant and most numerous of those groupings. There was also clear evidence of a number of frustrated Westminsterites. Significant minorities of the UK contingent corresponded closely to the 'European Political Careerist' and 'Public Servant/Technician' stereotypes.

On the one hand, the existence of a large number of exceptional MEPs corresponding closely to the 'European Political Careerist' stereotype will tend to reinforce one of the conditions -distinctiveness- considered necessary in Cotta's thesis. On the other hand, the departure of large numbers of Westminsterite MEPs (and the continued presence of frustrated others) could undermine another of the conditions -stability over time- necessary for the causal relationship predicted by Cotta's thesis.

### c. Group patronage and assignment processes - 1

The existence of a coherent minority of pre-1979 members among the post-1979 membership, the inheritance of the political group and parliament administration, the need for immediate organisational capacity, and the absence of any coherent alternative, all led the first directly-elected Parliament to inherit largely intact the old patronage system and assignment processes. This system was and continues to be based on an unwritten principle of consensual and proportionate distribution of hierarchical positions calculated on the basis of the numerical strength of the political groups and of national contingents within them.

Within that system, 1979 Conservative MEPs, who were numerous and amounted to a political group in themselves, enjoyed a generous entitlement of positions. Surviving 1979 Conservative MEPs remain numerous, coherent, and dominant within their group (now a national contingent within the EPP), and have continued to enjoy a disproportionate share of the ED's entitlement. On the other hand, 1979 Labour MEPs, who began as an uneasy contingent within the large Social Group, were few, divided, dwindling, and uninfluential. Few of them are now left. Frequent shifts in the majority political tendency within the contingent have meant that few have managed to develop any distinct career pathway within the Parliament.

Appointment/election to the key hierarchical position of President of the Parliament has increasingly depended on a complex combination of factors and frequently unpredictable circumstances, many of them extraneous to the Parliament, but that there has been a clear trend towards the 'election' of agreed candidates. In this context, the study demonstrated two simultaneous trends of increasing fragmentation of political representation within the Parliament on the one hand, and the increasing dominance of the EPP and Socialist Groups on the other. As a consequence, the leaders of the two groups have become important alternative focusses of power and patronage, particularly through the increasingly influential Enlarged Bureau. Leaders of national contingents, particularly larger contingents, within these two groups can also be influential. Thus, as the Labour contingent has grown and become less antagonistic to the integration process it has become more influential within the Socialist Group. The British Conservatives would hope to enjoy similar influence within the EPP.

The study briefly considered the positions of Vice-Presidents and Quaestors, positions which usually consist of combinations of less power with quantities of privilege and prestige. Appointments to these positions are made chiefly through the consensual system and are therefore in the gift of the political groups and national contingents within them. The groups' decisions

depend on and flow from the nationality and political colour of the President.

**d. II - Committee and committee leadership, assignment**

The (chiefly American) literature provides insight concerning committee size manipulation as leadership strategy, and committee stratification. Within the European Parliament, the number of committees and size of committee membership, together with the distribution of positions, are in the gift of the political group and primarily the largest two. The study reveals considerable signs of 'patronage inflation': a steady increase in the number of committees (and inter-parliamentary delegations), and in the size of committee membership; a trend towards multiple assignments; introduction of substitute membership. There was a clear relationship between these trends and the linking of members' allowances to committee attendance.

The study found that, although difficult to pin down methodologically (assignment and transfer requests not being available), committee stratification does exist within the Parliament. Use of a 'composition stratification' revealed several trends. First, 'exceptional' MEPs have tended to dominate membership of the larger, more prestigious committees, and were largely absent from the smaller, more mundane committees. Second, the reverse of this coin,



'freshman' hypothesis, was seen to be largely true. It is difficult and takes time for new MEPs to get onto the more prestigious committees, and by the same token they are over-represented on the medium- and smaller-sized committees. Thirdly, there was some evidence over time of an upward dynamic, from smaller to larger committees, with substitute membership as an intermediate step.

Evidence of an upward dynamic was offset by the generalised phenomenon of committee specialisation. This led to the identification of three informal seniority principles: first, the privileged position of the 'exceptional' MEPs; second, seniority in the house (including the 'freshman' hypothesis); third, length of service on a committee (the 'Collins/Price phenomenon'). Non-exceptional MEPs have been able to develop successful career pathways by specialising in the smaller, less prestigious committees.

Committee chairmanships are invariably the result of prior, consensual agreements between the political groups and the national contingents within them. Empirical study again revealed the privileged position still enjoyed by the exceptional MEPs, and the 'freshman' hypothesis at work in these appointments.

The study was able to discern career pathways within the Parliament, but these involved a complex combination of committee, delegation, political group, national party contingent, and even inter-group positions. Appointment to formal positions is by way of consensual and frequently rotational mechanisms that

encourage committee specialisation. Patronage inflation and the consensual assignment mechanism suggest that party/group hierarchies wield patronage primarily in 'minimax' utilitarian fashion, rather than as normative, potentially disciplinary instrument.

#### e. Latent frustration?

The study found some evidence of latent institutional (as opposed to constitutional) frustration among UK MEPs. It was hypothesised that this frustration remained latent for two reasons. First, a large proportion of the Parliament's membership is habitual absentee and takes no active part in its proceedings. In its absence, it is argued, favours inertia. Second, despite its shortcomings, the consensual system is recognised as the best, or even the only, possible system and, to that extent that all MEPs benefit similarly from it, they acquiesce in its continuation.

Nevertheless, UK MEPs voiced dislike of the 'Buggin's turn' and d'Hondt systems and favoured more meritocratic mechanisms and structures, particularly for committee appointments. This consideration could be particularly important in a context where there is yet no organic link to an executive (it was seen that the provisions of the Maastricht Treaty, were it to be implemented, would represent a step in this direction) and where specialised committees could be seen as providing an alternative career structure. Absenteeism

is one explanatory factor for the lack of protest; the large number of Westminsterite MEPs could also be seen as an implicit consequence of the unmeritocratic structure of the Parliament, particularly since many of them now figure on the Westminster front benches. Institutional reform might perhaps render the appointments system clearer and more meritocratic, but the most appropriate and effective reforms would have to be constitutional in nature (that is, Treaty change enhancing the legislative role of the Parliament and its relationship to the executive).

#### **f. Changing attitudes to constitutional reform**

The examination of MEPs' voting records and static survey evidence indicates that the above conclusion is shared by a growing majority of UK MEPs. Voting procedures and the necessarily weak whipping procedure in the European Parliament have led to a generally high incidence of abstention, non-participation, and absenteeism, and abstention and absence have been used strategically by UK MEPs. When the anti-Market MEPs were in a majority within the BLG, Labour pro-Market MEPs tended to abstain or absent themselves from constitutional votes. Since the majority has shifted the other way, anti-integrationist Labour MEPs have increasingly tended to absent themselves from such votes. Conservative voting records showed a strong inverse relationship between abstention/absence and

'yes' votes. Abstention/absence has been repeatedly used by Conservative integration enthusiasts as an ambiguous way of pleasing their consciences and the British government/EDG Whip simultaneously.

Overall, the records reveal a general and continuing decline in the level of opposition to, and a general, though slightly more volatile increase in the level of active support for, integrationist constitutional reform. These twin trends were particularly pronounced among the Labour members first elected to the Parliament in 1984. Such clear empirical data enables us to conclude that membership of the directly-elected European Parliament has led even the members who were initially opposed or sceptical to embrace the reformist camp or, at the least, refrain from actively opposing it.

#### g. A paradox?

Frustration is the driving force of Cotta's thesis. Lack of power will drive MEPs to clamour for further powers. New powers can only be achieved through constitutional reform. Hence, frustration will lead to constitutional reform. But is this the only possible outcome?

This study has shown that frustration, especially among younger MEPs, may also lead to impatience and early departure for the more tried-and-tested (and less alien) waters of the House of Commons. An MP

ultimately enjoy less policy influence, but the career pathways are more straightforward, better known, and apparently more meritocratic. As has been seen, many MEPs have found it easy to win nomination to a Westminster constituency within their Euro-constituency; paradoxically, membership of the European Parliament aids the passage to Westminster. At the same time, younger MEPs (particularly young Conservatives) have found their way in the Parliament blocked by the privileged access to the higher and more glamorous hierarchical positions of a large number of exceptional MEPs. These factors, together with other subjective considerations, such as the onerous amounts of travel involved and the unglamorous reputation the Community suffers in the UK, have undoubtedly encouraged a good deal of youthful and ambitious talent to leave Strasbourg for Westminster.

