## Summary of Discussions

### "Agenda for Europe" International Weekend Meeting: May 2/4, 1969

### Post Industrial Society – General Features

While most important events were impossible to predict and the most effective factors in determining them were irrational movements, certain features of the "post-industrial" society into which the advance of techniques was rapidly propelling us could usefully be considered. It was however important to recognise the limits of such enquiry and to remain continually aware of the unforeseeable effects on man's image of himself and of society of developments like the "world village" of instant television communication portrayed by McLuhan, of the new dimensions brought by space exploration or by medical and biological research, as well as of other forces as yet not even dimly perceived.

Most work on this subject was American and tended to assume a society dominated by elites in control of a whole battery of highly advanced techniques including those, such as drugs, information storage and mass media, which provided formidable tools with which to influence behaviour. There were obvious dangers in the uses which sinister men might make of such tools; and great difficulties even in defining the limits which society should set on their use for generally accepted and desirable ends, e.g. population control.

Yet this picture of elitist technocracy had little in common with actual experience so far. Governments were in fact very weak to-day – Johnson was unable to resist popular pressure over Vietnam, and the Russians, even with open recourse to force, circumscribed in the extent to which they could flout public opinion in Eastern Europe. Even De Gaulle's manipulation of television in France had not allowed him to do as he wished and may well have been counter-productive insofar as government control of this media had become for many the symbol of their opposition to his rule. Similarly it was probably easiest to mobilise popular opposition to the more obvious dangers such as drugs, euthanasia or subliminal techniques where the issues were clear: whereas it was more difficult to do so in the grey areas where they were not. Contrary then to the elitist projection, experience to date seemed to indicate an extraordinary development of the electorate's awareness of issues which in turn had noticeably reduced the freedom of action of the elites in government.

This same increase in awareness served as a counterweight to the general growth of large scale organisation in our society. At the same time the trend away from the existing overall pattern of work, with a large proportion of the population engaged in industry, towards a situation in which far more people were engaged in the service sector, seemed to be pointing in the same direction. For this entailed the multiplication of activities involving far more emphasis on human relations, for example in social work, information, the arts and entertainment. Thus while there was likely to be more organisation at levels which could be seen in aggregates, e.g. government or industry, there would be less in an increasing number of activities which were localised or diversified e.g. in universities or public relations firms. Where the units in the service sector were large mass organisations, e.g. the health service or government bureaucracy, there remained the problem of personalising them. But even here the trend was not one-way towards more centralisation but also, under the impact of some of the newer schools of management theory, towards more responsibility at the local level.

Against this background the prospect of the nightmare totalitarian society of '1984' or 'Brave New World' could give way to the totally contrary nightmare prospect of a disintegrating society in which the very low level of general satisfactions might result in small minorities struggling with each other for separate and local affirmation.

Since most people only wanted to participate some of the time in some things - and only politicians insisted in participating all the time in everything - it would obviously be wrong either to reject participation altogether or to try to enforce or encourage total participation. If elitism in general, and that of representative parliamentary democracy in particular, was under pressure, it was chiefly because the channels of communication were almost entirely from the top downwards. One line for reform would be to develop communication from the bottom upwards. This could be attempted through the use of petitions, the subject of which could eventually become the object of a referendum. Referenda could be democratic on particular issues, especially the local ones, but were highly suspect when made into plebiscites. Participation should not be an excuse for by-passing parliament, but an opportunity to bring it back into the mainstream of debate, e.g. by making it a channel for petitions.

As the scope of government grew - at whatever level - the need to lobby and influence it would grow too. It was suggested here that the formal method of decision was perhaps less important than the debate on the issue in question. The report of the British Skeffington Committee (on improving the methods of public debate on physical planning and land-use) would take this line in recommending the creation of local discussion forums as a framework for organised debate which, thoughdivorced from the formal decision-taking by the local authority, would influence this and require explanations both before and after the decision of the motivation for the choice taken and reasoned replies to the arguments raised against this choice.

One of the major issues facing society was to discover how an establishment based on economic growth and the production of goods for a mass market of individual consumers could cope with the problems of a mass society and urbanisation. A large number of individual satisfactions, such as ownership of a car or a house in pleasant surroundings, became self-defeating in a mass society where everyone possessed them, resulting,for example, in traffic jams, air and noise pollution, urban sprawl.

The provision of an acceptable social framework for the satisfaction individual desires was likely to be of great importance too, it was felt, in the exploitation of the possibilities provided by increased leisure. While, for example, large scale ski -resorts, the Club Mediterranee and commercial television in Britain were not actively harmful, and indeed had their good points, they did little to help develop individual creativity or the more diversified culture (in which people were active subjects and not just undifferentiated objects) such as appeared necessary if the nightmare of man trapped by leisure were not at some stage to become reality. Public support for the more creative leisure activities (e.g. on the lines followed by the B.B.C.) as well as public control of commercial aspects of their exploitation, was likely to become more, not less, important.

Post-Industrial Society - European Aspects

Most guesswork about developments in a 'post-industrial' society was based on the American example, which might not be comparable in every field to European developments. Europe was in any case some 10-15 years behind the U.S.A. and should be able to learn from American mistakes.

Europe too had a specific problem which the Americans did not face, namely the fundamental difference that while the U.S.A. had federal institutions, Western Europe did not. As a result the framwork did not exist for resolving conflicts of interest: often indeed such conflicts led to a reinforcement of particularism rather than a synthesis overriding differences. There was not only the example of the stimulus which French nationalism had given to nationalism in Germany and maybe elsewhere too. There was the equally striking case of technology where efforts to develop European co-operation had so far been more successful in re-animating intra-European conflict than in building up viable joint activities. Monetary questions could be cited as yet another case: and no doubt other such examples could be found. Due to the absence of political decision-making power at the relevant - European - level, many problems which were otherwide relatively simple were amplified out of all proportion.

