



## **Brief history of the Bruges Group 1995-2003**

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### **The premises: the Groupe de Seillac**

At the beginning of the 1990s, the first signs of the crisis affecting the Common Agricultural Policy finally found their expression in a plan for reform. Ray McSharry, the European Commissioner responsible for carrying out the reform, put forward a plan which was strongly criticised by professional organisations and which, after lengthy negotiations, amounted to a process which envisaged the alignment of European prices with world market prices and introduced compensation measures intended to protect the income of producers together with other so-called 'accompanying' measures.

In 1992 this project was adopted, and represented the first thoroughgoing reform of an agricultural policy conceived more than thirty years earlier. Its main points were the following:

- the lowering of guaranteed prices for cereals, beef and oilseeds
- the setting up of direct compensation payments
- obligatory set-aside of 15% of land in order to limit production
- accompanying measures: financial inducements for early retirement, payments for the reforestation of agricultural land, and an agri-environment programme.

At the time, the size of compensation payments, their unequal distribution and their lack of economic justification attracted opposition. In fact these payments merely reflected the inequalities inherent in the status quo ante which had been masked by the lack of transparency of market support mechanisms. These new measures suddenly made them visible to all. Within the European Commission, there were those who felt that this new-found and sudden transparency would give rise to opposition movements from civil society who would call into question the preferential arrangements proposed and which would in turn necessitate the adoption of new measures. It was already clear that the McSharry reform could not last for long.

Opposition campaigns did indeed take shape, particularly in France. But these were not of sufficient vigour to shake the foundations of the system of compensation payments.

Further criticism arose from the fact that the 1992 reform was born in an atmosphere of confidentiality through complex dealings between EU member states, the European administration and the agricultural profession. This haggling was denounced by those who had expected a public debate, and who thought that the CAP of the 1960s would be re-examined root and branch. At this juncture, proposals from NGOs were very limited. The environmentalists, who had thought through the issues more than most, began to eschew their seemingly interminable list of bans and proscriptions in favour of a more positive and inclusive proposal based upon the experience of the first agri-environmental contracts which had been set up in 1985. But their impact remained limited.

It is against this background that on January 17 1992 the Charles-Léopold Mayer foundation organised a meeting in Paris on the future of European agricultural policy and asked Edgard Pisani to chair the proceedings. Aware of the issues involved in what constitutes the principal instrument of European policy and which bears upon food, territorial considerations and the environment, the participants were disappointed at the lack of long-term perspective and the absence of participation of society at large in the debate. The Paris meeting led to the publication of a report on “Les futurs de l’agriculture européenne” [“Possible future paths for European agriculture”] (Ed. C.L. Mayer, DF 20, 1992). The participants affirmed that agricultural production is an economic activity of a special type which can neither be left to the mercy of economic liberalism nor circumscribed by authoritarian measures. They proposed a path which was more akin to contract than to constraint, leaving room for the expression of complexity and taking due account of new expectations from society in terms of respect for the environment, countryside management, the valuing of the work of farmers, greater equity in international (trade) relations and global food security.

On May 27 1992 Edgard Pisani published an article in the French mainstream broadsheet *Le Monde* entitled “De quelle agriculture avons-nous besoin?” (“What sort of agriculture do we need?”). This article located the question of the CAP in the context of the issues of the day - in particular the questions of feeding humanity, environmental considerations, and the management of European territory. It proposed to reward farmers for the services provided to society at large, and to devise policy instruments such as quotas to limit production. Finally, this article made an appeal for “a public debate and not discussions centred solely upon how much may be saved from the CAP budget or about what concessions might be offered to satisfy the Americans without driving our farmers to despair”.

Edgard Pisani and a number of close associates wished to pursue this train of thought in a collective manner. With the support of the Charles-Léopold Mayer foundation and the journal *Événement européen* a group of twenty individuals was set up, most of whom came from agricultural backgrounds - farmers, researchers, experts. Two came from non-farming backgrounds (Pierre Calame and Christian Blanc). This group met for the first time in December 1992 in Seillac (hence the *Groupe de Seillac*), and then in July 1993 in Chantilly.