In fact, Cotta's thesis contains a paradox. If MEPs had to choose between remaining in the European Parliament and fighting for constitutional reform, or nothing, there is little doubt that they would remain and fight. But, as we have seen, they may choose to go elsewhere, and membership of the parliament can even help them to get elsewhere. Faced as they are with an uphill, long-term, and frequently unrewarding constitutional fight, we should not be surprised if even many younger integrationist MEPs prefer to pursue their political careers in their national parliament. By the same token, we should not be surprised to find many

exceptional MEPs, with long and perhaps prestigious careers behind them, with relaxed and perhaps patrician attitudes to the domestic party's strictures, and with privileged access to hierarchical positions within the group and the Parliament (probably extending nomination to a safe seat), enthusiastically pursuing European political careers.

The apparent paradox brings us back to the discussion accompanying **Typology VI**. That there should be some turnover in Parliament's membership must be a good thing. At the same time, there must come a point where the parliamentary membership becomes too unstable for the Parliament to develop a coherent constitutional point of view. Although overall membership turnover is very high and has been increasing since the first direct elections, the consistency of the 14 resolutions analysed indicates that turnover has not yet undermined the integrationist effects of Cotta's thesis. In the particular case of the UK, a series of recent events suggest that the European Parliament may be becoming more, rather than less, attractive to ambitious British politicians. (In this context it should be pointed out that the large bloc of exceptional MEPs have been a temporary and gradually dwindling phenomenon.)

### Postscript

85.5 per cent of respondents to the 1983 EUI Survey<sup>1</sup> believed that they could have influence on the Parliament's decisions. As Wildenmann put it; "In comparison with what we know about other parliaments and assemblies, this figure is extremely high." (1984: 10) Such findings should be contrasted with reports about a growing malaise among backbenchers in the House of Commons. This is not just the well-documented sense of frustration among newcomers<sup>2</sup>, especially among those who stood in order to 'get things done', but also a more widespread and long-lasting feeling of frustration.<sup>3</sup>

The Labour Party has now lost four general elections in a row. This seems increasingly likely to become five.<sup>4</sup> On the Government backbenches, though the frustration induced by sheer weight of numbers<sup>5</sup> has diminished with the Government's reduced majority, expressions of unease are still common.

Immediately after the 1992 general election, Tony Banks, a Labour MP, announced that he was thinking of

---

<sup>1</sup> 283 of the Parliament's then 410 members.

<sup>2</sup> For example, Butt, 1967, MacLennan, 1987.

<sup>3</sup> So that a journalist was moved to entitle a recent article on the subject 'Corridors of the Powerless?' (Bunting, 1992. See also Jogerst, 1991)

<sup>4</sup> Especially as the Home Secretary has announced his hope that the Boundary Commissions' review should be finished by the end of 1994, five years earlier than originally planned. Though these changes will come too late for the 1994 European elections, they are expected to yield the Conservative Party 20 new seats in the next general election. (Guardian, 6. and 16.6.92, Independent, 11.4.92, Sunday Times, 12.4.92)

<sup>5</sup> What one MP called the 'lobby fodder syndrome'.

trying to become an MEP instead.<sup>6</sup> In a much-publicised episode, the high profile Edwina Currie, a Conservative MP and former minister, turned down an offer of a junior ministerial position in the government re-shuffle immediately after the 1992 General Election. Later, in a radio programme, she intimated that she, too, would be interested in becoming an MEP.<sup>7</sup>

In a letter to the Independent, 18 Labour MEPs declared that "Faced with another five years of ... Tory government, we must look to elections to the European Parliament in 1994 to build upon the successes gained in the general election."<sup>9</sup> The accepted view within the BLG/EPLP<sup>10</sup> is that defeat in 1992 has, through several probable factors as the mid-term swing and the protest vote, saved several seats that would otherwise have been lost and in addition made several Tory seats seem more vulnerable.

There has been a general build-up in media interest in the Parliament and its UK members.<sup>11</sup> Radio

---

<sup>6</sup> Later, on a radio programme, he explained this announcement: "I don't like to think that I am a serious politician. Serious politicians don't attempt to influence power, and I believe this is increasingly the case. It should be found in Brussels and Strasbourg." (BBC, 8.5.92) However, it should be pointed out that Blair's Westminster constituency would almost certainly be emasculated by the next Boundary Commission.  
<sup>7</sup> An earlier diary item had spoken of "her eagerness to develop her interests in Europe, including learning French". (Independent, 28.4.92)

<sup>8</sup> Including Adam, Balfe and Collins from the 1979 intake, the Westminsterites, and one former minister.

<sup>9</sup> The Independent, 30.4.92

<sup>10</sup> Despite an embarrassing Walworth Rd. analysis that argued that Labour could expect to lose 13 of its 45 European seats in 1994. (The Independent, 7.5.92).

Channel Four and BBC film teams have been present in force in Strasbourg corridors since the beginning of 1992, making many documentary films, respectively, on union-sponsored MEPs and MEPs' working lives.<sup>11</sup>



television news programmes increasingly solicit MEPs for their opinions. It is no exaggeration to say that they are beginning to enjoy similar levels of national public exposure to those enjoyed by the average backbench MP. Recent journalistic reports (for example, Hoggart, 1992) give the impression that UK MEPs increasingly see themselves as being in a superior position to that of UK MPs.<sup>12</sup>

The 1991 Labour Party conference took a number of decisions with far-reaching consequences. One of these was the creation of a sort of second class membership, whereby MEPs are now part of the leadership electoral college (which has thus been extended by about 15 per cent), although they cannot nominate candidates.<sup>13</sup> In an interview during the Labour Deputy leadership campaign, Ann Clwyd was reported to have said that:

"Starting again now in politics, she would stay in Brussels. The facilities are better, the atmosphere friendlier, you don't have to wait seven hours, hoping to speak, then not be called.

'It's where the future lies, and you can get things done. I changed an EC budget

---

<sup>12</sup> Many of them saw the Queen's much-postponed visit to the Parliament in May 1992 as a further indication of government recognition of their importance.

<sup>13</sup> Presumably, the logic is that MEPs cannot nominate because they cannot themselves be nominated. This fine distinction caused some confusion at Labour Party headquarters. Ballot papers for the leadership and deputy leadership nomination were mistakenly sent out to Labour MEPs and, announcing her withdrawal from the deputy leadership contest, Ann Clwyd angrily explained that she had been misled into believing she had been promised the support of 35 Labour MEPs (BBC, 28.4.92. - she needed 54 votes in all).

once, and got more money for Wales. Here, it's more difficult to change things."

(Davies, 1992)

Proof that the Conference had created an important bl another candidate for the deputy leadership, Marga Beckett, became conspicuously present in the Strasbo corridors and in meetings of the BLG/EPLP and Socialist Group, once Clwyd had withdrawn.

The EDG-EPP merger took place on 1 May 1992. T this had been primarily a marriage of practi convenience rather than the result of any ideologi imperative was underlined when the President of Christian Democrat (also EPP) group in the parliament assembly of the Council of Europe strictly ruled out similar merger on straightforward "ideological groun (Agence Europe, 6.5.92), as it was also by vocifer objections from many Conservative MPs (for example, B 27.4.92). At the same time, the leader of the Social Group in the European Parliament, Jean-Pierre Cot, the merger as an indication of increasing polarisation, with the EPP now sporting 165 votes to Socialist Group's 180. Although the chief practi consequence is more likely to be the reinforcement the two groups' oligarchical grip on patronage.

If this postscript had been written before th June 1992 referendum in Denmark, it would most probæ have consisted of a confident prediction that Parliament's new powers would continue to make it ■ attractive to young, ambitious politicians. Should

Maastricht Treaty's provisions (particularly those relating to the Commission President) not be implemented, the trends identified in this study will still continue. But, whether temporary or not, the Danish rejection of the Maastricht Treaty has brought a number of slowly-receding themes back into the daylight. Such a situation, whatever the outcome, is bound to re-awaken tensions between the BLG/EPLP and the other component parties of the Socialist Group (Palmer, 1992), and between British Conservatives and their Christian Democratic partners.