As well as facing other problems, West European countries had many distinc-tive characteristics over and above the obvious facts that they were near neigh-bours and all at approximately the same standard of living. These characteristics could well differentiate Western Europe's evolution from that of the U.S.A. and perhaps make it easier for it to adapt to some features of the 'post-industrial' era. Europe was, for instance, a much less violent society. In world politics European countries were middle powers rather than superpowers and therefore less burdened or internally divided by the strains of worldwide military involvement. Europe was potentially better equipped to provide good public administration, since within the existing nation states the institutions and the civil servants working for them were generally speaking more efficient, skillful and less corrupt than their counterparts at the state and local level in the U.S.A. Europe was also the only part of the world where democratic socialism was to be found, and its effects could be seen in a balance between the individual and society which was approximately the same for the E.E.C. and most E.F.T.A. countries and markedly different from the individualism of the U.S.A. or the centralism of the U.S.S.R. One aspect of this was that in Western Europe some 12-14% of G.N.P. was spent on social security whereas in the U.S.A. it was only 6% prior to the Johnson administration. If America was now moving towards the European pattern in this respect, it did nothing to alter the distinctive historical evolution of the two continents and might even be held to confirm that the European priorities were, and always had been, the right ones.

European integration provided a challenge to Western Europe to seize the opportunity to benefit from American experience while building on specifically European characteristics. Europe had to decide on the nature of its response to the penetrating influence of the U.S.A. which was felt both directly through foreign policy and indirectly through the activities of the American dominated international companies. European countries could decide just to be small and uninfluential but rich - and this was a legitimate objective. Or they could decide to integrate and play a more active role in influencing both their own future and that of the rest of the world.

It was by no means certain that the world could afford to see as large and potentially influential an area as Europe playing a passive role. And it seemed probable that the example of a civilisation like Europe's, with its diversity, its awareness of the past and its social values, would, if it managed to unite while preserving these qualities, provide encouragement to many other areas of the world.

Thus, despite the fact that many features of the 'post industrial' age would be common to all advanced economies, its implications in the countries of Western Europe with their particular historical evolution, distinctive problems and values could well be different from those elsewhere and were worth investigating.

## Strategic or Integrated Planning and Europe

Strategic or integrated planning was presented as the attempt to prepare the way for decisions concerning the allocation of resources in such a way as to take into consideration the largest possible number of factors affecting the object of the decision. Such factors included both the directly relevant economic data, and the more indirect economic considerations (sometimes known as social costs) e.g. the financial burden on the community collectively resulting from closure of an unprofitable factory in an area of high unemployment: they should also include appreciations regarding the likely developments over different time-scales and an awareness of general social values and targets.

Considerable scepticism was expressed as to the feasibility of pursuing such an all-embracing form of planning. The case of Community coalmining was given as one where multi-factor analysis had been attempted to justify subsidies for an activity which was no longer competitive in strict market terms, and where such analysis remained unreliable and unconvincing. It was suggested that planners had failed in the past and now, as an excuse for these failures, were demanding a wider brief.

Against this it was argued that planning was to-day more and more widespread. Companies - particularly the more successful ones - were conspicuous planners. Authorities such as those responsible for the port of Amsterdam had plans - which could of course be revised in the light of new developments - stretching forward to 2000 A.D. The problem was not less whether one should plan or not, but how one should do it and on the basis of what criteria. Companies based their plans on clear commercial criteria: ports such as Rotterdam too. But for society as a whole this was not sufficient, though in fact all too often the case. The 'failed planners' were in fact economists who were increasingly conscious of the fact that more general social and political considerations were all too frequently absent from economic decision-making. Thus short and medium-term planning in individual countries was all too often defensive and designed primarily to maintain competitiveness and preserve the balance of payments. The result was that essentially sectoral interests all too often became national ones and social values such as the need to control pollution were sacrificed to immediate economic considerations.

One of the most obvious failures of planning had been its inability to raise its vision beyond the context of the nation state. Yet no nation state in Europe was any longer able on its own to take a wide enough view of all issues and many national decisions were all too clearly victims of this. The most obvious example was the reaction to American investment where instead of trying to achieve a common front in order to obtain the maximum advantage (in terms for example of optimum access to knowhow for minimum loss of control), each separate government vied with its neighbour in offering more favourable terms to attract American firms. A second instance was the trend, frequently under direct government pressure, towards national concentrations, e.g. computers, cars, steel, oil: these concentrations were seldom relevant to the problems to be faced, and in many cases were positvely harmful, raising unnecessary new problems, disabilities and inhibitions. One very good case of this was computers, where I.C.T. and Telefunken would have been far more suited to each other than to the partners they were required to accept viz. English Electric and Siemens respectively. And once each country only retained one major company in each sector, it became more difficult to arrange links between such companies or even to guarantee free and open market conditions, since the fate of one company became so closely intertwined with national pride. It was natural enough that national governments with their limited national horizons and responsibilities should think in these perversely particularist ways. The result was however that Europe looked more like theatre for conflict than the context for solidarity and specialisation.

Advocates of European integration were often inclined to present it as a panacea to all things. It was not, of course, and it was certainly arguable that a properly elected European government would be as conservative as the separate governments of the Six were to-day in, for example, their approach to the Mansholt plan. Nonetheless, the European level did often bring a difference with the national level which was not merely the sum of the national attitudes - a difference which was qualitative and not merely quantitative. It was important to be specific in each case, but for the fields both of U.S. investment and industrial concentration the distinction was clear. For procurement too: many national officials claimed that within one country standardised procurement already had grave limitations, because of the separate requirements of different ministries for example, and that European co-ordination would simply amplify these limitations. But the contrary was the case since, given the specific example of ministry requirements, the differences were only as many as the sectors covered by individual ministries, and these sectors, e.g. education, transport, were the same in different countries: while standardisation within national frontiers was difficult, across them it would be quite natural.

The same qualitative difference might be true of decisions involving social values. A decision taken against the background of European resources seen as a whole might well be different from one taken from a purely national point of view. It was suggested that a broader assessment of the value of Concorde might have laid greater stress on the disturbance it would cause and less on the employment it provided, with the Germans and Italians for example putting forward a more objective judgement than the French and British who were preoccupied with the particular problem of the future of their aircraft industry. Similarly in terms of land-use and pollution control there would be many instances - e.g. airport and harbour development - where an overall view would reduce the risks of wasteful duplication of facilities. But more specific examples were needed.

