

Adapting Danish Interests to European Integration

Henning Bregnsbo, University of Copenhagen
Niels Christian Sidenius, University of Aarhus

When Denmark became a member of the European Community in 1973, political institutions as well as private business had to and did in fact make adaptations to the new and unaccustomed political environment. With the exception of the Common Market Committee of *Folketinget*, however, the Danish polity did not change much with regard to the EC until the late 1980s when the Community gained new momentum. Now, traditionally corporatist patterns of decision-making are adapting to a European polity much more complex and pluralist by nature. Political and administrative institutions are developing new ways of influencing EC policies, though their lobbying activities still remain basically *ad hoc* and reactive. As to private interests, agriculture occupies a unique position with its long tradition of aggressive lobbying, while lobbying by manufacturing companies is still in the making. However, an overall weakening of national corporatist patterns of decision-making in response to the integration process, which one might perhaps have expected, has not taken place. Rather, we observe a strengthening. Thus, our case poses questions as to the relevance of existing corporatist notions for an understanding of the general nature of the policy-making process in the Community and the prospects for interest organizational centralization at the European level.

In an analysis of the impact of European integration upon the national administrative structures of six member countries at the time, Christensen (1971, 242) pointed to the quite obvious fact that problems of adaptation “can only be understood against the background of specific political and administrative conditions existing in the member countries”. The observation can be taken to cover national styles of lobbying as well.

One such circumstance in the case of Denmark is its tradition of a corporatist pattern of political decision-making; Danish public policy, especially in the areas of industrial relations and agriculture, tends to be the outcome of close, integrated and institutionalized cooperation among organized interests and governmental institutions. With respect to corporatism in public policy-making, Williamson (1989, 148–156), for example, ranks Denmark just below Sweden, Norway, Austria and the Netherlands, whereas the USA, a more truly pluralist society, is put at the bottom of the scale. A related idea is found in Buksti & Martens (1984, 87) where a

Adapting Danish Interests to European Integration

Henning Bregnsbo, University of Copenhagen
Niels Christian Sidenius, University of Aarhus

When Denmark became a member of the European Community in 1973, political institutions as well as private business had to and did in fact make adaptations to the new and unaccustomed political environment. With the exception of the Common Market Committee of *Folketinget*, however, the Danish polity did not change much with regard to the EC until the late 1980s when the Community gained new momentum. Now, traditionally corporatist patterns of decision-making are adapting to a European polity much more complex and pluralist by nature. Political and administrative institutions are developing new ways of influencing EC policies, though their lobbying activities still remain basically *ad hoc* and reactive. As to private interests, agriculture occupies a unique position with its long tradition of aggressive lobbying, while lobbying by manufacturing companies is still in the making. However, an overall weakening of national corporatist patterns of decision-making in response to the integration process, which one might perhaps have expected, has not taken place. Rather, we observe a strengthening. Thus, our case poses questions as to the relevance of existing corporatist notions for an understanding of the general nature of the policy-making process in the Community and the prospects for interest organizational centralization at the European level.

In an analysis of the impact of European integration upon the national administrative structures of six member countries at the time, Christensen (1971, 242) pointed to the quite obvious fact that problems of adaptation “can only be understood against the background of specific political and administrative conditions existing in the member countries”. The observation can be taken to cover national styles of lobbying as well.

One such circumstance in the case of Denmark is its tradition of a corporatist pattern of political decision-making; Danish public policy, especially in the areas of industrial relations and agriculture, tends to be the outcome of close, integrated and institutionalized cooperation among organized interests and governmental institutions. With respect to corporatism in public policy-making, Williamson (1989, 148–156), for example, ranks Denmark just below Sweden, Norway, Austria and the Netherlands, whereas the USA, a more truly pluralist society, is put at the bottom of the scale. A related idea is found in Buksti & Martens (1984, 87) where a

distinction is made between a Southern and a Northern European style of political behaviour, the latter being more low-key and formally recognized.