**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL PREAMBLE**

This thesis necessarily assumes a certain familiarity with its background context; that political relations between the United Kingdom and European Community, and particularly the attitudes of the major political parties. Overviews are provided by de la Serre (1987), George (1990), and Nicholls (1990) though all concentrate on more recent times. Greg (1983) has examined the constitutional problems of membership of the Community posed for the United Kingdom. A plethora of publications preceded the first direct elections. Herman and Lodge (1978) is a good example and provides ample bibliographical leads (see also Lodge and Herman (1982), and Lodge (1983)). The perceptual studies of the advent of direct elections are two written by 'insiders', merit particular attention since many of their observations are still entirely pertinent. These are: Coombes (1979), Jackson Fitzmaurice (1979), and Marquand (1979). Herman Hagger (1980) provides a comparative account of the legislative process introducing direct elections in the Netherlands. Holland (1986) studied the MEP recruitment process in the UK. Inglehart *et al* (1980), Inglehart and Rabier (1981) and Inglehart (1984) studied candidates' attitudes.

The sadly discontinued 'Nuffield' studies (Butler and Marquand, 1981; Butler and Jowett, 1985) provide thorough accounts of the 1979 and 1984 European elections in the United Kingdom; there was no such study of the 1989 elections. If, as pundits suggest, the elections provoke greater interest, it is to be hoped that this series will be started up again. The *Three Guides* (Wood and Wood, 1979, Wood, 1984, Wood, 1989) provide succinct analyses of all three European elections so far, together with descriptions of major events and activities of the outgoing and incoming legislatures. The *European Journal of Political Research* devoted a special issue to the first elections (Chambers and Charlot, 1980), and *Electoral Studies* (Butler and Särilvik, 1984, 1989) to the second and third. For the 1984 elections, see also Jowett (1985) and Hearl (1985). More empirical/analytical approaches to the elections are to be found in Reif (1984 and 1985).

Despite its popularity as a subject for research, there have been few large-scale empirical studies of the European Parliament's membership, a shortcoming heavily bemoaned by at least one author (van Schendelen, 1982, 22). Kirchner (1983) is a rare exception, Bowler and Farrell (1990) another. Both were mail-administered questionnaires. The only full-scale survey research project on the European Parliament's membership involving long personal interviews with over 80 per cent of the total membership, remains the 1983 EUI Survey. Bardi (1989) provides a full description of this survey together with a thorough-going analysis of its representational styles. See also Wildenmann (1984) and Bardi (1984a) for early analyses.

Pridham, G, and Pridham, P, (1981) was an early study of transnational party cooperation. Vredeling (1972) puzzled over why truly European political parties obstinately refused to establish themselves. Pridham G. later returned to the theme (1986). Attina (1978) considered the consociational nature of the political groups within the nominated Parliament, elements of which survive. Featherstone (1988) describes the evolution of European Socialist Parties' attitudes to European integration, but his most unequivocal conclusion is to underline "the importance of the individual national contexts for the policy adopted towards supranational integration" (1988: 33). Wheaton (1972) studied Labour Party attitudes to Europe between 1950 and 1971. Byrd's (1975) study included the periods immediately before and after accession. Bilski (1977) examined the relationship between the left wing of the party and growing anti-Market attitudes. Robins (1979) brings the study of the party's views upto direct elections. Featherstone (1981) looked at Labour MPs' attitudes to European integration post-direct elections. Grahl and Teague (1987) examine the origin and form of the Labour Party's hostility to the European Community in the 1980s, and its gradual (temporary?) reversal. Fitzmaurice (1992) succinctly describes the Labour Party's changing attitudes to the European Community to date. Tindale (1992) covers the same ground in more polemical style. Haahr (1992) provides a comparative analysis, mainly from a neo-functionalist viewpoint, of the changes in attitudes of the British Labour Party and the Danish Social Democratic Party. George and the Nuffield studies (op cit) all describe the major political parties' policy platforms. Sweeney's analysis of the Socialist and Communist Groups within the Parliament (1984) led her to conclude that such divisions were 'ideologically illogical' and that the left should realign - surely an even more pertinent argument in 1992! Marquand (1979) had argued similarly (124) but extended the argument to all of the Parliament's political groups. (111-128)

The Times Guides (op cit) annex all the political parties' European manifestos in full. Perhaps surprisingly, there have been few studies (Burgess, 1989, being a rare exception) specifically focussing on the Conservative Party's attitudes towards the European Community and the European Parliament since direct elections, a period precisely coinciding with the 'Thatcher era' and including frequent fundamental policy confrontations. Unpublished early accounts include Ashford (1983) and Lopez (1984). Nor have there so far been any publications, factual or analytical, dealing with the changing (and generally improving) nature of United Kingdom MEPs' rights and relations vis-à-vis their Westminster colleagues and the Conservative and Labour Party organisations, despite lengthy debate prior to the first elections (although most of that was in the Lords rather than the Commons - see, for example, Butler

and Marquand (*op cit*): 30-44). On the distinct closely-related subject of Westminster (House of Lords) Strasbourg links, see for example the recommendation House of Lords (1992: 45).

Analytical works on the European Parliament's Draft Treaty on European Union are legion. Among the comprehensive are Bieber *et al*, eds. (1985), Capotorti *et al* (1985, 1986). See also Jacqu  (1985) Nickel (1984), and Nickel and Corbett (1985). Chronological, explanatory works on the development of the Parliament's constitutional strategy are rarer. Burrows (1984), Cardozo and Corbett (1986), Corbett (1984), H nsch (1984), Lodge (1984, 1986) and Spinelli himself (1984) all provide partial accounts of the early years. The Crocodile newsletter provides a running comment. Jacobs and Corbett (1990: 150-151, and 248-253) provide a good summary of the Spinelli initiative, the Federalist Inter-Group for European Union, and the Draft Treaty. The most comprehensive account is to be found in Pryce, ed. (1989), and particularly the three essays on, respectively, the Parliament's Draft Treaty (Schmuck), the Dooge Committee (Keatinge and Murphy) and the Single European Act (Corbett). For the Single European Act see also de Ruyt (1987). For the (Maastricht) Intergovernmental Conference on Political Union, see Corbett (1992). By far the most thorough objective analysis in English of the European Parliament's case for European Union, including large-scale deposition of evidence, is to be found in House of Lords (1985). The European Parliament itself published a collated version of constitutional proposals for the 1990 Intergovernmental Conference (1991c).