After its first meeting the *Groupe de Seillac* produced a document entitled “Agriculture, society and territory. For a European policy”. Published in April 1993 in the form of a 30 page brochure, this document had a profound impact in France. It was presented by members of the Group at public meetings, mainly at the request of agricultural organisations. The following year, after a second meeting, the *Groupe de Seillac* published a book under the authorship of Edgard Pisani entitled “Pour une agriculture marchande et ménagère” (Towards an agriculture for the market and for the territory). Two principles were set out in the book: on the one hand, payment for agricultural products on protected and regulated European markets; and on the other hand, greater account to be taken of environmental and territorial issues through the setting up of a system of payments for services provided by farmers.

This second proposal extended the principle of management contracts trialled by Great Britain over a number of years, and expanded upon the agri-environment policy instruments of the 1985 Green Book of the European Commission, which had formed part of the McSharry reform. It had a certain impact upon the policy debate in France. The CNJA (Young Farmers’ Association in France) had already been working on similar ideas since the beginning of the 1990s. This development later took further concrete form when the CTE (Contrats Territoriaux d’Exploitation – Land Management Contracts) were set up with the support of the CNJA under the initiative of Bertrand Hervieu, a former member of the *Groupe de Seillac*.

But the Groupe de Seillac suffered from one notable weakness - it was composed only of French nationals, while agricultural policy clearly has a European dimension. In 1995, therefore, the Group decided to dissolve and to create a European successor group. Bertrand Hervieu and Edgard Pisani were charged with this responsibility.

### **The beginnings of the Bruges Group**

The setting up of this new group was made possible thanks to financial support from the Charles-Léopold Mayer foundation, under the auspices of its "Agriculture paysanne et modernisation" (APM) programme. The members were selected by Bertrand Hervieu and Edgard Pisani from among specialists in agriculture, environment and rural development. Some of these, particularly those from the Eastern bloc countries, were identified through the APM programme and proposed by the Charles-Léopold Mayer foundation. Over the following years, the group was strengthened by the addition of new members at the suggestion in particular of Piotr Dabrowski who extended participation to individuals from the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe. A few members who had not been very active departed, and by 2003 the group consisted of 25 members from 22 countries.

The group met for the first time from February 2-5 1995 at Bruges. It was still at an early stage of development and comprised only a dozen members. The book "Pour une agriculture marchande et ménagère" ("Towards an agriculture for the market and for the territory) was distributed to all participants and served as a basis for discussion. This inaugural meeting set out to define the guidelines for the functioning and the thinking of the group. It broached a range of questions and issues but did not come up with a common declaration.

Some time later Pierre-Yves Guiheneuf was charged with the responsibility of the secretariat and with the preparation of the second meeting which was held from November 12-14 1995. This meeting was preceded by a significant amount of preparatory groundwork - desk research, collection of data and analyses - which attempted to cover as comprehensive a field of thought as possible: global food security, EU enlargement, the dilemma between the unity and the diversity of European territories, the expectations of society at large concerning the environment, product quality, employment etc. This preparatory document was drafted with the active participation of members of the group: Eduardo Moyano, Jean-François Sneessens, Wulf Treiber and Bertrand Hervieu. It was published the following year by Editions Charles-Léopold Mayer under the title "Cultiver l'Europe".

The second meeting of the Bruges Group dealt with the whole range of issues raised in the preparatory document. It resulted in the drafting of a common declaration which was prepared by the secretary after the meeting and subsequently submitted to all members for amendment and validation. This first declaration was published in France in Le Monde on March 12 1996 under the title "Which agriculture for Europe?" under the signatures of Edgard Pisani and Bertrand Hervieu. The text was also published in other countries on the initiative of its members - Denmark, Finland, Italy, Spain, Greece and Poland.