The consequences of such a national policy style depend in part upon the nature of the environment a country confronts. Streeck (with Philippe C. Schmitter 1992, 200–208) points to the “failure” of Euro-corporatism in the Community, and characterizes the policy-making process there as “fragmented and dispersed”. Mazey & Richardson (1991), Grant (1989) and Gardner (1991), by comparison, underscore the openness of the EC system. Gardner, speaking of “the accessibility and inherent ‘friendliness’ of the EC legislative process” (1991, 39), while at the same time talking of the legislative process as “a study in complexity” (1991,29), suggests that the EC system can be “almost startling in its openness” (1991, 39). This openness, according to Mazey & Richardson, may “pose problems for groups more accustomed to working within a national political-administrative system” (1991, 1).

Another consideration, pointed out by Tygesen (1986, 55–56), is the importance of sheer size. Denmark, certainly a small country, presumably has to meet higher standards in order to make itself felt than larger nations which are able, when need be, to use their greater economic and political clout. For instance in Holland, also a small country, van Schendelen (1993) observes that because of its small size, political relationships among actors tend to be informal (“we all know each other”), an observation which is also true of political relationships in Denmark. One could also, as does Damgaard (1990, 15–44), point to the almost permanent pattern of delicately balancing forces in Danish politics and the fact that relatively weak minority cabinets (minority *coalition* cabinets to boot) are something of a Danish speciality. This pattern, one can imagine, would make for enhanced responsiveness to outside influences on the part of the political system.

With regard to the formal national decision-making system concerning EC affairs, Sørensen (1978, 133–145) has described Denmark as strongly centralized – at least in appearance, he adds. Yet in actual fact, according to Sørensen, there has been a marked tendency towards decentralized decision-making. Evidence suggests that sector ministries, in particular those dealing with economic affairs and agriculture, have become more and more independently involved. Danish private lobbying, on the other hand, is generally described as rather reticent (cf. Buksti & Martens 1984). The only exception here is agriculture, owing to the importance of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Buksti and Martens point to Nordic affiliations among trade unions as part of the explanation for their reticence towards the EC. This reticence, it would seem, stands in stark contrast to what is observed elsewhere in Europe, i.e. a general expansion in private lobbying (cf. Mazey & Richardson 1991; Gardner 1991; Andersen & Eliassen 1991). Gardner, for example, talks of “internal politics of EC

member states . . . changing rapidly in response to the accelerating erosion of national sovereignty” (1991, 26–27), while Andersen and Eliassen speak of no less than an “explosive” growth of lobbying (1991, 174–177).

Our focus in this article is on how Danish political-administrative institutions at the central level and private business actors within agriculture and manufacturing (the individual companies and their associations) have adapted to the changes of recent years, that is, to a European policy environment which is less corporatist, more pluralist, and has loomed larger and larger. With respect to adaptation, we have in mind questions such as whether it is possible to uphold an ideal of consensus and discipline in the official Danish EC decision-making process, and whether the increased volume and importance of EC decisions make it possible or desirable for individual institutions to go their own way, seeking, for instance, alternative alliance partners. More generally, we wish to consider what is happening to the Danish liberal-corporatist tradition. We ask whether this tradition is in the process of being weakened or strengthened. In conclusion, we discuss how our findings agree with general corporatist notions as to the nature of the policy-making process in the Community and prospects for centralization of interest organizations at the European level (cf. Bregnsbo 1989, Streeck 1992).

Adaptation by the Political-Administrative Institutions

The Common Market Committee of Parliament

It is the strong and detailed parliamentary control of EC policy that makes the Danish EC decision-making system something special. The Common Market Committee of *Folketinget*, the Danish parliament, occupies a most central and unique position in this context. Established in 1973 as a miniature of the 179 member *Folketinget*, the Common Market Committee is the place where Denmark’s EC policy – both short- and long-term – is harmonized between government and opposition.