European Parliament (1987) is a good factual formal guide to the European Parliament's history, powers, and relations with the other European institutions. It is now out of date, but the For Ahead series are regularly up-dated before European elections. Though less detailed and more legalistic, Lasok and Bridge (1991) is more regularly up-dated. There have been many textbooks on the European Parliament. By far the best successor to Fitzmaurice (1985) and Palmer (1981) and also the most recent, is the work by two parliamentary insiders, Jacobs and Corbett (1990). The latter is to all intents and purposes equivalent for the European Parliament of works such as Griffith and Ryle (1989), and I make no apology for having quoted extensively from it in the text.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ashford, N., 1983, 'The Conservative Party and European Integration, 1945-1975', Ph.D. thesis, Coventry
- Attina, F., 1978, 'Interpretazione e ipotesi sul sistema dei partiti del Parlamento europeo', Rivista italiana di scienza politica, 2
- Attina, F., 1990, 'The Voting Behaviour of the European Parliament members and the problem of the Europarties', European Journal of Political Research, 18(5)
- Aydelotte, W.O. (ed.), 1977, The History of Parliamentary Behaviour, Princeton University Press, Princeton
- Bakema, W., 1991, 'The Ministerial Career', in Blondel and Thiébault (eds.)
- Barber, J.D. (ed.), 1974, Choosing the President, Prentice-Hall, New York
- Bardi, L., 1984, 'Members of the European Parliament: Experiences, Attitudes and Perceptions', in Reif, K. (ed), 1984
- Bardi, L., 1984, 'I parlamentari europei. Risultati di un'indagine', Democrazia e Diritto, 1984
- Bardi, L., 1989, Il Parlamento della Comunità Europea, Il Mulino, Bologna
- Beecham, D., 1974, Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics, London
- Bell, C.G., 1975, The First Term: A Study of Legislative Socialization, Sage, Beverley Hills, California
- Berrington, H., 1987, 'The Changing Party System', in Robins, L. (ed.)
- Bibes, J., Menudier, H., De la Serre, F., Smouth, M.-C., 1980, Europe Elects its Parliament, Policy Studies Institute, London
- Bieber, R., 1984, 'The Evolution of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament', in Hrbek et al (eds.)
- Bieber, R., 1984, 'Achievements of the European Parliament, 1979-1984', Common Market Law Review, 21
- Bieber, R., Jacqué, J.-P., and Weiler, J. (eds.), 1985, An Ever Closer Union. A Critical Analysis of the Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union, Luxembourg
- Bilski, R., 1977, 'The Common Market and the Growing Strength of Labour's Left Wing', Government and Opposition, 12
- Binyon, M., 1989, 'Review of the Campaign in Europe', in Wood, A., 1989
- Black, G., 1970, 'A Theory of Professionalization in Politics', American Political Science Review, LXIV
- Blondel, J., 1986, 'Towards a Comparative Analysis of Cabinet Structures', in Maihofer, W.
- Blondel, J., 1991, 'The Post-Ministerial Careers', in Blondel and Thiébault (eds.)
- Blondel, J., and Thiébault, J.-L. (eds.), 1991, The Profession of Government Minister in Western Europe, MacMillan, London

- Bodiguel, J., 1986, 'Que sont les ministres devenus?', Pouvoirs, 36
- Bowler, S., and Farrell, D., 1990, 1992, 'MEPs, Voters and Interest Groups: Representation at the European Level', Manchester (Unpublished Reports to the European Commission)
- Bowler, S., and Farrell, D., 1991, 'Representation and the European Parliament in 1990; Electoral Systems and Constituency Service', EPRU Working Paper 3, Department of Government, Victoria University of Manchester
- Bradshaw, K., and Pring, D., 1973, Parliament and Congress, Quartet, London
- Brandt, W., 1976, Speech to Congress of Europe, organised by the European Movement, Brussels, 6.2.76 (cited in Majocchi and Rossolillo, 1976: 219)
- Brogan, H., 1990, The Penguin History of the United States of America, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth
- Buck, P., 1963, Amateurs and Professionals in British Politics, 1918-1959, University of Chicago Press, Chicago
- Budgen, N., 1992, 'New Heads on the Block', The Guardian, 20.5.92
- Bullock, C., 1970, 'Apprenticeship and Committee Assignments in the House of Representatives', Journal of Politics, 32
- Bullock, C., 1972a, 'House Careerists: Changing Patterns of Longevity and Attrition', American Political Science Review, CXVI
- Bullock, C., 1972b, 'Freshman Committee Assignments and Re-election in the United States House of Representatives', American Political Science Review, CXVI
- Bullock, C., 1973, 'Committee Transfers in the United States House of Representatives', Journal of Politics, 35
- Bullock, C., and Sprague, J., 1969, 'A Research Note on the Committee Reassignments of Southern Democratic Congressmen', Journal of Politics, 31
- Bulmer, S., George, S., and Scott, A., 1992, The United Kingdom and EC Membership Evaluated, Pinter Publishers, London
- Bunting, M., 1992, 'Corridors of the Powerless', The Guardian, 4.1.92
- Burgess, M., 1984, 'Federal Ideas in the European Community: Altiero Spinelli and the European Union, 1981-1984', Government and Opposition, 3
- Burgess, M., 1989, 'The Convergence of the British and European Conservative Traditions', in Federalism and European Union (same author), London/New York, 1989
- Butler, D., and Kitzinger, U., 1976, The 1975 Referendum, MacMillan, London
- Butler, D., and Marquand, D., 1981, European Elections and British Politics, Longmans, London
- Butler, D., Marquand, D., and Goschalk, B., 1979, 'The Euro-Persons', New Society, 3 May 1979



- Butler, D., and Jowett, P., 1985, Party Strategies in Britain - A Study of the 1984 European Elections, MacMillan, London and Basingstoke
- Butler, D., and Särilvik, B., 1984, Electoral Studies, 3(3) (Special issue on the 1984 European elections)
- Butler, D., and Särilvik, B., 1989, Electoral Studies, 8(3) (Special issue on the 1989 European elections)
- Butler, M., 1986, Europe: More Than a Continent, William Heinemann, London
- Butt, R., 1967, The Power of Parliament, Constable, London
- Byrd, P., 1975, 'The Labour Party and the European Community', Journal of Common Market Studies, 13
- Cain, B., Ferejohn, J., and Fiorina, M., 1983, 'The Constituency Component: A Comparison of Service in Great Britain and the United States', Comparative Political Studies, 1
- Capotorti, F., Hilf, M., Jacobs, F., and Jacqué, J.-P., 1985, Le Traité d'Union Européenne - Commentaire du projet adopté par le Parlement Européen, Brussels
- Capotorti, F., Hilf, M., Jacobs, F., and Jacqué, J.-P., 1986, The European Union Treaty, Clarendon Press, Oxford
- Cardozo, R., 1989, 'The Project for a Political Community (1952-54)', in Pryce, R. (ed.), 1989
- Cardozo, R., and Corbett, R., 1986, 'The Crocodile Initiative', in Lodge, J. (ed.)
- Chabod, J., 1978, L'Idée d'Europe Unie de 1919 à 1939, Grenoble
- Charlot, M., and Charlot, J., 1980, European Journal of Political Research, 8(1) (Special issue on the 1979 European elections)
- Chiti-Batelli, A., I 'poteri' del Parlamento europeo, Dott. A. Guiffre Editore, Milan
- Clapp, C.L., 1964, The Congressman: His Work as He Sees It, Doubleday, New York
- Clark, G., 1984, 'Five Years Spent Striving for Power', in Wood, 1984
- Commission of the European Communities, 1972, 'Report of the Working Party Examining the Problem of Enlargement of the European Communities' ('Vedel Report'), Bulletin of the European Communities, Supplement 4/72
- Coombes, D., 1977, 'The Problem of Legitimacy and the Role of Parliament', in C. Sasse et al, Decision-Making in the European Community, Praeger, New York
- Coombes, D., 1979, The Future of the European Parliament, Policy Studies Institute, London
- Coombes, D., 1988, 'The European Parliamentary Tradition and its Significance for European Integration', Paper delivered at an international symposium, 'Beyond Traditional Parliamentarism: the European Parliament in the Community System, Strasbourg, 17 and 18 November 1988, European Parliament
- Corbett, R., 1984, 'The European Parliament and its Initiatives', Contemporary Review, 1421
- Corbett, R., 1989, 'The 1985 Inter-Governmental Conference and the Single European Act', in Pryce (ed.), 1989

