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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS

- The title of this talk is wide.
- It must have left you wondering just what I would try to cover.
- One obvious approach would be to give you a broad survey of the Community's relations with different parts of the world.
- I shall not take this course, on account of the competition.
- Foreign Minister Thorn, the President in office of the Council of the European Communities, gave just such a survey in his speech to the UN General Assembly yesterday.
- So I want to follow a different approach.
- Instead of telling you what the end product is, I will try, in these brief remarks, to tell you about the machinery which churns it out.
- In case you find this a rather limited approach, let me say straightaway that, when I have finished, I shall be delighted to respond to questions about any aspect of the Community's external relations.
- Either about the machinery.
- Or about the substance.
- So, if some of you are wanting to quiz me about the Community's attitude on North/South questions, on protectionism, on the CSCE meeting taking place in Madrid, on the Middle-East, on the Community's relations with COMECON, on the Euro/Arab Dialogue, or on anything else, you will have the opportunity to do so.

What is the Community ?

- Now to get back to that title - the external relations of the European Community.
- Its air of simplicity is deceptive.
- The term "the European Community" can be used in many different ways.  
so
- Sometimes it is used to refer, not only to the EEC, but to the European Coal and Steel Community and the European Atomic Energy Community also.
- Sometimes it is used, in a wider sense still, to embrace the machinery of the political co-operation.
- Well today, I am going to try and simplify things a bit by at least leaving aside the Coal and Steel Community and the Atomic Energy Community.

- 2 - Of course, both Communities have a substantial range of external relations; but these are nevertheless much less important than the external relations of the EEC.
- I shall limit myself, therefore, to the EEC.
  - And to the political Co-operation.

### The EEC

- The founding fathers of the EEC, when they drafted the Rome Treaty, knew very well that its range of activities would lead it to establish external relations, although I doubt whether any of them would have guessed how important these external relations would have become today, only 22 years after the Treaty came into force.
- They gave the EEC the power to conclude international agreements covering any matter within its competence: the interpretation since given by the Community Court of Justice to the notion of competence has given this power wide application.
- As time went by, experience showed that it was often necessary to conclude agreements with third countries which covered, not only matters within the Community's competence, but also matters which remained within the competence of member states.
- To meet this need, the Community which is nothing if not dynamic and evolutive, developed the concept of the mixed agreement, to which not only the Community, but also all its member states are parties.
- As the Community has passed from infancy to adolescence, its fields of competence have progressively widened.
- At the same time, it has emerged as one of the world's three major economic groupings.
- Perhaps I can throw in just a few facts and figures.
- In 1978 the Community's GDP nearly equalled that of the US and was double that of Japan.
- But of course we are much more dependent on foreign trade than you.
- In the same year we took 38 % of world imports, compared with your 14 % and Japan's 6,5 %.
- the export picture was similar.
- Incidentally the EEC was taking 22 % of your exports.
- Increasingly, third countries are knocking at the door of the Community, and asking to negotiate agreements on a wide range of subject.
- The range of subjects covered by these agreements is very varied.
- I offer you a non-exhaustive list which, as an exception to my groundrule, touches on the work of all three Communities: framework agreements for economic cooperation; trade questions; scientific and technological cooperation, environment and transport; and fisheries.

- No need to say that the importance of the Community's agreements varies greatly.
- At one end of the scale, for example, you have the second Lomé Convention, a mixed agreement, linking together the Community and its member states on the one hand, and 60 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, in a broad and imaginative partnership, aimed at promoting the development of the latter.
- At the other end of the scale, if I may go from the sublime to the ridiculous, I offer you a recent agreement with Israel, suspending a tariff reduction on Israeli tomato concentrates.
- In parallel with all this treaty activity, there has been a steady growth in the development of systematic, official relations between the Community and individual third countries.
- By mid- 1980, no less than 117 of them had established diplomatic missions accredited to the central institutions of the Community in Brussels.
- In recent years, there has been a development in the reverse direction.
- The Commission, which is responsible for the day-to-day conduct of the Community's international relations, has progressively opened delegations in third countries or with international organisations.
- They now number 59 in all.
- The duties and importance of these delegations are very varied.
- At the top end of the range you have our Mission in Washington, responsible for the day-to-day conduct of the Community's relations with the US Government - a complex, but challenging task.
- With its help we conduct a continuous, in depth, series of contacts and consultations, at every level from the President downwards.
- This relationship has proved its value.
- Since the enlargement of the Community in 1973, the international economic climate has been continuously disturbed.
- Pressures for protectionism have been growing on both sides of the Atlantic.
- But so far, due to an efficient early warning system, and mutual trust, the Community and the US, the world's two biggest economic units, have avoided any serious row in the trade field.
- We must try to keep it that way.
- It is natural that I should, in this audience, dwell a little on our bilateral relationship.
- Next in importance, you have our Mission in New York, responsible for relations with the UN.