The Common Market Committee has expanded its powers since its initial creation. At the time Denmark joined the EC, provisions stipulated only that the government had to report to parliament (in practice an annual report paralleling the Commission’s annual report) and that the government should brief the Common Market Committee on proposals from the Commission to the Council. In the years since the committee’s inception, the government has had to accept that the Common Market Committee shall be briefed on all Commission proposals for directives and resolutions, and the government must also consult the Common Market Committee on all questions of major importance. Prior to meetings of the Council, moreover,

the government has to report orally to the Common Market Committee on proposed negotiating positions on all major matters, and it may then negotiate on the basis of its declared position only if a majority in the Common Market Committee has not disapproved. If an attractive compromise solution to a question emerges during negotiations of the Council, the government has to go back to the Common Market Committee for approval. In some cases it has even been necessary for the Common Market Committee to “firewatch” in Copenhagen during important negotiating phases in Brussels.

The Common Market Committee is briefed orally only in order to avoid weakening the Danish positions through leaks. Illuminating for the delicate balance in Danish EC policy-making is a decision made by the Common Market Committee in 1983 after doubts about whether the then foreign minister had in fact stuck to the position he had stated to the committee. The decision made by the Common Market Committee was that henceforth oral briefings by ministers were to be taken down stenographically in the committee’s own minutes. And since 1988 the committee has had a special “EC consultant” attached to it permanently (at present a senior civil servant provided by the Ministry of Finance). In the most recent years, the committee has furthermore been supported by a special envoy in Brussels, who serves as a liaison to the European Parliament independent of the Denmark’s Permanent Representation. The arrangement is meant to strengthen the committee relative to the government and the ministries, and is said to have bolstered morale in the committee (Drachmann 1991).

The members of the Common Market Committee may further demand information on any proposal or issue up for discussion among EC bodies. The government has also had to accept an obligation to forward to the committee briefs on the consequences and range of national law-making powers following the possible adoption of any Commission proposal in the Council.

After the Single European Act of 1985, the Common Market Committee has also obtained the right to ask for a general debate in *Folketinget* upon any Commission proposal related to the single market. Such debates are held on the basis of a report written by the government. The debate follows general lines, after which the matter is referred back to the Common Market Committee. The matter may also be referred to other relevant standing committees for comments. It should be noted, however, that the general interest in these debates among MPs and in the media has been very limited.

In 1990 the opposition parties asked the government to introduce a bill giving public access to the “aide-memoires” of the ministries in EC matters. The bill was passed in May of 1991 by the so-called “alternative majority” against the votes of the government parties, giving the public almost the

same kind of access to ministerial documents in EC matters as in Danish politics in general. As a consequence some ministries make fewer "aide-memoires" than before, preferring "notes" which are not covered by the law instead.

In general, the Common Market Committee is especially strong in matters of high saliency, but somewhat weaker, though still strong, in matters of technical detail. Its fundamental power base is of course the precarious nature of the Danish parliamentary system, in which minority multi-party governments predominate. The Maastricht agreement, when (and if) ratified, will strengthen the influence of the European Parliament, but whether that will either positively or negatively affect the role and competences of the Common Market Committee remains to be seen.

The strong position progressively acquired by the committee reflects, on the one hand, a more general decrease in the strength of the government and its coordinating powers and, on the other hand, the fact that public opinion, until recently, has been fairly sceptical with respect to Danish EC membership. The issue, for example, has split the Social Democratic Party since the 1972 referendum. Throughout the period of membership public opinion has consistently been hostile to further institutional developments with respect to issues of an economic and not the least a political union. This was in particular demonstrated by the narrow "no" to the Maastricht agreements in the June 1992 referendum. It should be added, however, that the past few years have witnessed an upsurge in general acceptance of Danish EC membership as such; for all practical purposes the question of membership *per se* is now a non-issue. After the "no" outcome in the June 1992 Maastricht referendum, the three leading opposition parties (two "yes" parties and one "no" party) formulated a so-called "national compromise" for negotiations with the other Community members. The compromise, in reality accepting the Maastricht agreement but asking for clarification and certain exemptions, was accepted by the government without ceremony and, for once, by the Common Market Committee as well.

It is important to emphasize here that vigorous parliamentary supervision of governmental dealings with Brussels by no means implies a weakening of the quest for consensus and discipline. When the government obtains its mandate in the committee it can negotiate in the knowledge that it has full backing at home. Curiously, references to the "notorious" Common Market Committee by Danish negotiators in Brussels ("we shall never get through with this in the Market Committee") can even strengthen their bargaining position.