1996 also witnessed the publication of a book entitled "Agriculture, un tournant nécessaire" ("Agriculture at a turning point") which expanded in some detail upon the proposals developed during the 1995 meeting. This book was published in France by Editions de l'Aube, in the Netherlands by éditions De Balie, and in Spain by the Ministry of Agriculture.

In 1996 the third meeting of the Bruges Group was held from 26-29 September in Bavaria, at Herrshing, at the invitation of Wulf Treiber who ran a training centre for young farmers. This was the first thematic meeting, and the theme was global food security in the context of the preparatory meetings leading up to the World Food Summit (FAO, Rome November 1996). This meeting was notable for the participation of Laurence Tubiana, of Solagral (France),

and of participants from the German agricultural profession. Pierre Vuarin, head of the APM programme of the Charles-Léopold Mayer foundation, also participated.

The preparatory report "Besoins de l'Europe et besoins du monde" ("The needs of Europe and of the world") which was sent to the participants presented a synthesis of up-to-date documentation on this theme, in particular summaries of documents, overviews of future trends, and working notes from American networks such as IATP and RIAD. From now on, each meeting of the group was preceded by the drafting of a preparatory document. Following the meeting at Herrshing, a short article entitled "Pour une Europe solidaire du monde" ("Towards a Europe in solidarity with the world") was published in the journal *Terre Citoyenne*, and was distributed in six languages at the initiative of the APM programme. After the Press Conference which was held following the meeting, articles were also published in Germany. Finally, as a logical extension of this train of thought, Bertrand Hervieu with *Le Monde Diplomatique* and Solagral collaborated in the organisation of a conference on the global food issue at Chantilly on October 11 and 12 1996. However, the theme of global food security was rapidly overtaken by events.

### **The question of rural development**

In November 1996, just after the meeting of the Bruges Group in Bavaria, European Commissioner Franz Fischler took the initiative to organise a European conference in Cork (Ireland) which attracted a large participation from delegates from non-farming interest groups and networks. The theme was rural development. Commissioner Fischler's objective was to lend impetus to a decisive change in the CAP by transforming it into a policy for rural development, thereby calling into question the exclusively productivist dimension of agriculture and broadening the range of partners in the public debate. His initiative generated considerable interest among those concerned with questions of rural development and territorial issues: local associations, experts, universities, territorial groupings etc.

The final declaration of the Cork conference on rural development, affirmed that "rural development must be put at the top of the agenda of the European Union" and defined the objectives to be pursued: "reversing rural out-migration, combating poverty, stimulating employment and equality of opportunity, and responding to growing requests for more quality, health, safety, personal development and leisure, and improving rural well-being. The need to preserve and improve the quality of the rural environment must be integrated into all Community policies that relate to rural development".

But this declaration met with stiff opposition from the European Council of Ministers, and in particular from the French Minister of Agriculture. This rebuff to Commissioner Fischler unsettled the plans of the Commission and reinforced the position of those who believed in the maintenance of the status quo and who were banking on the progressive opening up of the European market without putting in place a rural policy.

But from that point on, the question of rural development became central to the thinking about the CAP. The Bruges Group decided to make this their theme in its 1997 meeting and to devote considerable effort to it, particularly by opening up its meetings to participants who were not members of the group. Several months before the meeting, the European Commission made public its proposals for Agenda 2000, which marked a certain break with the intentions declared at the Cork conference.

At the same time, Piotr Dabrowski managed to convince the rest of the group of the need to include as members participants from candidate countries from Eastern and Central Europe. Thanks to his efforts, three new participants joined the group - from Slovenia, Bulgaria and Lithuania. Other members from Switzerland, Sweden and Italy also joined.

The 1997 meeting was held in Bruges in October. About fifty individuals attended, thirty of whom were not part of the group. There were specialists in the rural world, and members of the European Network of Experiences in Sustainable Development belonging to local development associations from the EU and from the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

The preparatory document for the meeting was drafted in collaboration with them. This constituted an important work of compilation of proposals for reform of the CAP by European networks both agricultural and non-agricultural. This document, entitled "19 policy platforms for the future of Europe" bore witness to the progressive maturity of proposals put forward by NGOs, particularly the environmentalists. It also testified to the emergence on the European scene of groups from 'ruralist' movements (territorial groupings, agents of local development...) and of new preoccupations with regard to the creation of jobs, to the link with society, and to the governance of territories.