- We have medium sized missions in Tokyo, Ottawa, Bangkok, Geneva, Vienna and so forth.

And,

- at the bargain basement end, we have a number of mini-delegations established in some of the smaller ACP countries, whose essential role is to administer aid granted by the Community under the Lomé Convention.
- So far, I have been talking about bilateral treaties and bilateral relations.
- But the founding fathers also foresaw, and provided for, the need for the Community to participate in multilateral agreements and international organisations.
- The most striking use made of this facility is perhaps to be seen in the Community's participation in GATT.
- Here, much and indeed most of the subject matter discussed is of Community competence.
- Where this is so, even though it is the member states and not the Community which are parties to GATT, it is the Community, represented by the Commission, which negotiates and concludes agreements binding the member states.
- Given the trading weight of the Community, it was in fact the most important partner in the recent, successful Tokyo Round Negotiations, where we worked very closely indeed with the US Government.
- But one swallow does not make a summer: I certainly would not try to kid you into thinking that our relationship with GATT is typical.
- At the time when the Community's position in that organisation was being established, the other club members had a strongly positive approach towards us.
- As a result, the Community's insertion into the ball game was accomplished very smoothly.
- In other international organisations, the pattern varies very much.
- The Community's position depends of course partly on its competences, but usually a good deal more on the statutes of the international organisation and the attitude towards us of its members.
- Take the case of the UN for example.
- The Community is thus debarred.
- Instead of membership, it has observer status.
- Within the UN family, however, many international conventions are negotiated.

- 5- Where matters of Community competence are concerned, it is necessary that the Community should accede if they are to be effective in its territory.
- The principle of this has already been recognised.
  - The Community, for example, became a party to the UNCTAD conventions on wheat, tin, cocoa and coffee.
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- I believe that a trend has been set here, which will increasingly be followed.
  - To complete this potted survey of the Community's participation in international gatherings, I should perhaps say one word about a very particular kind of gathering, namely the Western European Summits.
  - 4 of the Community's member states take part in their own right.
  - But, since 1977, the Community as such has been represented alongside them.
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- Up to this point, I have talked about the Community's role in the external field without mentioning how the point of view it expresses is developed within the Community's own machinery.
  - To deal with this question in detail would take a long time.
  - But I think it may be helpful to give you some very broad indications.
  - The basic system of the Rome Treaty, as you know, is that the Commission proposes policy lines, the European Parliament expresses an opinion on them, the Council decides, and the Commission executes.
  - In a very broad sense, it can be said that this system applies in the working up of the directives which are given to the Commission before it sets out to negotiate international agreements on behalf of the Community, whether of a bilateral or multilateral nature.
  - I have already remarked that the day-to-day conduct of external relations is in the hands of the Commission, and that it is the Commission which establishes and directs our delegations in third countries.
  - All this is fully in line with the philosophy of the founding fathers.
  - But in recent years, there has been a development which they did not foresee, namely the growing role of the so-called Presidency of the Community.
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- Each member state in turn holds this Presidency for 6 months at a time.
  - During this period it is responsible for chairing the Community's Council, which brings together Ministers of the Nine more than sixty times a year.
  - It also chairs every one of the enormous number of dependent committees of officials.
  - There are many reasons, not all of them related to external relations, why the Presidency's role within the Community machinery has tended to grow.
  - I have already alluded to one of them, namely the need to insert the Community into international situations where the Commission alone is not regarded as sufficient or in some cases even acceptable.