- Corbett, R., 1992a, European Parliament Socialist Group Working Paper on the Consequences for the European Parliament of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union, Brussels (unpublished)
- Corbett, R., 1992b, 'The Intergovernmental Conference on Political Union', Journal of Common Market Studies, 3
- Corbett, R., and Jacobs, F., 1988, 'Summary Report on the European Parliament's Current Activities and Working Structures', Paper delivered at an international symposium, 'Beyond Traditional Parliamentarism: the European Parliament in the Community System, Strasbourg, 17 and 18 November 1988, European Parliament
- Cot, J.-P., 1992, 'The Late Christian Democracy', Agenda (Brussels)
- Cotta, M., 1980, 'Classe politica e integrazione europea. Gli effetti delle elezioni dirette del parlamento comunitario', Rivista italiana di scienza politica, X
- Cotta, M., 1984, 'Direct Elections of the European Parliament: A Supranational Political Elite in the Making?', in Reif, K. (ed.)
- Cotta, M., 1991, 'Conclusion. Ministerial Careers; Two Perspectives', in Blondel and Thiébault (eds.)
- Crick, B., 1970, The Reform of Parliament, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London
- Curtice, J., 1981, 'An Analysis of the Results', in Butler, D., and Marquand, D.
- Czudnowski, M. (ed.), 1982, Does Who Governs Matter?, Northern Illinois University Press, Dekalb
- Davidson, R., 1981, 'Subcommittee Government: New Channels for Policy Making', in Mann and Ornstein (eds.)
- Davies, H., 1992, 'What nobody ever asked Ann Clwyd', The Independent, 28.4.92
- Dawnay, I., 1992, 'Labour faces internal splits on Europe', Financial Times, 23.6.92
- de la Serre, F., 1987, La Grande-Bretagne et la Communauté Européenne, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris
- de Ruyt, J., 1987, L'Acte unique européen, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Brussels
- de Winter, L., 1991, 'Parliamentary and Party Pathways to the Cabinet', in Blondel and Thiébault (eds.)
- Drewry, G. (ed.), 1985, The New Select Committees: A Study of the 1979 Reforms, Clarendon Press, Oxford
- Eulau, H., 1985, 'Committee Selection', in Loewenberg et al.
- Eliassen, K., and Pedersen, M., 1978, 'Professionalization of Legislatures: Long-Term Changes in Political Recruitment in Denmark and Norway', Comparative Studies in Society and History, XX
- Elles, J., 1992, 'Comment on 'Assessing MEP Influence on British EC Policy' by Stafford T. Thomas', Government and Opposition, 27(1)
- Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1982, 15th Edition, Micropaedia, Volume V, London

- Englefield, D. (ed.), 1984, Commons Select Committees: Catalysts for Progress?, Longman, London
- Epstein, L., 1980, 'What Happened to the British Party Model?', American Political Science Review, 1
- European Commission, 1992, Treaty on European Union, Luxembourg
- European Parliament, various dates, 'Grey Lists' (regularly up-dated lists of Parliament's members, of their political group affiliations, and of their committee and delegation assignments): 17.7.79, 24.9.79, 10.12.79, 14.4.80, 13.10.80, 9.2.81, 1.9.81, 9.3.82, 11.10.82, 11.4.83, 24.10.83, 12.3.84, 24.7.84, 10.9.84, 11.2.85, 9.9.85, 10.3.86, 2.6.86, 6.10.86, 16.2.87, 6.4.87, 26.10.87, 12.10.87, 8.2.88, 13.6.88, 10.10.88, 13.3.89, 25.7.89, 23.10.89, 12.2.90, 11.6.90, 19.11.90, 18.2.91, 6.4.92
- European Parliament, various dates, 'Info Memo' (regular briefings and press releases)
- European Parliament, 1982a, Vade Mecum, Luxembourg
- European Parliament, 1982b, Forging Ahead. Thirty Years of the European Parliament, 1st Edition, Luxembourg
- European Parliament, 1984, Vade Mecum, Luxembourg
- European Parliament, 1987, Vade Mecum, Luxembourg
- European Parliament, 1989, Forging Ahead. The European Parliament, 1952-1988, 36 Years, 3rd Edition, Luxembourg
- European Parliament, 1991a, Rules of Procedure, Luxembourg
- European Parliament, 1991b, Vade Mecum, Luxembourg
- European Parliament, 1991c, 1993: The New Treaties. European Parliament Proposals, Luxembourg
- European Parliament, 1992, Facts Book - Elections 1989 Up-Date, Press and Information Service, Luxembourg
- Featherstone, K., 1981, 'Socialists and European Integration: The Attitudes of British Labour Members of Parliament', European Journal of Political Research, 9
- Featherstone, K., 1988, Socialist Parties and European Integration. A Comparative History, Manchester University Press, Manchester
- Fenno, R., 1973, Congressmen in Committees, Little, Brown, Boston
- Fiorina, M., Rohde, D., and Wissel, P., 1975, 'Historical Change in House Turnover', in Ornstein, N.J. (ed.)
- Fitzmaurice, J., 1979, 'The Danish System of Parliamentary Control Over the EC', in Herman and van Schendelen
- Fitzmaurice, J., 1985, The European Parliament (second edition), Saxon House, Farnborough
- Fitzmaurice, J., 1992, 'Labour and Europe', in Telo, M. (ed.), Politica Europea, Annali, 1991-1992, Franco Agnelli, Milan (forthcoming)
- Fowler, L., Douglass, S., and Clark, W., 1980, 'The Electoral Effects of House Committee Assignments', Journal of Politics, 42
- Frears, J., 1991, Parties and Voters in France, Hurst, London

- Gawthrop, L., 1966, 'Changing Membership Patterns in House Committees', American Political Science Review, CX
- Gene Frankland, E., 1977, 'Parliamentary Career Achievement in Britain and West Germany: A Comparative Analysis', Legislative Studies Quarterly, II(2)
- Gerth, H., and Wright Mills, C. (eds.), 1948, From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London
- George, B., and Evans, B., 1983, 'Parliamentary Reform: The Internal View', in Judge, D. (ed)
- George, S., 1990, An Awkward Partner, Oxford University Press
- Gitelson, A., Dudley, R., and Dubnick, M., 1991, American Government (Second Edition), Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston
- Goodwin, G., 1959, 'The Seniority System in Congress', American Political Science Review, CV
- Graham, J., 1982, 'Legislative Careers in the French Chambers and U.S. House, 1871-1940', Legislative Studies Quarterly, VII
- Grahl, J., and Teague, P., 1987, 'The British Labour Party and the European Community', The Political Quarterly, 59(1)
- Gregory, F., 1983, Dilemmas of Government, Martin Robertson, Oxford
- Griffith, J., and Ryle, M., Parliament. Functions, Practice and Procedures, Sweet and Maxwell, London
- Haahr, J., 1992, 'European Integration and the Left in Britain and Denmark', Journal of Common Market Studies, 30(1)
- Hagger, M., and Wing, M., 1979a, 'Legislative Roles and Clientele Orientations in the European Parliament', Legislative Studies Quarterly, 14
- Hagger, M., and Wing, M., 1979b, 'The Deconcentration of Legislative Power: the Development of Committees in the European Parliament', European Journal of Political Research, 7
- Hagger, M., 1980, 'The United Kingdom: The Reluctant Europeans', in Herman, V., and Hagger, M. (eds.)
- Hainsworth, P., 1979, 'The European Election of 1979 in Northern Ireland: Linkage Politics', Parliamentary Affairs, 32(4)
- Hainsworth, P., 1984, 'The European Election in Northern Ireland', Parliamentary Affairs, 37(4)
- Hänsch, K., 'The Reform Proposals, the Strategy of Small Steps Versus the General Reform', in Hrbek et al, 1984
- Hearl, D., 1986, 'The United Kingdom', in Lodge, J. (ed), 1986
- Hedlund, R., 1985, 'Organisational Attributes Of Legislative Institutions: Structure, Rules, Norms, Resources', in Loewenberg, et al
- Heffer, S., 1992, 'The Turning of the Tories', The Spectator, 13.6.92

- Herman, V., and Lodge, J., 1978a, 'Is the European Parliament a Parliament?', European Journal of Political Research, VI
- Herman, V., and Lodge, J., 1978b, The European Parliament and the European Community, MacMillan, Basingstoke
- Herman, V., and Hagger, M., 1980, The Legislation of Direct Elections to the European Parliament, Gower, Farnborough
- Herman, V., and van Schendelen, R., 1979, The European Parliament and the National Parliaments, Saxon House, Farnborough
- Hill, D. (ed.), 1984, Parliamentary Select Committees in Action: A Symposium, Glasgow University Politics Department, Glasgow
- Hinckley, B., 1970, 'Incumbency and the Presidential Vote in Senate Elections', American Political Science Review, VXIV
- Hirschman, A., 1970, Exit, Voice, and Loyalty. Responses to decline in firms, organisations, and states, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Hoffman, M. (ed.), 1991, The World Almanac and Book of Facts 1992, Pharos Books, New York
- Hoggart, S., 1992, 'Community Centre', Observer Magazine, 10.5.92
- Holland, M., 1981, 'The Selection of Parliamentary Candidates - Contemporary Developments and the Impact of the European Elections', Parliamentary Affairs, XXXIV
- Holland, M., 1986a, 'British Political Recruitment: Labour in the Euro-Elections of 1979', British Journal of Political Science, 17
- Holland, M., 1986b, Candidates for Europe, Gower, Aldershot, Hampshire
- House of Commons, 1978, First Report from the Select Committee on Procedure, HC 588-I, 1977-8, HMSO, London
- House of Lords, 1985, European Union, 14th Report (1984-85 Session) of the Select Committee on the European Communities, with Minutes of Evidence, HL 226, HMSO, London
- House of Lords, 1986, Privileges and Immunities of Members of the European Parliament, 8th Report (1985-86 Session) of the Select Committee on the European Communities, with Evidence, HL 105, HMSO, London
- House of Lords, 1992, Report from the Select Committee on the Committee Work of the House, Volume I - Report (1991-92 Session), HL Paper 35-I, HMSO, London
- Hrbek, R., Jamar, J., Wessels, W. (eds.), 1984, Le Parlement européen à la veille de la deuxième élection au suffrage universel direct: bilan et perspectives 1979-1984, De Tempel, Bruges
- Huntington, S., 1973, 'Congressional Responses to the Twentieth Century', in Truman, D. (ed.), 1973
- Hurd, D., 1979, An End to Promises: Sketch of a Government 1970-1974, Collins, London