Some initial agreement was needed simultaneously on both aims and institutions. For the former it should take the form of 'upward harmonisation' (harmonisation par le haut). For example, careful land-use, given the scarce land resources in Europe, was essential. An encouraging degree of resistance to commercial and industrial spoliation was already to be found in several countries, e.g. Britain; these countries would need to know that their standards would be generally adopted and not expected to succumb to the dictates of a less fastidious majority.

Many such objectives could be secured through the medium of international conventions, for example, on river pollution, food and drug control, the control and treatment of oil slicks in coastal waters, etc. But such measures were only applicable for the control of known nuisances and were generally a posteriori action. It was probably true that in most cases knowledge of new kinds of pollution could only be acquired in practice by reaction to their existence. But there was also in practice a great difference between the negotiation and ratification of an international convention once a nuisance had become sufficiently widespread for governments to be aware of the need for this and a system set up to foresee and investigate the new forms of pollution which new techniques were likely to cause. In this role the first task of planning was to raise questions and point to possible dangers and choices from the start or at least from as early a stage as was possible, in order to condition decisions in the same or allied fields from an equally early stage.

Planning was of course intended to be more than a method for averting or limiting various forms of pollution and nuisance, however important this function was. It was concerned not so much with controlling change by reacting to it as with creating change and moulding it in the image that society desired. Even if

it only succeeded in modifying attitudes it would be rendering a service. But in fact long-term decisions on allocation of resources had to be taken throughout society and such decisions inevitably involved some degree of planning. As such it was, according to one participant, nothing else than politics.

## Institutions of Planning

Since in an open society these discussions leading up to a decision are as important as the decisions itself, the institutions of planning - and through them the identity of the planners - was every bit as important as its general purpose.

If one main objective of planning was to impose some generally accepted orientation on a series of otherwise unconnected decisions taken at random by individual companies or authorities, there was little improvement in replacing such unknown agents by an almost equally faceless and irresponsible group of independent technocrats in Brussels. In any such process, as in all democratic political systems, the problem was to secure acceptance by making decisions correspond to what was both possible and known to be the choice of the community at large. While the lobby system had its advocates, it could never be more than partially representative, with the weaker and poorer groups left to one side. A system in which responsibilities were ill-defined gave more power to the lobbies since they were general freer and better placed to know where to apply pressure to favour their ends. Without broadly representative political assemblies empowered to discuss and decide on plans at each level, including the European level, and executive bodies responsible to these assemblies, planning would remain an activity imposed on people and not one which they felt to be their own.

Concern was expressed at the prospect of planning conducted from the top down. It would be preferable if requirements and priorities were first drawn up at the bottom, e.g. at the level of economic planning regions and collate at the centre into a feasible programme related to resources.

In conclusion it was suggested that whatever the institutional framework adopted, a planning staff at European level, devoid of any decision-making power but responsible for wide-ranging research into lon-term developments and their implications, would be a great stimulus to debates and decisions on planning.

Points requiring further study included classification of the significance of planning at the European level in such fields as land-use, pollution and education; whether people would feel less involved in planning carried out at the European level because it was so much more distant, or more involved because this was in many cases the relevant level for decisions; if, should the latter hypothesis be true, people would then be more concerned to strengthen European institutions; and how far a European form of strategic planning, as a means for the community to try to control its environment, could enrich the possibilities offered through European integration for the development of a society in which man was served and not dominated by technology.

## Industrial Democracy and Europe

As a specific item on the agenda of European economic integration, industrial democracy had so far been almost completely absent. The debate on a common company law for the E.E.C. countries had, however, raised the problem of the future of the German 'mitbestimmung' system (whereby representatives of the workers sit on the managerial boards in coal and steel, and the supervisory boards in other industries). If 'mitbestimmung' was not adopted throughout the

Six - which seemed unlikely in the immediate future - then any German company which resented the existing degree of workers' control could set up a foreign holding company to supervise its own activities out of the reach of the requirements of German law in this respect.

This situation arose at a time when German trade unionists and socialists were thinking of trying to extend the tighter degree of workers' control in coal and steel to other industries in Germany, and when the number of transnational companies was growing. While the latter development was highly necessary in itself, it nonetheless raised vital problems concerning the control of such companies.

Behind these fairly specific problems lay the more general question of the type of society that Europeans as a whole would wish to see develop in their region of the world. If this society was to be one in which citizens were to exercise an increasing degree of control over their environment, then this had to include conditions at their place of work. There seemed already to be the beginnings of a trend in this direction, not only through mitbestimmung in the one country of Germany and in various isolated examples elsewhere of particular companies which had voluntarily introduced forms of co-determination, but also in the growing trade union demands for improvements in work conditions as well as in wages. Workers had a different view of themselves and were concerned less with the sole guarantee of a well-paid job but increasingly with the nature of their work. The May revolt in France had certainly not been primarily in favour of higher wages but rather of greater rights for workers. It had shown quite glaringly how out of date and irrelevant the orthodox Communist demands had become.

But if the May revolt was the clearest example of this, it was symptomatic of a far more widespread movement of workers involvement in the problems of management. This was in most countries already exercised indirectly through union pressure which management had to take account of. As this pressure became more explicit, the old forms of bargaining would be seen to be obsolete. They would need to be replaced by direct participation at the shop-floor level and various forms of representational participation at higher levels. Such rights would reduce the alienation of workers in their workplace - and offer them an alternative to a frontal assault on society as in the May revolt; they would provide the conditions in which unions and their members could be reasonably expected to act responsibly.

It was illusory to think that direct Trade Union representation - as in 'mitbestimmung' - was always necessarily equivalent to worker participation - an illusion which the many trade unions opposed to worker participation obviously did not harbour. Unions could suffer like other organisations from the defects of bureaucracy and despite elections, of hierarchy. Yet whatever the system followed, whether confrontation as at present, or participation, or a mixture of the two, these defects were likely to remain. Only at shop-floor level was direct participation of every individual possible.

At other levels it was once again suggested that participation in decisions was less important than in discussion, that an efficient flow of information in both directions was sufficient and that decisions could then be left to management. Worker participation in decisions was no improvement if the representatives were badly informed of what their supporters would accept, as instanced in the recent nurses' pay award in England, where the nurses' representatives had totally miscalculated the effects for their members of the agreed settlement. Furthermore, much of management was increasingly centralised and based on sophisticated calculation which, even with participation, workers would find difficult and uninteresting to follow.