This stage is marked by two significant developments for the Bruges Group. Firstly, the growing influence of thinking of territory as in some way crystallising concerns about the environment, employment, subsidiarity, social dynamics etc. Secondly, a gradual increase in awareness of the importance of non-agricultural NGOs in the renewal of the public debate about agriculture.

The 1997 meeting, which had seen the participation of Corrado Pirzio-Biroli, Director of Commissioner Fischler's staff, of a number of international experts such as Alan Buckwell, author of a noted report on EU rural development policy, and of local actors involved in concrete activities placed the Bruges Group at the heart of the debate on the CAP as a truly European and independent forum for reflection.

The Group published a report of the meeting under the title "Agriculture and rural development: European issues" and then set up a web site where its publications may be consulted and downloaded.

The following year, in the context of the fortieth anniversary of the Stresa Conference which had founded the CAP, the Group submitted an article to a number of newspapers in Europe. In France, this was published in *Le Monde* on July 10 1998 under the title "Agriculture: l'après-Stresa a commencé". The article deemed the agricultural question to pose a risk to the enlargement and deepening of the EU because the difficulties in achieving its reform compromised the adaptation of Community policies and institutions. This article also stressed the enrichment of the public debate by calling attention to the fact that "The emergence of non-agricultural social groups in the debate on the CAP represents a turning-point for the 1990s", and stated that a new CAP could not be fashioned without greater attention being paid to the expectations of society at large. And finally, against a background of the globalisation of trade, it cautioned against the danger of a liberalisation of the sector in insisting upon the necessity for a robust and resolutely European public policy.

### **Reforming the reform: the risk of public disengagement**

1998 was marked by the rise in the tide of debates aroused by preparations for Agenda 2000. After a very large meeting, several members of the Group requested the organisation of a more restricted assembly in order to draft a collective declaration in response to the Commission's proposals. There was also the question of taking the time for in-depth debates with the new members so as to create confidence based upon the sharing of common values.

This more restricted meeting took place in the autumn of 1998 at the castle of Villarceau in France, at the invitation of the Charles-Léopold Mayer foundation. It brought together fifteen

members of the group, and was preceded by a discussion with the management of the Bergerie farm.

This meeting enabled the group to gain a better appreciation of the issues in play in future reform of the CAP. The illusion of conquering world markets as a possible way to revitalise European agriculture emerged clearly as a major risk. Such a proposal might in fact win the support of sectors of the European Commission who had long sought the opening up of domestic markets, as well as of groups of producers/exporters in positions of strength within professional organisations and of trading partners of the EU. It could also win over associated groupings - particularly environmentalists, consumers and rural interest groups - who wanted the EU to concentrate its resources upon the management of European territory and who might be prepared to let the management of the market take care of itself without public oversight. Only Third World organisations and certain minority agricultural groups clearly perceived the perverse effects of such a proposal for the developing countries and for small-scale European producers.

Following this meeting, the Bruges Group sent an open letter to six hundred European parliamentarians. Entitled "Agriculture must reconquer the European Union", it reaffirmed that the demands of society and of citizens must be at the heart of the agricultural and rural question, but that this take the form of public regulation of the markets and the limitation of volumes of production, both to guarantee profitable returns for producers (world prices being unsuitable as reference prices because they are a product in part of dumping) as well as to limit subsidised exports which present a threat to the poorer countries. This document in fact reiterates the principles set out by the Groupe de Seillac: the European market and territories are the two inseparable constituents of the CAP.

### **Evaluation and new directions**

In May 1999 a meeting was organised in Valencia (Spain) by the Charles-Léopold Mayer foundation which was attended by several members of the Group.