- Inglehart, R., 1984, 'The First Direct Elections to the European Parliament: Some Findings from the Candidates Study', in Reif, 1984
- Inglehart, R., Rabier, J., Gordon, I., and Lehman Sorensen, C., 1980, 'Broader Powers for the European Parliament? The Attitudes of Candidates', European Journal of Political Research, 8, 1
- Inglehart, R., and Rabier, J., 1981, 'What Kind of Europe?', Government and Opposition, 16, 2
- Inter-Parliamentary Union, 1986, Parliaments of the World: A Comparative Reference Compendium - Second Edition, Gower, Aldershot
- Ionescu, G. (ed.), 1972, The New Politics of European Integration, MacMillan, London
- Ionescu, G., and Morgan, R., 1988, 'The Present State of Relations between the Political Parties in the EP and in the National Parliaments', European Parliament, Luxembourg (Paper delivered at an international symposium, 'Beyond Traditional Parliamentarism: the European Parliament in the Community System, Strasbourg, 17 and 18 November 1988, European Parliament)
- Jacobs, F., and Corbett, R., with Shackleton, M., 1990, The European Parliament, Longman, Harlow
- Jackson, R., and Fitzmaurice, J., 1979, The European Parliament, Penguin, London
- Jacqué, J.-P., 1983, 'Conquêtes et revendications: l'évolution des pouvoirs législatifs et budgétaires du Parlement européen depuis 1979', Journal of European Integration, 6
- Jacqué, J.-P., 1985, 'The Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union', Common Market Law Review, 1
- Jenkins, R., 1989, European Diary 1977-1981, Collins, London
- Jogerst, M., 1991, 'Backbenchers and select committees in the British House of Commons: Can Parliament offer useful roles for the frustrated?', European Journal of Political Research, 20
- Johnson, N., 1977, 'Select Committees as Tools of Parliamentary Reform: Some Further Reflections', in Walkland and Ryle (eds.)
- Johnson, R., 1973, 'The British Political Elite, 1955-72', in Archives Européennes de Sociologie, XIV
- Jowett, P., 1984, 'Great Britain', Electoral Studies, 3(3)
- Jowett, P., 1985, 'The Second European Elections: 14-17 June 1984', West European Politics, 7(1)
- Judge, D., 1981, Backbench Specialisation in the House of Commons, Heinemann, London
- Judge, D. (ed.), 1983, The Politics of Parliamentary Reform, Heinemann, London
- Judge, D., 1992, 'The 'effectiveness' of the post-1979 select committee system: the verdict of the 1990 procedure committee', The Political Quarterly, 63(1)
- Keating, P., and Murphy, A., 1989, 'The European Council's Ad Hoc Committee on Institutional Affairs (1984-1985)', in Pryce (ed), 1989

- Keohane, R., and Hoffmann, S. (eds.), 1991, The New European Community, Westview Press, Oxford
- Kernell, S., 1977, 'Toward Understanding 19th Century Congressional Careers: Ambition, Competition and Rotation', American Journal of Political Science, XXI
- King, A., 1977, Britain Says Yes, American Enterprise Institute, Washington
- King, A., 1981, 'The Rise of the Career Politician in Britain - And its Consequences', British Journal of Political Science, XI
- King, A., 1991, 'The British Prime Ministership in the Age of the Career Politician', West European Politics, XIV(2), and
- King, A., 1991, 'The British Prime Ministership in the Age of the Career Politician', in G. W. Jones (ed), West European Prime Ministers, Frank Cass, London
- Kirchner, E., 1984, The European Parliament: Performance and Prospects, Gower, Aldershot
- Kostroski, W., 1978, 'The Effect of Number of Terms on the Re-Election of Senators, 1920-1970', Journal of Politics, XXXX
- Lasok, D., and Bridge, J., 1991, Law and Institutions of the European Communities, Fifth Edition, Butterworths, London
- Laundy, P., 1989, Parliaments in the Modern World, Dartmouth Publishing Co. Ltd., Aldershot
- Lijphart, A., 1992, Parliamentary versus Presidential Government, Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Lipgens, W., 1984, Documents on the History of European Integration, Vol. 1: Continental Plans for European Union, 1939-1945, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin/New York
- Lodge, J., 1983, The European Community: Bibliographical Excursions, Frances Pinter, London
- Lodge, J., 1984, 'The Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union', Common Market Law Review, 1
- Lodge, J. (ed.), 1986a, Direct Elections to the European Parliament, 1984, MacMillan, London
- Lodge, J., (ed.) 1986b, European Union. The European Community in Search of a Future, London
- Lodge, J., and Herman, V., 1982, Direct Elections to the European Parliament: A Community Perspective, MacMillan, London
- Lodge, J., 1989, 'The European Parliament - from 'Assembly' to Co-Legislature; Changing the Institutional Dynamics', in Lodge, J. (ed), 1989
- Lodge, J., 1989, The European Community and the Challenge of the Future, Pinter Publishers, London
- Loewenberg, G., Patterson, S.C., and Jewell, M.E. (eds.), 1985, Handbook of Legislative Research, Harvard University of Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- Lopez, D., 1984, 'The Conservative Government and the European Community, 1979-1984', M.Sc. dissertation, London
- Louis, J. (ed.), 1985, L'Union Européenne, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Brussels

- Louis, J., and Waelbroeck, D., 1986, Le Parlement Européen dan l'Evolution Institutionnelle, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Brussels
- Ludlow, P., 1991, 'The European Commission', in Keohane and Hoffman (eds.)
- MacLennan, R., 1987, 'Parliamentary Representation: What is Wrong with the British Model?', Parliamentary Affairs, 40(3)
- Maihofer, W. (ed.), 1986, Noi si mura, European University Institute, Florence
- Majocchi, V., and Rossolillo, F., 1979, il Parlamento europeo, Guida Editori, Napoli
- Marchision, J.-C., 1992, 'L'OPA des conservateurs sur...le PPE' (interview with Jean-Pierre Cot), Derniers Nouvelles d'Alsace, 14.5.92
- Marquand, D., 1979, Parliament for Europe, Jonathan Cape, London
- Mann, T., and Ornstein, N. (eds.), 1981, The New Congress, American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C.
- Marsh, J., 1985, 'Representational Changes: The Constituency MP', in Norton, P. (ed.)
- Martin, D., 1992, 'Comment on 'Assessing MEP Influence on British EC Policy' by Stafford T. Thomas', Government and Opposition, 27(1)
- Martin, D., 1991, 22.11.90 Resolution on the Two Intergovernmental Conferences in the Context of Parliament's Strategy, OJ N° C 324, 24.12.90, 219-238
- Masters, N., 1961, 'Committee Assignments in the House of Representatives', American Political Science Review, CV
- Matthews, D., 1960, U.S. Senators and Their World, Vintage Press, New York
- Matthews, D., 1974, 'Presidential Nominations: Process and Outcomes', in Barber, J.D. (ed.)
- Matthews, D., 1985, 'Legislative Recruitment and Legislative Careers', in Loewenberg, G., et al
- Meehl, 1977, 'The Selfish Voter Paradox and the Thrown-Away Vote Argument', American Political Science Review, Vol. LXXI(1)
- Mellors, C., 1978, The British MP: A Socio-Economic Study of the House of Commons, Saxon House, Farnborough, Hampshire
- Menke, K., and Gordon, I., 1980, 'Differential Mobilisation for Europe: A Comparative Note on Some Aspects of the Campaign', in Charlot, M., and Charlot, J. (eds.)
- Mount, F., 1992, 'A Constitution Unwritten and Unloved', The Guardian, 12.5.92
- Nicholls, A., 1992, 'Britain and the EC: the historical background', in Bulmer, George and Scott
- Nickel, D., 1984, 'Le Projet de Traité instituant l'Union Européenne', Cahiers de droit Européen, 5-6
- Nickel, D., and Corbett, R., 1985, 'The Draft Treaty Establishing European Union', Yearbook of European Law