./ Thus, at the UN, or at Western

6 - Thus, at the UN, or at Western European Summits, the Community is represented jointly by the Presidency and the Commission.

- Much the same, with variations of detail, is true of Community representation at the CSCE and in the Euro/Arab Dialogue.

#### European Political Co-operation

- That is all I shall say, for the moment, about the Community aspects of our external relations.

- Now I turn to the European Political Co-operation.

- Born only in 1970, it is less than half the age of the EEC.

- Its creation reflected a new stage along the path of European unification.

- At the end of the 1960's, the Community had got over some serious initial growing pains.

- And the Six original member states had to decide where to go next.

- They agreed to enlarge and strengthen the Community.

- They also agreed to set alongside it an organisation, which we have since christened European Political Co-operation (or EPC), whose task would be to work towards greater political unification, notably as regards international affairs.

- At first sight, there is perhaps something surprising in the fact that, at a time when the Community was itself rapidly developing its own external relations, a body should have been set up in parallel and, as some wrongly thought, in competition.

- But there was a good reason for this.

- The Community operates under tight rules and disciplines.

- Community legislation and Community agreements are legally binding for all member states.

- The member states were perfectly happy to accept this degree of discipline for matters of Community competence.

- But they did not want to do so for other aspects of their international relations.

- They wanted to work more closely together on these, but nevertheless in a looser and more informal way.

- In 1970, the twin aims of political co-operation were defined by the member states as being:

• "To ensure, by regular information and consultations, a

• "To reinforce their solidarity by harmonising their views, by concerting their attitudes, and (where possible and desirable) by common actions".

- To these aims, three years later, an important political engagement was added.

/The member states then agreed that

- 7 The member states then agreed that they would consult together on all important foreign policy questions before fixing their own positions definitely.
- This far-reaching engagement has been largely, though not entirely, respected.
  - I did not think it necessary, when talking about the EEC, to describe its various institutions - Parliament, Council, Commission and Court of Justice - because these are relatively well known.
  - I stress the word relatively.
  - The majority of the Community's own citizens are in fact blissfully unaware of them, or at least of how they work.
  - But I felt that, in this audience, the situation would be different.
  - Be that as it may, the machinery of the political co-operation is not nearly so well known.
  - So: I hope you will bear with me if I describe briefly how it works today.
- The Foreign Ministers meet in this framework about 15 times a year.
  - The Political Committee, which underpins them, and which is composed of senior officials from the Foreign Offices of the Nine, meets about once a month.
  - This Committee is the central pivot of the whole machinery.
  - It is supported by about a dozen working groups, composed of sectoral experts from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs.
  - The work of the Foreign Ministers, and that of the Political Committee, is normally based on a written report.
  - Sometimes Ministers will simply take note, and give instructions for further work.
  - Sometimes they will decide on a common action by the Nine.
  - Where a common action is decided, it frequently takes the form of a public declaration or a diplomatic démarche.
  - But it may be more directly operational.
  - This was the case when the Nine adopted a code of conduct for their business enterprises working in South Africa.
  - It was the case again when the European Council, meeting at Venice last June, agreed on a series of principles in relation to the Arab-Israel dispute and on the opening of exploratory talks by M. Thorn, now President of the Council, with all the parties concerned.
  - In cases where there is to be a diplomatic démarche, this is undertaken by the diplomatic missions of the Nine in the countries concerned.
  - These missions are also called on to make joint reports on selected matters to the Political Committee.

/It is for the Presidency

- It is for the Presidency Embassy, in the capital of each third country, to co-ordinate this kind of activity.
- Very often the Presidency Ambassador will in fact go alone, on behalf of all the Nine, to make a démarche to the government to which he is accredited.
- The whole mechanism of political co-operation is supported by a system of cypher communications which directly links all the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Nine, through which nowadays a very large number of messages is sent.
- The subject matter treated by the political co-operation is very extensive.
- Without pretending to offer you an exhaustive list, I will mention the main areas in which the Nine, through political co-operation, have tried to work closer together.