However, while it was recognised that good management in close consultation with the unions could produce acceptable contracts of great material benefit, e.g. the U.S. autoworkers settlement, it was felt by many that this was unsatisfactory both in human terms and in practice. Consultation had to be seen to be real and the best, perhaps the only, guarantee that it would be was one based on accountability, when managers and/or workers representatives were required institutionally to account for their actions to their electorate. A system of this sort, with workers involved in discussion because they took part in decisions either directly or indirectly through elected representatives, worked in Jugoslavia. Both the Jugoslav and several other examples of co-operative or co-determinatory systems were often dismissed as being inefficient. Several cases of highly-efficient firms of this nature could also be given however. The most that could be said is that the case against co-operatives or co-determination on the grounds of inefficiency is not proven; and that within such systems different methods can produce greater or less efficiency.

The Jugoslavian model was not based on trade unions. But in Western Europe it was difficult to envisage developments towards greater worker participation which were not based on strong unionism. At most stages beyond the shop-floor a representative system was in any case required and effective unionism provided the basis for this. For 'mitbestimmung', strong unionism was essential. And growing pressure for more industrial democracy was most likely to succeed if backed by the unions. In fact the T.U.C. was quite likely to take up the demand for more worker representation in management.

In Germany and in Britain, despite its failings, trade unionism was strong and united. In Italy and France it was weak and divided by quarrels stemming from the late '40's'. These ideological disputes were now increasingly out-of-date. The hope was expressed that the divisions they caused might now be overcome in a wider European grouping. This had probably been made easier by the withdrawal from the I.C.F.T.U. of the American trade unions.

The fear was expressed though that new differences were coming in to take the place of the old ones and that European trade unionism was in danger of splitting between those, like the French, who saw worker participation as a point of departure for the reform of society in general, and those, like the Germans, who looked on it as a modest reform within existing society. Thus the Germans were inclined to say that co-determination was a form of participation in a mixed economy that was neither capitalist nor socialist. It was democratic and liberal (in the political sense) being principally concerned with safe-guarding the rights of workers in the economic sector in the same way that law and the constitution protected those of citizens in the political sector. This encountered the Marxist criticism, for example from the French, that to restrict freedom of management based on the right of ownership was to engage battle over questions at the root of capitalism, involving fundamental conflicts of power which polite formulas could only conceal, not eliminate.

There was therefore some question as to whether the 'mitbestimmung' system implied abandoning the old socialist dreams or not. This depended on which old set of dreams one took. It certainly meant recognising that nationalisation was no panacea. But many early socialists had never made that mistake. Participation could be seen not as some alternative to socialist aspirations but as a change back to the earlier conceptions of Owen and Fourier. It might eventually be complemented by a change in ownership where this still remained in private hands, and was in any case necessary where public ownership was already achieved.

The plea was made for these differences of emphasis to be looked on as differences over experiments, all of which pointed in fact in the same direction.

The rather superior attitude taken by the strong and well-organised German unions towards the weak French and Italians encouraged the latter to condemn the Germans for being within the system and to justify their own weakness through the purity of their more revolutionary zeal. Yet differences of this order did not justify the divisions between the trade union movement in various European countries.

The strength born of such unity was by any standards increasingly necessary in a society of rapid change and wider horizons which did not wish its future to be shaped by decisions taken in a fragmented way by small unrepresentative groups of privileged persons. The problem of social control over the activities of transnational companies had already been mentioned, yet decisions by such companies affected the jobs of many thousands of employees and sometimes the economic wellbeing of whole regions. It was for this reason that some trade union movements, notably the Dutch, put emphasis on 'uber-betriebliche mitbestimmung' or trade union participation beyond the individual company at the level of wider economic problems on general and regional planning boards. Both within existing national frontiers and beyond them many decisions affecting industry were not taken by industry at all, but within the finance sector. An increasingly large proportion of the population gained its livelihood in the service sector where there was virtually no participation. Both in East and West Europe a number of service industries were monopolies or near-monopolies, whether publicly or privately owned: co-determination processes, for example along the lines of the co-operative movement, bringing consumers as well as employees into decision-making, could well provide a restraining influence on such giants.

Faced with these and other problems of our developing society, industrial co-determination could be seen to be one aspect of the search for greater participation in the processes by which society took decisions at many levels and in many sectors. 'Mitbestimmung' was one of the most developed experiments in this field and worthy of much more examination by other countries in Europe. For while there was little point in Europe seeking to differentiate itself from other regions of the world for the sake just of being different, it was nonetheless true that almost alone amongst the industrially developed regions, Western Europe was, with its mixed economy, strong unionism and traditional emphasis on social values, in a unique position to push ahead towards industrial democracy and perhaps in doing so to demonstrate the value of sych a system for modern industrial society.

## Information

The regulation of information flow is and always has been one of the substances of power, with a close correlation between the maintenance of secrecy and the exercise of power. This was no less true to-day for, despite the rapid development of new techniques of information supply and procurement, the quantity of information available was also growing at a rate which made it difficult or impossible for the individual to keep pace. The process of information selection was therefore of paramount importance, above all in a society which wished to be based on persuasion and the force of argument. Equally, the ability of the individual to obtain specific data on issues which affected him directly was a necessary and fundamental guarantee of his rights.

The great mass of the population, it was suggested, was not ready to absorb information other than as a form of relaxation, and if it were asked to absorb general information for other purposes it would neither want to nore know how to. Information was in practice a bastion of hierarchy in our societies since although a great deal of it was freely available only a small elite made use of this facility.

A long-term educative process was considered by some to be the only means of moving away from this situation. But others felt that where people were actually involved in taking decisions, for example by referenda on specific local issues, their appetite for information on that issue grew enormously. For example on three occasions recently referenda held in Bolton (Northern England) brought a great demand for information and an 80% poll. Similarly, the desire of the great majority of the people for reasonably open information could only easily be measured when there was an attempt to limit or prevent access to such information. In recent months the reaction of both the French and Czechoslovak public opinions had demonstrated that there already existed a very strong desire amongst the people at large to preserve and strengthen their right to open and reasonably factual information. Put another way, people would perhaps only make use of, and actively seek, information when they felt they had need of it; but, in consequence, they were ready to defend strongly their right to the facility of information even if they did not always make much use of it.