- Noel, E., 1992, 'Reflections on the Maastricht Treaty', Government and Opposition, 27(2)
- Norton, P. (ed.), 1990, 'Parliaments in Western Europe', special issue of West European Politics, 13:3
- Norton, P., 1990, 'Parliament in the United Kingdom: Balancing Effectiveness and Consent?', West European Politics, 13:3
- Norton, P., 1975, Dissension in the House of Commons: Intra-Party Dissent in the House of Commons' Division Lobbies, 1945-74, MacMillan, London
- Norton, P., 1980, Dissension in the House of Commons, 1974-79, Clarendon Press, Oxford
- Norton, P., 1985, Parliament in the 1980s, Basil Blackwell, Oxford
- Norton, P., 1986, 'Committees in the House of Commons', Social Studies Review, Vol. 1 (3)
- Norton, P., 1987, 'Independence, Scrutiny and Rationalisation: A Decade of Change in the House of Commons', in Robins, L. (ed.)
- Norton, P., (forthcoming), National Parliaments and the Single European Act
- Nothomb, C.-F., 1988, Contribution to TEPSA Conference on 'Beyond Traditional Parliamentarianism' (Author's notes)
- Official Journal of the European Communities, 'C Series' (Minutes of European Parliamentary Sessions) and Annex (Debates of the European Parliament)
- Ornstein, N. (ed.), 1975, Congress in Change: Evolution and Reform, Praeger, New York
- Oxford University Press, 1972, A Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary, Volume 1, Oxford at the Clarendon Press
- Oxford University Press, 1983, The Oxford Paperback Dictionary, 2nd Edition, OUP, Oxford
- Oxford University Press, 1987, The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English, 7th Edition, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, Oxford
- Palmer, J., 1992, 'Left blocks Kinnock's EC Candidacy', The Guardian, 11.6.92
- Palmer, M., 1981, The European Parliament: What It Is, What It Does, How It Works, Pergamon Press, Oxford
- Palmer, M., 1983, 'The Development of the European Parliament's Institutional Role Within the European Community, 1973-83', Journal of European Integration, 6
- Pasetti-Bombardella, F., 1984, 'Le rôle des commissions', in Hrbek, Jamar and Wessels (eds.)
- Patterson, P., 1967, The Selectorate - The Case for Primary Elections in Britain, MacGibbon and Kee, London
- Peabody, R., Ornstein, N., and Rohde, D., 1976, 'The U.S. Senate as a Presidential Incubator: Many Are Called But Few Are Chosen', Political Science Quarterly, CXXXXI

- Pedersen, M., 1976, Political Development and Elite Transformation in Denmark, Sage, Beverley Hills, California
- Pedersen, M., 1977, 'The Personal Circulation of a Legislative: The Danish Folketing, 1849-1968', in Aydelotte, W.O. (ed)
- Perkins, L., 1981, 'Member Recruitment to a Mixed Goal Committee: The House Judiciary Committee', Journal of Politics, 43
- Pescatore, P., 1978, 'L'Executif communautaire: justification du quadripartisme institué par les Traités de Paris et Rome', Cahiers de droit européen, 4
- Pflimlin, P., 1991, Mémoires d'un Européen de la IVe et la Ve République, Fayard, Paris
- Pinder, J., 1988, 'Role Concepts for the European Parliament and their Implications', European Parliament, Luxembourg (Paper delivered at an international symposium, 'Beyond Traditional Parliamentarism: the European Parliament in the Community System, Strasbourg, 17 and 18 November 1988, European Parliament)
- Pitkin, H., 1972, The Concept of Representation, University of California Press, Berkely and Los Angeles
- Polsby, N., 1968, 'The Institutionalisation of the U.S. House of Representatives', American Political Science Review, CXII
- Polsby, N. (ed.), 1971, Congressional Behaviour, Random House, New York
- Polsby, N., Gallaher, M., and Rundquist, B., 1969, 'The Growth of the Seniority System in the U.S. House of Representatives', American Political Science Review, CXIII
- Price, D., 1971, 'The Congressional Career: Then and Now', in Polsby, N. (ed.)
- Price, D., 1975, 'Congress and the Evolution of Legislative "Professionalism"', in Ornstein, N.J. (ed.)
- Price, D., 1977, 'Careers and Committees in the American Congress: The Problem of Structural Change', in Aydelotte, W.O. (ed.)
- Pridham, G., and Pridham, P., 1981, Transnational Party Cooperation and European Integration, Allen and Unwin, London
- Pridham, G., 1986, 'European Elections, Political Parties and Trends of Internationalisation in Community Affairs', Journal of Common Market Studies, 4
- Pryce, R., 1962, The Political Future of the European Communities, John Marshbank, London
- Pryce, R., 1989, The Dynamics of European Union (Second Edition), Routledge, London
- Ranney, A., Pathways to Parliament: Candidate Selection in Britain, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, Wisconsin
- Ray, D., 1974, 'Membership Stability in Three State Legislatures: 1893-1969', American Political Science Review, CXVIII

- Ray, B., 1980, 'Federal Spending and the Selection of Committee Assignments in the U.S. House of Representatives', American Journal of Political Science, XXIV
- Ray, B., and Smith, S., 1984, 'Committee Size in the U.S. Congress', Legislative Studies Quarterly, 9
- Reif, K. (ed.), 1984, European Elections 1979/81 and 1984: Conclusions and Perspectives from Empirical Research, Quorum, Berlin
- Reif, K. (ed.), Ten European Elections, Gower, Farnborough
- Reif, K., Cayrol, R., and Neidermayer, O., 1980, 'National Political Parties' Middle Level Elites and European Integration', European Journal of Political Research, 8(1)
- Rice, S., 1929, Quantitative Methods in Politics, Knopf, New York
- Riddell, P., 1988, 'The Making of a Modern Minister', Financial Times, 22 & 23.10.88
- Robins, L. (ed.), 1987, Political Institutions in Britain. Development and Change, Longman, London
- Robins, L., 1979, The Reluctant Party. The Labour Party and the European Communities, MacMillan, London
- Rohde, D., and Shepsle, K., 1973, 'Democratic Committee Assignments in the House of Representatives: Strategic Aspects of a Social Choice Process', American Political Science Review, CXVII
- Rothman, D., 1966, Politics and Power: The United States Senate 1869-1901, Harvard University Press, Cambridge
- Rush, M., 1969, The Selection of Parliamentary Candidates, Nelson, London
- Rush, M., 'The 'Selectorate' Revisited: Selecting Parliamentary Candidates in the 1980s', in Robins, L., (ed.)
- Ryle, M., and Richards, P. (eds.), 1988, The Commons Under Scrutiny (Third revised edition), Routledge, London
- Scalingi, P., 1980, The European Parliament. The Three-Decade Search for a United Europe, Aldwych Press, London
- Schmuck, O., 1989, 'The European Parliament's Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union (1979-84)', in Pryce, R. (ed.)
- Shackleton, M., 1990, Financing the European Community, (a Chatham House Paper), Pinter Publishers, London
- Shepsle, K., 1978, The Giant Jigsaw Puzzle: Democratic Committee Assignments in the Modern House, University of Chicago Press, Chicago
- Shonfield, A., 1973, Europe: Journey to an Unknown Destination, Penguin, Harmondsworth
- Smith, S., and Ray, B., 1983, 'The Impact of Congressional Reform: House Democratic Committee Assignments', Congress and the Presidency, 10
- Spinelli, A., 1984, Towards the European Union, Sixth Jean Monnet Lecture, European University Institute, Florence, 13 June 1984