Bases for Dealings with Brussels: Discipline and Consensus

In contrast to Germany and Italy, for example, the official Danish EC

decision-making system is highly centralized, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs serving as coordinator and “watchdog”. It is constructed so as to maximize coordination of Danish participation in the administrative and political processes in the EC. The underlying idea is that in order to manifest itself, a country like Denmark, despite its numerical weakness (Denmark holds only three votes out of 76 in the Council and only 16 seats out of 518 in the European Parliament) has only to put forward viewpoints that are watertight, characterized by continuity, and founded on firm principles. At the same time the Danish system is consensus oriented and open, offering easy access for external interests wanting to inform and enlighten bureaucrats and politicians. Related to the consensus-oriented character of the system, the influence of *Folketinget*, particularly in high-saliency matters, is strong and, compared to other member countries, of a special character given the position of the Common Market Committee.

As a general rule the decision-making process is cross-ministerial, and it contrasts with the traditional hierarchical decision procedure of the Danish civil service. At the same time it is also often of an informal character. The system is further characterized by the fact that many decisions are made at the level of the civil servants.

There are three administrative and political levels in the Danish system. At the bottom level are the so-called special committees (*specialudvalg*). The special committees (at present there are 28) are manned with middle-level civil servants from diverse ministries and governmental boards. In committees dealing with labour-market relations, labour associations are also permanently represented. Each special committee has its own specific area of responsibility – e.g. agriculture, environment, industry, labour affairs, the single market, legal affairs, and so forth. Traditional administrative scrutiny takes place within the respective ministries. The committee chairman as well as the committee secretary are from the relevant ministry, which always plays a pivotal role; the relevant ministries hear external interests, make policy choices and take formal decisions.

At this level external interests are drawn in on a routine basis, and any member of a special committee can have a topic of relevance put on the agenda to ensure that all external interests concerned get a fair hearing. One might in this connection talk of a diffusion of the right to initiate a hearing. This level is the route of formal access for external interests. The involvement of industrial interests in EC policy-making has thus become institutionalized, and within agriculture and fisheries involvement since December 1972 has been formalized by law which provides for integration of peak and trade associations.

Consultations in the special committees may result in a formal “mandate” to the relevant ministry or board, a mandate which is considered binding for those negotiating the Danish positions in Brussels at the Commission

level. During such negotiations Danish representatives may, if they wish, refer the matter back to Copenhagen, to the special committee in question, for further advice.

At the middle level is the so-called EC Committee (*EF-udvalget*), which constitutes the national counterpart of COREPER. The EC Committee is manned by heads of ministries or senior civil servants from a number of ministries and boards. In accordance with its role as the pivot of the whole system, the chair belongs to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The task of this committee is to coordinate in a general way and make decisions in matters where the special committees have not themselves reached an agreement. Some members of the EC Committee are also members of one or more special committees. Some members have also been members of the Permanent Representation in Brussels. Finally, committee members coordinate and supervise activities in their own ministries or boards "at home".

The whole idea with this arrangement is to secure continuity and consistency in Danish EC policy. The EC Committee considers all proposals that lie on the table of the Council, and the proposals are likewise divided into A- and B-proposals. In the event of especially obnoxious B-matters, they may be referred to the Government's EC Committee, the last step on the administrative ladder.

The members of the Government's EC Committee (*Regeringens EF-udvalg*) are the ministers from the most EC relevant ministries. The agenda of the committee is set up by the EC Committee, and the chairman of this committee is secretary in the Government's EC Committee in accordance with the above-mentioned philosophy of continuity and consistency. The Government's EC Committee occupies itself with the main lines in Denmark's EC policy, discusses all items on the agendas of coming Council meetings, and generally takes up all EC questions of major importance, including questions where the most involved ministries disagree about the Danish position. And if the Common Market Committee of *Folketinget* is to be given a briefing on a proposal for a directive or something similar, such a briefing is first discussed by the ministers.