Moreover, the growing techniques of information supply were going to change very considerably the basic facts of the situation. Whereas television, radio and even mass circulation newspapers could in most instances, as mass media, not escape from providing largely undifferentiated material to cater for the supposed needs of the great majority, new techniques were much more suited to meeting the particular requirements of the individual. Data retrieval by individuals through access by telephone to a central information bank was the most obvious new such technique: but videotape recording systems on the one hand and satellite trans-mission on the other gave much more flexibility to the use that could be made of television sets; while local radio was likely to bring much more variety and much closer contact with individuals, together with an opportunity for them to take part more directly through radio programmes and telephone link-ups in local affairs.

These and other developments would certainly make it technically possible for a larger number than ever before to obtain relevant information on either general or particular issues which concerned them. New methods of direct voting from the home could also provide people confronted with the need to take part as voters in decision-making with the incentive to inform themselves more.

So the image of the passive majority uninterested in knowing more might well be shown to be out of date by the (closely inter-related) development of greater participation in decision-making on the one hand and of new more flexible infor-mation-giving and voting techniques on the other. But there were, of course, dangers. Techniques such as phone-tapping, handwriting analysis, information obtained by officials for one purpose and employed for another, the circulation of secret black lists, all required strict regulation. Data banks could be weapons of oppression if access to them was limited to a privileged few, of liberation if it was open to all. Individuals could need and desire information and find them-selves unable to obtain it. In Britain, for example, it was extremely difficult (and often impossible) to discover who was the owner of a given plot of land; students refused a scholarship grant had no right to know the reasons for the refusal; and the Official Secrets Act was far too restrictive. Legislation was required to guarantee the individual the right to obtain specific information on questions where he had a specific interest. Exceptions on the grounds of in-dustrial property, libel, official secrets or administrative whim should be reduced to the very barest minimum.

For general information the situation was obviously more complicated since the choice and presentation of facts was the key issue and it was impossible to pretend that this could be done entirely objectively, uninfluenced by the values of the organisation providing it, or indeed by the values of the society of the

country or region concerned. The citizens themselves should certainly be given some control over the methods and practice of information selection and presentation. Specific dispositions could be introduced requiring information to be supplied on current legislative proposals, or even setting up special bodies with responsibility for providing such information and stimulating consultation. The B.B.C. and Le Monde set in their separate spheres examples of very high standards, which had very largely succeeded in winning respect and large audiences despite a conscious re-fusal of many of the accepted norms of journalistic fashion. Consumer association journals such as 'Which' had played a similar exceptional and un-typical role, described aptly as the provision of counter-information. Such organs of informa-tion were fulfilling a major public service and as such should perhaps be con-sidered as worthy of public support (which the B.B.C. already had of course).

Enthusiasm for media like these should not, however, be allowed to obscure the danger of any one of them obtaining a monopoly position. Similarly the right to contribute to information media should not be restricted to a self-governing caste such as was the case for journalists in Italy.

## The Relevance of Europe

The relevance of the European dimension in this field could be seen in two lights: the need for European countries to understand each other and their pro-blems if they were to come closer together; and the fact that countries could only agree to live and work together in a free and democratic system if they were all to know that the same guarantees for fair and objective information would apply in all the consituent parts of the union. This required common standards, including cer-tainly a degree of common legislation and maybe a public authority at European level with powers to oversee and stimulate activity in this field.

On the first point it was often the case that information media reinforced national frontiers. This was particularly the case with television. But the de-velopment of satellites offered great scope for much fuller use of the Eurovision network, with a conscious attempt to increase transnational group discussions for example. Similarly newspapers could be encouraged to try to treat foreign reporting less as something far removed from the preoccupations of their readers and to show with adequate background reporting that events in neighbouring countries were closely related to these preoccupations. In this respect the growing tendency of quality newspapers to give more attention to long-term developments at the ex-pense of immediate news reporting of incidents was a healthy one. In this way information could become more than an essential but somewhat passive ingredient in the integration process and contribute positively to the dynamic of this movement.

Language was, and was likely to remain, one of the major obstacles in this process. Research into automatic translation was proposed as one means of trying to overcome this. The recent creation of the English language weekly selection of Le Monde was cited as a praiseworthy example worthy of imitation.

## Education

If education was still looked on as one of the great liberators, providing the knowledge and understanding for achievement and self-realisation, the passage to a post-industrial society of highly developed techniques and increased leisure time raised its own problems and new opportunities. The specific problems included the vast expansion required in the intake of students, both for their initial for-mal education and at later stages for re-education; the choice of subjects for curricula and the method of choice, whether this should be based on unit-cost planning and the demands of the market or not; the nature of teaching, the

relationship between it and research, and the best form for research itself.
Behind these relatively specific points lay the all-embracing question of the
relationship between schools and universities and modern society around them.

Few of the problems facing education in Western Europe were peculiar to this
region except for the general backwardness by comparison with the U.S.A., the
U.S.S.R. and Japan in the numbers attending school beyond the age of fifteen and
staying on into higher education. Even this was not to say that the problem of
expanding and extending educational facilities was a specific European problem
since it was a feature common in different degrees to most parts of the world. It
was, however, particularly acute in the case of Europe, though not always seen to
be so.

If American or Soviet experience could be considered as any guide it seemed
clear that the trend was towards a much higher leaving age of about twenty-one to
twenty-two for a majority of future generations with some form of higher education
accepted as the normal culmination to their studies. At the same time an in-
creasing level of re-education for older generations would be required. An expan-
sion to reach objectives of this sort, whatever its long-term economic benefits,
involved a vast increase in expenditure. The conflict between such aims and the
costs of meeting them could not be avoided. Much greater flexibility in methods
might help to make it easier to absorb the higher costs, with less emphasis on the
full-time three year (or more) degree or diploma course. Students might instead
be encouraged to follow 'sandwich courses', fitted in between, or alongside, full-
time wage-earning employment. The proposed university of the air (open univer-
sity) in Britain, transmitting courses by television and correspondence, was a
further cost-saving device making more education available to larger numbers. One
suggestion was that a similar initiative at European level would not only be cheap,
generally available and of high quality, but also form a catalyst for
Europeanisation.