Immediately after this meeting, the secretariat of the Bruges Group organised a consultation with its members with regard to future orientations. In fact, after the anticipated conclusion of the Agenda 2000 negotiations, the EU entered into a six year phase without significant modifications apart from those which could be decided at the mid-term evaluation in 2002 and which it was felt should be limited in scope.

Several points were underlined by the Group:

- the desire to pursue the activities underway and to strengthen the presence of the Group in certain countries. During this year and the following year, new participants joined from Great Britain, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Rumania and later Austria. Efforts to find an Irish participant remained fruitless.
- the wish to preserve the independence of the Group, guaranteeing the credibility and the legitimacy of its deliberations
- the need to strengthen exchanges with non-agricultural European networks involved in reflecting upon agricultural policy and rural development.
- the wish to pursue analysis of the international effects of the CAP. Since 1995 public debate had made progress in several areas, in particular with regard to territorial issues. Questions related to multi-functionality, contractualisation and agri-environment were also widely discussed and the debate made some headway. In France these developments were illustrated by the setting up of

CTE. The Bruges Group did not set out to substitute for social actors or indeed for politicians by going as far as proposing detailed policy instruments, confining itself rather to drawing the attention of the protagonists in the debate to the major issues. From this point of view the international dimensions, particularly the relations between the EU and the peripheral regions (the Mediterranean, Central Europe) appear to the Group to constitute one of the weak points in thinking about the CAP.

At the end of 1999 the Group met at Cordue at the invitation of Eduardo Moyano. This was the occasion for a meeting about the Mediterranean region at a time when relations between Europe and the Mediterranean were prominent on the political agenda. A dozen researchers and professionals from the region participated in the meeting alongside Group members. Questions related to the gradual shift of the CAP toward becoming a rural development policy remained at the heart of the debates. Developments in public policy and policy instruments (such as the Leader programmes), the innovatory capacities of local groups, the reform of advisory and research structures, and the articulation of sectoral strategies with territorial dynamics were questions of interest both to the countries of the East as well as to the Mediterranean countries.

### **Shrinking scope for debate**

In 2000 the Group met in Cracow at the invitation of Piotr Dabrowski. There were 14 members of the Group in attendance, together with 6 external participants of whom two - from Hungary and the Czech Republic - became members.

After this meeting the Group sent out a new open letter to European parliamentarians under the title of "Territory, an issue for an enlarged and renewed Europe". This text stresses the narrow margin for manoeuvre available to the countries of Eastern and Central Europe to negotiate their entry into the EU, and the need for a shared project upon which EU enlargement and deepening may be constructed. Such a project must in particular embrace the question of territory and related issues: solidarity between regions, control of population movements, the links between urban centres and rural areas, the creation of new activities, the geographical distribution of activities... The text makes an appeal for a rural development policy which is conceived in partnership with the candidate countries.

Agriculture per se figures only fleetingly in this declaration. Through this declaration, the Bruges Group broadened its principal objective and deliberately placed itself in the territorial camp.

Thanks to the participation of members of the Group, this text was translated into 14 languages (English, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, German, Bulgarian, Finnish, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Polish, Rumanian, Slovene, Swedish and Czech) and was posted on the internet. It was also published in France, Italy, the Netherlands and Bulgaria.

At this juncture, the debate about agriculture was going through a phase of contraction. While throughout the 1990s the questions posed by CAP reform raised high hopes with regard to the expectations of society at large (environment, food quality, territorial management, transparency and fairness in the making of public policy...), the end of the decade witnessed a narrowing of the questions raised. It is possible that the hopes dashed after the Cork conference may have discredited proposals related to rural development. It is probable that the negotiations which accompanied the adoption of Agenda 2000, by giving rise to a strong resurgence of national interests, the haggling over budgetary matters and a desire to return to the status quo may have discouraged some activists. The second outbreak of Mad Cow disease focused public attention on food-related questions - more precisely questions of public health - without however stimulating any real debate about

models of production. Only the GMO question then seemed capable of remobilising public opinion, but it was the big corporations and research institutes, rather than farmers themselves, which became the targets of demands from society at large.

