

CONV 775/03

CONTRIB 348

COVER NOTE

from Secretariat
to The Convention

Subject : Contribution by Mr. Esko Helle, alternate member of the Convention:
- “On the Chairmen of the Union institutions”

The Secretary-General of the Convention has received the contribution annexed hereto from
Mr. Esko Helle, alternate member of the Convention.

**Contribution to the European Convention
by Mr Esko HELLE,
Alternate Member of the Convention
representing Parliament of Finland**

ON THE CHAIRMEN OF THE UNION INSTITUTIONS

I'm somewhat astonished that so many convention members propose that the Council of Europe and the Council of Ministers be chaired by a Member of the Commission, by the General Secretary of the Council or by somebody else not being member of the said institution.

I cannot agree with those proposals. The Council has to be chaired by a minister who is responsible to his own National Parliament. Only so can the political responsibility be ensured. How would the political responsibility be realized if a Member of the Commission would be the Chairman of the Council? I do not think that a parliamentary committee in any National Parliament of the Union could be chaired by a person who wouldn't be Member of that Parliament.

The Council of Europe should only consist of the Heads of Governments of the Member States, i.a. of the Prime Ministers who are responsible to their own National Parliaments. The Presidents who do not have this parliamentary responsibility shouldn't become members the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe should be chaired (and the conclusions made) by a Head of a Government who is responsible to his own National Parliament.

One of the main objectives of the Convention is to increase the acceptability of the Union by the citizens and the representatives of the Member Countries. If the Council of Europe was chaired by a person who wouldn't be responsible to his National Parliament, the influence of the National Parliaments to the union politics would be diminished compared to the present situation. This would not increase but decrease the Union's acceptability in the eyes of its citizens.