Public Lobbying: Ad hoc and Re-active, but Changing

Official procedure puts the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the top of the domestic policy-making hierarchy. In practice, however, most EC matters are decided upon by consensus at the level of the special committees. In cases of conflict between ministries (e.g. between the Ministries of Environmental Protection, Industry or Agriculture), the involved ministries, sometimes in conjunction with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, try to

solve the problems among themselves, avoiding bringing conflicts onto the agenda of the Government's EC Committee.

High-level decision-making in EC matters in Brussels also ascribes a dominant role to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and usually it acts at the level of the Council and the Commission. But in most cases the relevant sector ministry is responsible for bringing about a consensus among the various interests. This applies to preparatory activities in Denmark and to policy-making in Brussels alike. The sector ministries are, with minor exceptions, capable of handling this responsibility, because for years most of them have been integrating EC matters in their daily routines. Most EC matters, moreover, are of a highly technical nature which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would not be able to handle anyway.

The system of EC attachés at the Permanent Representation also encourages this practice. Formally, the attachés are instructed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but real life is somewhat different as most attachés work intimately with their own sector ministry on the formulation and representation of the official Danish positions in Brussels. Thus, there are close contacts between attachés and experts from sector ministries participating in EC working groups and committees. In addition to formal contacts with the EC authorities, in which permanent Ministry of Foreign Affairs representatives also participate, the attachés have contacts with the representatives of national associations and to some extent with individual companies. They also engage in contacts with colleagues from other member countries.

In general, such contacts and activities of attachés and sector ministries take place within the framework of decisions made in Denmark. And usually the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Permanent Representation in Brussels is kept informed about informal and spontaneous initiatives. This does not mean, however, that the system is without flexibility and freedom of action for attachés and sector ministries. Pre-concerted positions, we have been told, can be argued more insistently than one would think, attachés can discretely promote positions of sector ministries, and ministries can actively initiate joint efforts with their opposite numbers in other member countries, in this way bringing pressure to bear on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the relevant EC institutions. The main point, however, is that such manoeuvres are still exceptions to the general pattern of consensus and discipline among the ministries, though they seem to have increased somewhat during recent years. This decentralized, lobbying-style policy-making also varies a bit among the ministries, depending on different traditions, issues and personalities.

In fact, sector ministries do not form a united front against the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On the contrary, the relations among ministries can be characterized as a variable geometry in which conflicts usually emerge

between two or more sector ministries or between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a sector ministry. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not always have its way, and, besides, it is a common attitude that all ministries actually should participate in national consensus building even in matters where the position of the ministry is challenged. There are several reasons for this, the most obvious being that all ministries accept the necessity for discipline in Brussels and the fact that the ministries have neither the tradition nor the resources necessary to perform international policy-making in a decentralized way. Some ministries, however, have both the tradition and the resources necessary for bringing pressure to bear on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other parts of the government, either through the Common Market Committee or through individual MPs who agree with the viewpoints of a ministry. In this way there is a fundamental nexus between national policy-making and the freedom of action enjoyed by Danish ministries in Brussels.

Though it is generally recognized that the draft phase is a very important one if you seek influence, Danish ministries have not as yet been able to give a pronounced higher priority to initiatives in this phase. Most influence is exerted at the level of COREPER and the Council. On the other hand, much of the work of the attachés and the direct representatives of the sector ministries takes place long before issues are taken to the level of COREPER. Such initiatives in the draft phase are not, however, performed in any systematic and planned way. This situation implies that results may be somewhat haphazard owing to lack of resources and the lack of a tradition.

As mentioned, COREPER and the Council are seen as important channels for the promotion of Danish interests, but these highly politicized fora are not the only channels of influence, although they are extensively utilized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in particular. Through working groups and committees of the Commission, efforts are also exerted by sector ministries and attachés to promote Danish viewpoints in more informal ways. The promotion of interests at the Commission level is directed towards the relevant General Directorate and towards individual commissioners and their cabinets. Often Danish sector ministries try to promote their viewpoints through the "national" commissioner's cabinet or through the "national" commissioner himself, just as contacts in specific cases may be initiated that way. This has been taking place since Denmark joined the EC, and some kind of subtle interplay seems to have evolved, though some ministries expect more support than the commissioner's cabinet, despite its "nationality", is willing to supply. These contacts with the "national" commissioner's cabinet very often take place alongside contacts with the issue-specific cabinet.