It is true to say that the debates continued, but in a less open and more segmented manner aimed at the definition of regulatory instruments.

The Bruges Group was aware of the danger posed by the reduction of debates about the CAP to a discussion about budgetary options and technical instruments, while the substance of new concepts such as “rural development” or “sustainable agriculture” remained as yet ill-defined. The Group also felt that the main issues confronting the European Union were not being adequately addressed. In particular the question of the transition of candidate countries after their accession to the EU left room for considerable uncertainty. Likewise, the role of the EU in the organisation of international trade remained uncertain. And finally, the democratisation of the debate about rural and agricultural questions had in effect been called into question by the narrowing of the discussions since 1999.

In 2001, the Group set in motion a range of activities. In January, several Group members attended an international meeting held in Lisbon (Portugal) at the invitation of an organisation called “European Partners for the Environment” which brought together representatives from Europe and the United States to discuss issues such as sustainable agriculture and rural development. In July, several of these individuals met again at Ancona (Italy) to participate in a European conference on rural development and to organise the next Group meeting. And finally, several members also participated in the continental meeting at Peles (Rumania) at the initiative of the Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World).

The November 2001 meeting of the Bruges Group was held near Berlin and was organised with the German Federation of Rural Training Centres. Sixteen members of the Group attended, together with 36 invited guests, of whom seven were experts and a dozen representatives of European networks involved in CAP reform, in particular environmentalists and ruralists. In this way the Bruges Group sought to reinforce its links with active networks. Two observers from the United States (Hal Hamilton, and Molly Anderson) also attended the proceedings.

The climate for debate at that time was coloured by the events of September 11 2001, and by the opening of the WTO Doha negotiations. This was the moment for the Bruges Group, in its Berlin Declaration entitled “Urgent issues for Europe”, to stress the importance of the international dimensions in the conceptualisation of public policy. This document was sent to a number of newspapers but was not published, which demonstrated clearly that questions related to European policy on agriculture and rural development were no longer a priority in public debate.

### **Mid-term review: new debates**

The year 2002 was marked by the mid-term review of Agenda 2000 and by the desire of the European Commission to capitalise upon this opportunity to propose a major change to the CAP in view of the imminent prospect of enlargement. In fact, while the entry of candidate countries will be effective from 2004, negotiations for the post-2006 period have been taking place in the context of an EU of 25 member States, and major points of inertia - for example with regard to direct agricultural support payments - could then make their presence felt. The Commission wishes therefore to set up certain policy instruments, for example eco-conditionality and the modulation of direct payments, and to place greater emphasis on decoupling.



The year 2002 thus witnessed a certain relaunching of the debate about matters agricultural and rural, and the Bruges Group has drawn upon this to disseminate its ideas.

First there was the publication of a second edition of the book "Agriculture at a turning point" which this time was published in 5 countries: the Netherlands, France, Italy, Spain and Bulgaria. This edition gave rise to several articles in the Press and to a public debate in Amsterdam, with the Dutch Minister of Agriculture and a good attendance. Despite the translation into English of this book, and numerous approaches to publishers, the United Kingdom remains inaccessible.

However, at the beginning of the year the publication in this country (the UK) of an official report on agricultural policy aroused considerable discussion in the print media. After the scandal which followed the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease, this report proposed to accelerate the liberalisation of the sector and to set in place a European environmental and rural policy to supersede the CAP. This "liberal-Green" position which had already become apparent during the Agenda 2000 negotiations is gaining ground. The Bruges Group, which has long insisted that account be taken of the environment, is attempting to demonstrate that abandoning agricultural markets to free trade is nonetheless undesirable. Asked by the UK development education organisation Farmers' World network for an opinion the UK's policy report (the Curry Report), the Bruges Group made it clear that the regulation of agricultural markets must remain a matter for public policy, lest the foundations of European agriculture and the welfare of resource-poor farmers in the developing countries be placed in greater jeopardy. This article was published in the English language journal LANDMARK and in its French language version Agri-Repère.