Considerable fears were expressed that the high cost of expanding education
would adversely affect the quality of education provided. If cost considerations
were uppermost, market forces would dictate. Strains already existed within
universities between the new approach of cost-unit planning, which attempted to
evaluate given educational courses in money terms, and the more traditional
liberal attitude which considered any such control as misplaced and irrelevant for
an activity whose sole justification was and could only be the furtherance of
knowledge and understanding. The effect of market factors on universities, it was
suggested, would be to upset balanced development within and between certain dis-
ciplines. For instance, in France the current vogue for urban planning meant that
urban sociology was flourishing whereas allied and equally essential branches of
sociology e.g. sociology of the family, sociology of law and institutions, were
almost abandoned. More generally, market orientated demands on universities were
likely to be for ever more highly trained technicians with specific skills for
industry. Society at large however would need citizens with open minds, a wide and
general culture and the ability to learn. This was what schools and universities
should aim to provide, while more specific technical training might be better
furnished by industry itself. But to achieve this more general aim a source of
pressure was required which was not based primarily on market considerations.

The recognition that the accumulation of knowledge, whether specialised or not,
was not the chief aim of education, but that the technique of learning was seemed
nevertheless to be gaining ground at all levels of education in Europe. Perhaps,
it was suggested, this represented the first assertion of the new society of
leisure and plenty for which the material constraints of earlier times no longer
applied. Be that as it may, 'Contestation', which was already a fact not only in

higher but also in secondary education, and generally accepted as something which was not going to disappear, was a major example of this. For if on the one hand it had been born as a more critical attitude of new generations prepared and wanting to accept change confronted with teaching authorities which found it more difficult to do so, on the other, it was by its very nature an innovation in the method and form of education. Turning its back on the uncritical absorption of second-hand information, 'contestation' involved a new emphasis on how rather than what to learn. In this it rejoined the post-war revolution in many primary schools in Britain (and elsewhere?) by which these schools had become much less authoritarian and instead aimed at giving children techniques to learn and think for themselves and to develop their own interests and activities for themselves. One aspect of this was the encouragement given to schoolchildren to pursue their own research, e.g. into local history. Parallel to this trend in both schools and universities towards learning how to learn, there was also in universities the reaction against specialist studies with a growing place given in them to more general inter-disciplinary courses.

The effects of this policy of developing freer more individually creative forms of education and the spontaneous criticism of old established ways brought about through 'contestation' could be expected to make future generations both more intransigeant in their rejection of received opinion and more responsible in their willingness and ability to take part actively in society. If this were to be a major aim of education, then it was important to know whether it was preferable for it to be pursued in close relation with society or in relative isolation from it. The problem was especially relevant for universities since they had traditionally been set somewhat apart, giving time for reflection free from preoccupations with everyday reality. Should they continue to be seen in this light or should they be seen more as models and testing grounds for the future, closely integrated with society, sharing its problems, helping to prepare their solutions and forming young people through experience in university activities to become active and informed citizens? Certainly much opposition was expressed to the idea that universities should forego the larger view that their relative independence allowed. But equally the contrast between the two roles was probably somewhat exaggerated, since however hard they tried to involve themselves in society, universities could not avoid providing a time and a place for reflection and discussion: this was their very nature, and if it was not maintained why, the question was asked, have universities at all? At the same time a university which remained to some extent detached could perfectly well - and perhaps the better for being somewhat independent from the day to day rivalries of interest groups - be a practical testing ground for forms of participatory democracy.

Universities which shared the same general purpose and teaching methods could yet remain very different from each other in the relative specialisation they were able to develop in particular branches of study. A large university could cover all fields of study and yet be highly specialised in only a few because in these it had attained a particular level of original research. Teaching could not be divorced from research which at all levels was one of the best disciplines for intellectual enquiry. At lower levels research could be stimulating without being especially original. At the highest level where it was breaking new frontiers a degree of mutual stimulation and team work was required. This was best achieved in 'centres of excellence' (e.g. M.I.T.) but the need for high standards as well as the cost of research facilities made it imperative to limit the number of such centres. The ability to develop such centres at a continental rather than national level in Europe would be of obvious advantage. A strategy which was complementary to this rather than an alternative to it would be to develop research networks, pooling information through a computerised data bank: here again the European dimension could be invaluable through its contribution to greater exchange of ideas and information.

Concern was expressed that undue emphasis on the Europeanisation of higher education would result in a 'European elite', separate from the great mass of the population. With time, of course, the danger of forming a new elite might disappear as more people stayed on longer in secondary and high education. But even at such a stage, secondary education should not be looked on as something separate from higher education. The development of teaching methods in secondary schools to form critical and responsible members of society was as important as in higher education if the danger of 'two nations in one country' was to be avoided. What was true at the national level was equally true at the European level. A just and democratic European society would need to be founded on common educational standards and opportunities for all its citizens and not only just for a privileged part of them.

Europeanisation in education was as natural as Europeanisation in other fields and essential if European integration was to have firm foundations. It was also of value in itself since any attempt to broaden the horizons of education was in itself a constructive step. As such, of course, Europeanisation would need to be non-exclusive and open-ended, building on other world-wide contacts which already existed and not being achieved at their expense.

Such a process could not, however, be seen in isolation from the general social background. The best educational system in the world could not overcome entirely the influence of the home and family. If an authoritarian society or work place bred an authoritarian family, the children of that family would with few exceptions be less equipped to benefit from participatory forms of education than those with a freer and happier home.

## Political Participation

Democratic government in Europe was passing through a stage where its inadequacies for controlling events around it were increasingly evident. Its weaknesses could be traced principally to the undifferentiated concentration at national government level of an ever increasing range of competences. National governments were without exception overloaded with responsibilities which in many cases they were not competent to assume. Parliaments were equally overworked and even when they were able to supervise adequately the myriad actions of governments often found that the executive they were supposed to control was itself not master of many of its own acts. Small wonder then that representative democracy was in disrepute.

Three major developments, already to be seen in practice, were likely to characterise the transition towards a post-industrial age. The first was the extension of the functions of government which increased urbanisation and the demands for more collective action both to control and take advantage of the exploitation of techniques was likely only to accentuate. The second was a change in the nature of local communities and the problems affecting them. The third was the increase in the scale of many problems - economic, political, military - which made even the largest national units in Europe no longer self-sufficient or even adequate to find solutions on their own.