During one interview, we met a case of a Danish employee now at the

Commission who also had a record in the sector ministry in question. It was stated that the employee was very "helpful" and useful indeed, but also that the positive relationship evolved incidentally, being no part of any "grand scheme". The interviewee declared this "Commission Connection" was very "fruitful" and would like to expand the "system" into other areas. Other interviewees too suggested that these kinds of intelligence channels are legitimate. This is not the normal state of affairs, yet it may be a portent of more intense inter-bureaucratic dealings as European integration increases.

Recently, contacts with the European Parliament, especially its committees and individual MEPs, have gained some weight, at least in more politicized matters and new EC matters. Nevertheless, Danish ministries do not employ this channel as intensively as the previously mentioned routes of influence. There are also contacts between the political parties and their members of the European Parliament. One example of that is Mr. Hovgaard Christiansen, MEP, former secretary to the Social Democratic Party.

On the basis of the agreed upon national position, Danish ministries usually work independently vis-à-vis the Community institutions, but they also participate in coalition-building at all levels, from the Council to working committees. Coalition-building often depends upon the work of the attachés, but in other cases a senior staff person from a ministry or the minister himself participates. There does not seem to be a fixed pattern in coalition-building on the substance of issues, though efforts are definitely carried out when a Danish position is or will be put under pressure. However, as more and more matters will be decided upon by majority vote, at least in principle, some ministries foresee that they will in the future become more engaged in coalition-building.

To date coalition partners are almost exclusively ministries in the other member countries, which can be contacted either in Brussels, or in Bonn, London, etc. There are as yet virtually no relations between the Danish ministries and Euro-associations.

General Features of Public Adaptation

The ideal of consensus and discipline within a highly centralized framework has clearly undergone modifications in practice. Official lobbying styles and initiatives are very much bound by national rules of the game, implying that sought-for discipline and consensus is also accepted by the ministries when working in Brussels. However, there are variations among ministries as to actual behaviour in Brussels, and a general tendency towards independent and increased activities vis-à-vis the EC institutions is noticeable. Variations among the ministries in performance and volume of activity are

due to different demands made by different policy areas and by differentially politicized issues. The newer ministries (e.g. the Ministry of Environment) seem somewhat more aggressive in their lobbying styles than do some older ministries (e.g. the Ministry of Industry). It should be emphasized, however, that the sector ministries do not act, or at least do not want to act, in contravention of general policy as laid down by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Undoubtedly, public lobbying has been on the increase as a whole, which is a logical consequence of the increased importance and volume of EC decisions to be made. And a marked tendency towards a more systematic and holistic approach on the part of Danish official interest articulation is clearly discernible. Despite this, however, one must say that, on the whole, Danish lobbying performance is still mainly *ad hoc* and reactive. It is, furthermore, mostly oriented towards the Council, though increasingly other phases, the draft phase in particular, are taken into account.

The sector ministries both initiate and participate in coalition-building in EC policy-making, but owing to the traditional high level of discipline and centralization, this does not imply a substantial transfer of national conflicts to the Community level. Neither does it further transnational and sectoral alliances at the cost of national cohesion. The Common Market Committee of parliament may be considered an important safeguard in this respect.

Adaptation by Business: Reliance on Associations and National Political Institutions

Danish employers and workers are represented in the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) by their national associations, which hold nine seats out of 189. It is an old and formalized but rather unimportant link to Brussels. Another and much more important link goes through the national political and administrative system, especially the sector ministries which also involve organized private interests in EC policy-making, and which can be influenced by the interests and viewpoints of the associations. In Brussels Danish private interests often rely on the support of official Danish representatives. As for the more informal lobbying relations of private business with the EC, various access routes seem to have developed during the membership period, in particular during recent years.

