

Extract from:

Yves Bertoncini, Valentin Kreilinger, "Seminar on the Community Method. Elements of Synthesis", Notre Europe/BEPA, May 2012.

Foreword

As the European Union faces a crisis at once political, economic, financial and social, debates unceasingly fuel exchanges and also a comparison of analyses and proposals not only on how to douse the flames of speculation but also on how to find a way out of the crisis capable of fostering fresh enthusiasm and a new spurt of growth and development.

In this context, it is crucial also to address the issue of governance, if for no other reason than to discard the excessively simplistic ideas being touted in that connection. Hence the appeal to the leading players – governments, professionals, political scientists – to engage in an exchange of concerns and views on the situation, and of recommendations for emerging from it, in a climate of serenity based on solid facts and figures.

Thus we must thank the BEPA and the *Notre Europe* think tank for persuading the best professionals, the men and women most involved in running the Community in the front line, to attend this seminar.

I shall not attempt to summarise the papers because they are both full and explicit in themselves. Nor do I intend to draw any conclusions from them. The texts must simply be read attentively. They provide analysis grids and they describe complex mechanisms that are constantly evolving under the constraints of the treaties and of the unfolding of events.

Naturally, the two poles of the debate remain the Community method and the intergovernmental method. These two focal points, in their original purity if I may call it like that, remain crucial yardsticks in the reflection.

Thus, we are armed to dissect the specific system at work, a mix of the two methods in a ratio which has changed in the past and which can change again in the future.

The wealth of contributions and the players' unparalleled experience make this document a crucial tool for understanding, analysing and then, if necessary, formulating proposals.

The Union has three imperatives that it needs to address: necessity, effectiveness and legitimacy. It is around these three criteria that we have to build the Union's institutional and democratic renewal.

The discourse on the method cannot be separated from the assertion of a vision for Europe – an additional difficulty, a major difficulty for those who want governance to be of useful service to their chosen vision and to cause the construction of the Community to move forward on every level we could hope for.

This seminar will help each of you to better serve the cause of a Europe united in its diversity.

Thank you, and good luck to all of you trailblazers in the field of new hope in Europe.

Jacques Delors – Founding President of Notre Europe