The Group has also drafted a response to the European Commission's proposals concerning the mid-term review of Agenda 2000. This document is posted on the Groupe de Bruges website. It was broadly in favour of the directions that the Commission proposes to embrace, but reiterated that market regulation must remain at the heart of the CAP. It requested clarification of the EU's position on contributing to resolving the problem of global food insecurity. And finally, it requested that territorial cohesion be reasserted as an objective of the CAP, and that greater subsidiarity be introduced in the implementation of the policy instruments.

Finally, in 2002 several members of the Bruges Group actively participated in the work of the European Agricultural Convention, created at the initiative of the European Parliament Agriculture Commission with a view to contributing to the Convention for the Future of Europe presided over by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. This working group essentially brings together representatives of the main no-governmental networks in the EU and the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe involved in the debate on agriculture and rural development: consumers, environmentalists, rural interest groups, animal welfare activists... It is an important forum and a place where proposals may be subjected to scrutiny. Members of the Bruges Group sent written contributions, as well as attending several meetings in Brussels and contributing to the final text.

By contrast, plans for a meeting in 2002 in collaboration with the British organisations UK Food Group and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) had to be cancelled for financial reasons. The theme was due to be global food security, a topic whose importance is considerably underestimated in discussions about the CAP. It is regrettable that in this area there are very few networks of stature in Europe, but some associations are mobilising in certain countries - for example in France through the Campaign for a reorientation of the CAP or in the EU through the campaign "Food and Farming: Time to Choose!" The cancellation of this meeting bears witness to the fragility of the functioning of the Bruges Group, which has to make overtures to specific groups in order to organise meetings.

As the year 2000 draws to a close, a meeting is in prospect for 2003 in collaboration with the Franco-Austrian Centre for economic relations in Europe.

## Chronology

27 May 1992. In the context of the Mac Sharry CAP reform, Edgard Pisani publishes in *Le Monde* (France) the article « *Which agriculture do we need ?* »

Dec. 1992. Creation of the Groupe de Seillac with the support of the FPH and of the journal « *L'événement européen* ». Twenty members, all French.

April 1993. Publication of the brochure « *Agriculture, société et territoires : pour une politique européenne* ».

1994. Publication of the book « *Pour une agriculture marchande et ménagère* » (Ed. de l'Aube). Dissolution of the Groupe de Seillac.

Feb. 1995. First meeting of the Groupe de Bruges under the presidency of Edgard Pisani. Fifteen members.

Nov. 1995. Second meeting (Bruges) on the theme of CAP issues.

March 1996. Publication of the book « *Cultiver l'Europe* » (Ed. C.L. Mayer)

1996. Publication of the book « *Agriculture, un tournant nécessaire* » (France: Ed. de l'Aube ; Netherlands: De Balie ; Spain: Ministry of agriculture.

Oct. 1996. Third meeting (Herrshing, Germany) on the theme of global food security.

Oct. 1997. Fourth meeting (Bruges) on the theme of CAP reform and rural development policy.

Oct. 1998. Fifth meeting (Villorceau, France) on the theme of Agenda 2000. The Groupe de Bruges has 25 members.

Jan. 1999. Open letter to European parliamentarians « *Agriculture must reconquest the European Union* ».

March 1999. Internal evaluation of the Groupe de Bruges and definition of programme of work.

Oct. 1999. Sixth meeting (Cordoba, Spain) on the theme of the Mediterranean region.

Oct. 2000. Seventh meeting (Cracow, Poland) on the theme of enlargement. Open letter to European MPs : « *Territory, an issue for an enlarged and renewed Europe* »

July 2001. Seminary in Ancona (Italy)

Oct. 2001. Eighth meeting (Berlin, Germany) on the theme of food and territory.

2002 Second edition of book « *Agriculture at a turning point* » (France, Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Bulgaria).