The extension of government competences barely required comment. Ministries concerned with transport, social security, housing, technology, labour, power etc. were unknown in most cases fifty years ago and in many before the last war. The tasks of the older ministries were greater and more varied than ever before. New fields such as leisure, environment, natural resources were being added to the list. It seemed illusory to imagine that an increasingly urbanised, wealthy,

leisured, interdependent and highly technically developed society would not feel the need continually to extent public control and direction over its living conditions and their evolution to ensure the maximum satisfaction of rising expectations.

Local communities had been most strongly marked by rapid urbanisation and greater mobility. Units which used to be closely knit communities with their own democratic (or oligarchic) structures had become dispersed through the growth in numbers and the overspill into the surrounding country. The old unit of the municipality continued to live out its formal existence but in practice the real problems were no longer to be found at this level. Instead the close circle of sub-political social activity had become the neighbourhood. While the area for which physical planning and the provision of community services could be usefully and effectively carried out now stretched beyond the old boundaries to encompass the surrounding countryside at a supra-municipal level. At neighbourhood level direct participation was feasible and the need for formal structures less certain. But at the supra-municipal level where vital local issues such as land-use, public transport and other services required attention a sense of community and local democracy were impossible without such structures which were in most cases inexistent.

There was a growing demand for a further element of identity at the regional level, above the supra-municipal but below the national level. This corresponded in several cases to a cultural entity or submerged nation seeking self-expression e.g. Brittany, Scotland, in other more numerous instances to a desire to defend identifiable common interests such as regional economic development. The exact shape of such regions was not clear in every case, depending on the criteria used since political considerations would often give one set of boundaries, economic patterns, another and land-use and natural resources yet a third.

The size of the major grouping of which the region was a part was also an important factor. If, for example, in Britain or France, regions were considered almost exclusively as a means of breaking down the undue centralisation of national government, then some fourteen regions in Britain and twenty in France could be envisaged. If, on the other hand, they were seen as the second or third tier unit underpinning a European federal system, then a much small number, say seven or eight in both cases, would be justified.

Given effective political structures, regions could relieve national governments of a wide range of their detailed executive responsibilities though legislative power should remain at the higher levels. National governments had acquired many of their existing functions not because they were best suited to exercise them (e.g. both the Luxembourg and the British governments held much the same functions) but because they were the centres of power at the time. Detailed regional economic development, town and country planning, the siting of industry and the provision of services such as health and welfare, police and education could all, for example, be taken care of better at regional level. This did not mean depriving higher levels of government of any say in these fields. A system would be unworkable if in specific fields all power law with one or another level of government. Co-ordination was necessary in most fields running from the most general guidelines at the top to the most detailed elaboration at the bottom. Confrontation between each level could proceed on the basis that the lower level retained the right of proposal and the higher level the power to accept or refuse proposals made within the general targets it had already set.

Forms of democratic participation could vary and need not all be identical at different levels. Some form of popular election was however needed at the regional level not only in order to allow people to involve themselves in questions

affecting them but also to endow their representatives with sufficient authority
to negotiate with higher levels of government. If an elected regional assembly
appeared too cumbersome a solution, and an indirectly elected one too partial,
then an alternative at this level might well be direct election on a party list
of a small executive college. This might reawaken interest in local politics
and both encourage more electors to vote and to do so on the basis of local or
regional issues rather than national ones as at present. Regional government
being concerned with executive functions rather than legislation, direct election
of the executive would provide democratic control where it was needed and an
indirectly elected assembly composed of knowledgeable and expert people meeting
at occasional intervals would serve a watchdog role. A regional ombudsman could
in addition protect individuals against administrative injustice.

The development of regional government gave the best opportunity over the
next few years for evolving new institutions capable of revitalising democracy
through increased participation by citizens in the affairs which concerned them
most closely. By reducing the load on national governments and parliaments it
would also reinforce democracy through increased participation by citizens in
the affairs which concerned them most closely. By reducing the load on national
governments and parliaments it would also reinforce democratic control at this
level and help made government more efficient by clearly limiting its responsi-
bilities to fields where it was competent to act. The picture would then need
to be completed by political institutions at the European level equipped with
powers to tackle problems which the lower tiers could not, e.g. control of the
transnational company, to provide overall co-ordination of policies pursued in
detail at national and regional level, and to codify and ensure the application
of norms accepted by the whole area. These institutions would need to include an
executive, a directly elected parliament and a senate representing the national
and regional governments, the two assemblies having both legislative and super-
visory powers.

Democracy had to have institutions able to confront the problems facing
society at the level where they occurred. If it did not, decisions would still
be taken at this level, but they would not be democratic. The problems facing
society in the new technological age would be still more diverse than in the past
and would require solutions at many different levels. A European political
structure superimposed on existing centralised nation states like Britain or France
could not be adapted to solving many of the internal problems within such member
states. For although in several cases the larger dimension might help, in others
the greater remoteness would render still more absurd the intervention from on
high than it was already with the national government. Equally a regional reform
which relieved national governments of some of their too heavy burden would not
restore democratic control if national governments remained subjected to external
forces which they could not master.

Conclusions

The significance of West European integration for the major themes of
planning, industrial democracy, information, education, and participation in
political decision-making could be looked at in two distinct ways. These were:
i) Europe as the framework for harmonisation;
ii) Europe as the necessary condition for social and economic self-determination.

i) Europe - framework for harmonisation

This, the minimalist approach or thesis, took as its starting point the
evidence that Western Europe was in the process of uniting under the motivation
of pressures in other fields, e.g. defence, world politics, economics,

international finance. This trend towards unification between countries which shared the same situation in the world and had similar living standards and political and cultural outlooks necessarily implied that problems which were similar but for the present were generally looked on as affecting each country separately would fairly rapidly become problems of common concern. This was first and foremost because countries could not link themselves closely in a number of fields without being concerned about developments in others eg it was obviously legitimate for countries bound together in an economic union to have guarantees that in all parts of the union the freedom of trade unions and the rights of workers to join them would be ensured. Similarly, the effects of technical progress which had already spurred on integration would continue to influence an increasing range of policy areas.