- Here is my list:

- Africa
- The Middle-East
- Southern Asia
- South-East Asia
- Latin America
- Eastern Europe
- CSCE and other détente questions
- Disarmament
- UN peace-keeping operations.

- One thing is demonstrated by this list which I would like to draw to your attention.
- There is a close connection between the work of the political co-operation and the work of the European Community as such.
- For example, both CSCE and the Euro/Arab Dialogue have strong economic as well as political connotations.
- It is natural, in these circumstances, that there should be close co-ordination between the machineries of the Community and of the political co-operation.

Presidency of the Community goes hand in hand with that of the political co-operation.

- In addition, the Commission of the European Community participates extensively in political co-operation work.



## The Interplay between the EEC and EPC

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- I hope that I have said enough, first about the EEC and then about the EPC, to give you a broad picture of how both of them operate on the international stage.
- But perhaps I should try and pull it together a bit.
- On the one hand, you have in the EEC a complex and sophisticated legal entity.
- It has its own European Civil Service.
- It operates under a clearly defined Treaty.
- Its decisions, some of which are taken by qualified majority, are nevertheless binding on all member states.
- Its competence lies broadly in the economic and social fields.
- Nevertheless, its activities can have very great external ramifications.
- I do not think it necessary to labour this point.
- Nevertheless, I will offer just a couple of examples of Community activities having a major bearing on the comity of nations:
  - . First, I would cite the successive extensions of the Community, to take, in first, Britain, Ireland and Denmark, and now Greece, to be followed by Spain and Portugal: clearly these developments have done much to consolidate and strengthen Western Europe.
  - . Second, there is the Community's powerful influence on international economic and financial discussions - an influence which is traditionally exercised in favour both of free trade and of helping developing countries.
- And then, on the other side, you have the EPC.
- It was set up, not by Treaty, but simply by a series of decisions by Foreign Ministers.
- It does not have institutions, in the sense of the EEC Treaty.
- It has no infrastructure or international staff.
- Its work is concentrated entirely on external relations.
- Its decisions are taken by consensus, and are political not legal commitments.
- These two organisations of course have a common membership.
- But they derive, as we have seen, from very different origins.
- In the first few years after the EPC was set up, the interplay between them was not always perfect.

./ But in recent years, things have

- But, in recent years, things have developed very positively.
- Since 1977, I have had the opportunity of representing the Commission within the political co-operation.
- It has put me in a position to observe both bodies from close quarters.
- And I can testify that there is steadily improving co-ordination between the work of the Community and the work of the EPC.
- Increasingly, the one complements and reinforces the other, in a way which I would be very willing to illustrate in reply to questions.
- To outsiders, it is often difficult to distinguish between the Community and the political co-operation.
- Clearly this does not matter.
- Both are emanations of a single thought, the desire of the member states of the Community to work together and to speak to others increasingly with a single voice.
- We have gone a long way down this road now.
- Nowhere is this more apparent than right here in New York.
- Yesterday, as I mentioned, M. Thorn gave the General Assembly a wide ranging statement of the views of the Community on many aspects of world affairs.
- Parts of this had been prepared in the Community machinery, and parts in the EPC.
- Thereafter, they were welded together.
- The picture thus presented was <sup>that</sup> of an important group of highly industrialised countries, which increasingly work and act together.
- No other regional grouping in the UN has begun to approach the degree of unity of thought and action which the Nine have attained.
- But I do not wish to close these remarks on a note of euphoria.
- On the world at large, Europe's increasing unity of purpose does, I think, make an impression.
- We in the Community, inevitably, are more conscious than those outside of the problems we still face in trying to move closer together.
- We are more conscious of our disappointments than of our achievements.
- We are more conscious of the extent to which entrenched national interests often prevent us agreeing on things which would serve the broader interests of the Community.
- But building Europe was always bound to be a slow process.
- In historic terms, we have not been at it for very long.
- A long path lies ahead.

./ Concluding remarks.