- Struble, R., 1979-80, 'House Turnover and the Principle of Rotation', Political Science Quarterly, CXXXIV
- Study of Parliament Group, 1978, Committees in the House of Commons, PEP, London
- Swanson, W., 1969, 'Committee Assignments and the Nonconformist Legislator: Democrats in the U.S. Senate', Midwest Journal of Political Science, 13
- Sweeney, J., 1984, 'The Left in Europe's Parliament: The Problematic Effects of Integration Theory', Comparative Politics, 1
- TEPSA (Trans European Policy Studies Association), 1988, 'Beyond Traditional Parliamentarianism: The European Parliament in the Community System - Summary Report', European Parliament, Luxembourg (Paper delivered at an international symposium, 'Beyond Traditional Parliamentarianism: the European Parliament in the Community System, Strasbourg, 17 and 18 November 1988, European Parliament)
- Thomas, S., 1992, 'Assessing MEP Influence on British EC Policy', Government and Opposition, 27(1)
- Thöne, E., 1982, 'Das direkt gewählte Europäische Parlament: Ein Beitrag zur Abgeordnetensoziologie', Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen, Jahrgang 13, Heft 2, Juni
- Tindale, S., 1992, 'Labour Learns to Love the Community', Government and Opposition, 63(3)
- Truman, D. (ed.), 1973, The Congress and America's Future, 2nd Edition, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey
- Van Schendelen, M., 1988, 'The European Parliament: More or Less than a Parliament?', European Parliament, Strasbourg (Paper delivered at an international symposium, 'Beyond Traditional Parliamentarianism: the European Parliament in the Community System, Strasbourg, 17 and 18 November 1988, European Parliament)
- 'Vedel Report' - See Commission of the European Communities, 1972
- von der Groeben, H., 1985, The European Communities: the Formative Years, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg
- Vredeling, H., 1972, 'The Common Market of Political Parties', in Ionescu (ed.)
- Wahlke, J., Eulau, H., Buchanan, W., and Ferguson, L., 1962, The Legislative System: Explorations in Legislative Behaviour, Wiley, New York
- Walkland, S., and Ryle, M. (eds.), 1977, The Commons in the Seventies, Fontana, London
- Weber, M., 1930 (?), The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, ??????
- Weber, M., 1948, 'Politics as a Vocation', in Gerth and Wright Mills
- Weiler, J., 1988, 'The European Parliament, European Integration, Democracy and Legitimacy', European Parliament, Luxembourg (Paper delivered at an international symposium, 'Beyond Traditional

- Parliamentarism: the European Parliament in the Community System, Strasbourg, 17 and 18 November 1988, European Parliament)
- Wessels, W., 1988, 'Evolving Patterns of the European Parliament's Role Performance since 1979 in Terms of Policy Making', European Parliament, Luxembourg (Paper delivered at an international symposium, 'Beyond Traditional Parliamentarism: the European Parliament in the Community System, Strasbourg, 17 and 18 November 1988, European Parliament)
- Westefield, L., 1974, 'Majority Party Leadership and the Committee System in the House of Representatives', American Political Science Review, CXVIII
- Westlake, M., 1990, The Origin and Development of the Question Time Procedure in the European Parliament, Florence, EUI Working Paper EPU N° 90/4
- Westlake, M., 1991, 'Democratisation as a Two-Way Process: Survey Evidence of the Effect of Direct Elections on Members of the European Parliament', Brussels (unpublished manuscript)
- Westlake, M., 1992a, 'The European Parliament's Presidency: An Analysis of Elections, 1979-1992', Brussels (unpublished manuscript)
- Westlake, M., 1992b, 'Defining Committee Stratification in the European Parliament: Formulating a Composite Stratification', Brussels (unpublished manuscript)
- Westlake, M., 1992c, 'Debates and Explanations of Votes Accompanying 14 Integrationist Resolutions Adopted by the European Parliament', Brussels (unpublished manuscript)
- Wheaton, M., 1972, 'The Labour Party and Europe 1950-71', in Ionescu (ed.)
- Whiteman, D., 1983, 'A Theory of Congressional Organisation: Committee Size in the U.S. House of Representatives', American Politics Quarterly, 11
- Who's Who, 1991, A & C Black, London
- Who's Who in European Institutions, Organisations and Enterprises, 1985, Sutters International, Tavernio, Italy
- Wildenmann, R., 1984, 'Presentation of Preliminary Results', unpublished paper delivered to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, 16 February
- Wildenmann, R., and Castles, F. (eds.), 1986, Visions and Realities of Party Government, W. de Gruyter, Berlin
- Wilson, J., 1962, The Amateur Democrat: Club Politics in Three Cities, University of Chicago, Chicago
- Wing, M., Hagger, M., and Atkinson, J., 1980, 'Some Dynamic Aspects of British Representation in the EP', paper presented to the ECPR Conference Workshop 'Direct Elections to the European Parliament', Florence, 25-30.3.80
- Witmer, T., 1964, 'The Aging of the House', Political Science Quarterly, CXXIX
- Wolters, M., 1982, 'European Interspaces: A Roll Call Analysis of European Parliament Division Since the Direct Elections', paper delivered to the ECPR

- March/April 1982 Workshop on Decision-Making Processes  
in European Integration, Aarhus University, Aarhus
- Wood, A., 1984, The Times Guide to the European Parliament  
1984, Times Books, London
- Wood, A., 1989, The Times Guide to the European Parliament  
1989, Times Books, London
- Wood, D., and Wood, A., 1979, The Times Guide to the  
European Parliament 1979, Times Books, London
- Young, J., 1966, The Washington Community: 1800-1828,  
Columbia University Press, New York

#### PERIODICALS AND REVIEWS

American Journal of Political Science  
American Political Science Review  
American Politics Quarterly  
Archives européennes de sociologie  
British Journal of Political Science  
Cahiers de droit européen  
Common Market Law Review  
Comparative Politics  
Comparative Political Studies  
Comparative Studies in Society and History  
Congress and the Presidency  
Contemporary Review  
Crocodile Newsletter  
Electoral Studies  
European Journal of Political Research  
Government and Opposition  
Journal of Common Market Studies  
Journal of European Integration  
Journal of Politics  
Legislative Studies Quarterly  
Midwest Journal of Political Science  
Parliamentary Affairs  
The Political Quarterly  
Political Science Quarterly  
Pouvoirs  
Rivista italiana di scienza politica  
Social Studies Review  
West European Politics  
Yearbook of European Law  
Zetschrift für Parlamentsfragen

#### NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

Agence Europe  
Agenda (Brussels)  
The Daily Telegraph  
Derniers Nouvelles d'Alsace  
The Economist Magazine  
The Evening Standard  
The Financial Times  
The Guardian  
The Independent  
Kangaroo Newsletter  
Libération

The Listener  
 La Libre Belgique  
 Le Monde  
 New Society  
 The New Statesman and Society  
 The Observer  
 The Spectator  
 The Sunday Times  
 The Times

**OBITUARIES**

(Three members of the original 1979 intake of UK MEPs have since died.)

Sir Brandon Rhys Williams; The Times, 14.5.88  
 Basil De Ferranti; The Times, 26.9.88  
 Dame Shelagh Roberts; The Independent, 20.1.92

**OTHER MEDIA**

Reference has been made to a number of recent radio broadcasts. Dates are of first broadcast.

- BBC, Radio Four 24.4.92, Talking Politics (includes an analysis of the powers of the Whips in the House of Commons - presented by Peter Hennessy)
- BBC, Radio Four 27.4.92, The Today Programme (interview with Lord Bethell, MEP, and Nicholas Budgen, MP, about the EPP-EDG merger)
- BBC, Radio Four 28.4.92, The World at One (interview with Ann Clwyd, MP and former MEP, about her withdrawal from the Labour Party deputy leadership)
- BBC, Radio Four 8.5.92, Any Questions? (with Edwina Currie, MP, Tony Banks, MP, Charles Kennedy, MP, and Sir Charles Powell - discussion about future political intentions and possibility of becoming an MEP)