A common concern about similar sets of problems did not necessarily entail common solutions for them. It did, however, certainly imply at the very least a high degree of mutual encouragement towards the adoption of common standards (e.g. conventions) on the one hand and co-ordination (e.g. joint transport networks) on the other.

These processes might well be translated in practice into 'upward harmonisation', by which the highest standard reached by any one member country set the norm to be adopted by the others. Apart, however, from this small dynamic factor, this general approach to the significance of Europe was, for the policy areas considered in this enquiry, a largely static one.

## 2. Europe - Sine qua non for Social and Economic Self-Determination

This was the maximalist thesis. It considered that the classical pro-European arguments of economic efficiency and military defence together with many of the arguments drawn from world politics, were not by themselves sufficiently compelling to justify European integration. This judgement seemed to be endorsed by the large numbers of a younger generation neither nationalistic nor prejudiced in advance against European unity which nonetheless dismissed the traditional arguments in its favour as outmoded, materialist, technical or just irrelevant. Irrelevant because for this generation the problems they were aware of and concerned with were questions such as human relations at their place of work or education, the dehumanising effects of organisation and bureaucracy, the need for debate and joint decision-making to replace ex cathedra pronouncements and authoritarianism etc. These problems concerning the shape and structure of society in Western Europe and in the world at large did not in their eyes receive any solutions from the process of unification.

For the maximalist thesis, however, Western European unification was in fact highly relevant to such questions. This was not because successful reforms in all these fields could be guaranteed to follow automatically from unification: this was not a panacea and many of the problems raised would need solving at many lower levels than the European one. Equally, however, European unity would not prevent countries carrying out those aspects of their own reform over which they had control, e.g. university or regional reform; and would in fact lead to increased mutual stimulation with member countries following closely the experiences of others and if successful putting them into practice themselves. Many old taboos in individual societies would be overcome with the help of allies from other parts of the union. An open society would be favourable to change.

The key difference brought about by European union would be the greater independence to choose both goals and values, which comes with increased resources

and the ability to take the longer view. For example, many governments in
Western Europe were strongly circumscribed in their allocation of resources by
short-term problems such as the effects on the balance of payments ( - and this
was by no means true of deficit countries only). While this economic dis-
cipline would not disappear entirely within a united Europe, it could be expected
to be much less arbitrary and much less severe because (i) it would not apply
to intra-European balance of payments (no one is concerned to know whether
Brittany is in surplus or deficit with the rest of France); (ii) a united
Europe would have a far stronger influence on world monetary policy and could,
for example, call for the creation of international credit or even create its
own if this was needed to avoid recession; (iii) considerable economies could
be achieved in allocating resources over the wider area, economies which would
bring greater freedom of action in other fields.

This example, though highly pertinent to economic growth and the fruits it
does or does not bring (e.g. raising the school-leaving age) could be con-
sidered as technocratic. So too could the further argument deployed by the
maximalist thesis that only a strongly united Western Europe could supply the
necessary framework for the rapid development of new sectors and new techniques
with all the opportunities these would bring for both job creation and individual and
group achievement.

But beyond these arguments lay the political case. Europe (or rather Western
Europe until such time as the springtime of Prague was once again allowed to
blossom) contained the seeds of a society in which individual rights and partici-
pation in decision-making went hand in hand with an acceptance of social priori-
ties over commercial considerations - a society which was neither statist like
the U.S.S.R. nor laisser-faire like the U.S.A. But these seeds would need to
grow in an area larger than individual countries taken separately: -

(i) because of the pressures - economic, financial, political - on indivi-
dual countries not to stray too far from the pattern of their neighbours: these
pressures need not be direct - for example, a reallocation of resources to massive
pollution control in one country would increase costs and lower its industry's
competitive edge; the pressure of economic competition would therefore rule
this out;

(ii) because of the inability of individual countries to control at national
level a number of vital factors operating at the transnational level which
nonetheless affected the country's interests and standard of living; an example
of this would be the transnational corporation;

(iii) because a society which had succeeded in pooling the resources of one
major sub-continent in a free and peaceful process would be an encouragement and
an example for many other parts of the world.

For these reasons, although European unification might not hold the key to
all the reforms required for a genuine participatory social democracy to come
into being, it could not be left out of the picture. Nor could the prospect
that, if this specifically European society could only be developed in a piece-
meal, because disunited, way, many individual European countries might turn to
follow other influences and adopt other forms of society.

## Policies or Institutions First?

An implication of the maximalist thesis was that institutions came first,
policies after. No institutions were neutral, however, and European institutions
would tend to reflect and reinforce the power structure in Europe when they were
set up.

Since this was the case, a preference was expressed for agreement on policies first and on institutions thereafter. When most countries in Europe had evolved individually to the point where they each practised similar socialist and democratic values, then it would be possible to merge like with like.

A further criticism of the institutional priority for integration was that it might well be opposed to what people wanted. If they wanted less integration not more, then it was wrong to force yet a new dimension of involvement on them.

Against these points it was argued that the non-neutrality of national institutions was still more dangerous than the non-neutrality of European institutions. The extent to which national institutions were in fact in control of events was often as small as their sense of self-importance was great. Certainly the British government's control over its attitude to the Vietnamese was and the defence of the pound sterling appeared somewhat marginal. European institutions might not be neutral but they should at least be able to exercise effective control and therefore to be effectively responsible within a democratic system.

There was agreement that within a responsible democratic system of government decisions had to be taken at the level were they were relevant. It was clear that if this level was European, decisions had to be taken democratically at the European level. Failure to do this would be a failure of democracy, made no better by the theory that European institutions could only usefully be introduced when all countries were agreed on policy - or on socialism. If people did not wish to take part in integration or its institutions they could opt out. But if they did wish to take part they would find it extremely difficult in the absence of any institutions. And since they were affected by decisions taken at or beyond the European level - with or without European union - then it was right that they should wish to take part and be given the opportunity to do so at this level.

## Closing Remarks

The value of taking further the study of the 'agenda for Europe' in these fields concerning the future shape of European society was equally clear whichever thesis was taken. The practical political usefulness would be to provide a European dimension to policy areas which the public found more exciting and interesting than the many technical issues of customs union and economic integration.