Agriculture: CAP and COPA

Agriculture is the oldest and most resourceful private Danish interest in Brussels. Obviously, the small-scale structure of Danish agriculture makes

it too costly for operational units to act on their own. Consequently almost all agricultural lobbying takes place through associations. There are, however, some large food-processing companies, e.g. Danisco, which have the resources to do their own lobbying.

Today three organizations – the Danish Agricultural Council, the Danish Dairy Federation and the Association of Danish Slaughterhouses – each supply the EC Office of Danish Agriculture with three lobbyists, i.e. a total of nine lobbyists in all. Representation of the Dairies and the Slaughterhouses is set up in order directly to influence the decisions of the management committees of the Commission and to get a fair share of the resources under the EC programmes. Representation of the Agricultural Council, by comparison, has a broader scope of activities, its main functions being to supply headquarters in Copenhagen with information, participate in the discussions and activities of COPA (the European peak association for agriculture), maintain and develop contacts with the Commission, and deliver services to visitors from the Danish agricultural associations. The latter representation, furthermore, has excellent relations with the Permanent Representation and it cooperates closely on a bilateral basis with agricultural associations from other member countries. The president of the Agricultural Council, Mr. H. O. A. Kjeldsen, has been president of COPA and is at present a member of its Presiding Committee.

Lobbying strategies differ depending on subject matter. In general, agricultural interests have close relations with the cabinet of the agricultural commissioner, whereas collective viewpoints on European agriculture are promoted by COPA. Relations with General Directorate VI (agriculture) are of particular importance, and contacts with the European Parliament have gradually attracted more attention and gained more importance. With the Maastricht agreement giving even more power to the Parliament, this tendency seems likely to continue.

Both formal and informal channels of influence are important to Danish agriculture. Big issues usually go through the formal channels, e.g. through the Presiding Committee of COPA, but issues of a distinctly national nature are handled informally, e.g. through direct contact with the agricultural commissioner. In such cases the Danish Ministry of Agriculture is informed routinely, indicating the close relations between the two political actors. In some cases the Agricultural Council tries on an *ad hoc* basis to influence the Danish government through contacts with agricultural associations and ministries of other member countries, indicating the close ties between national and EC lobbying.

As an old EC policy area, agriculture is integrated at all political and administrative levels. EC agricultural politics is heavily influenced by agricultural interests and a more offensive lobbying style has not been deemed

necessary. Mobility of staff, from the Danish agricultural associations to the EC administrative system and the other way round, is frequent.

Manufacturing: Companies and Associations

Manufacturing companies do not seem to have developed formal or informal contacts with the Community to any large extent.¹ Thirteen percent of manufacturing companies (out of a population of 8000 companies) admit to "contact with" the Community, but 9 percent answer less than "once a year" and only 1 percent "more than once a month" (the most intensive level of contact) and none more than "once a week". Only a small fraction participates in EC committees and workshops (Sidenius 1991a).

Contacts with the EC take place through many channels. Four percent of the companies establish contact directly from headquarters in Denmark "often or occasionally", 3 percent go through a trade association, 2 percent work together with other companies, and 2 percent establish contact through a peak association or through public authorities. Less than 1 percent have used professional lobbyists (Sidenius 1991a), and probably less than five companies, have established a representation of their own in Brussels (*EF direkte!* 1991; *Børsens EF-håndbog* 1991).

Most lobbying activities fall in a continuum with information-seeking at one end and efforts to solve specific problems stemming from other member countries (e.g. problems with non-tariff barriers) at the other end. In a case involving technical hindrances, a company may expect help from the "Danish" commissioner's cabinet. There are notable successes for lobbying initiatives of companies in Brussels, e.g. Lego, Danfoss, Scanvægt and the partly state-owned Danish Steel Rolling Mill. Lego, the toy-makers, effectively informed and influenced the working committee on the directive for standards for toys, and *Det Danske Stålvalseværk* effectively lobbied at the commissioner's level. Choice of channel and means of influence thus depend on the nature of the company and the case in point.

EC related activities of Danish trade and peak associations within urban trades are more comprehensive than activities of manufacturing companies.² Fifty-nine percent of the responding trade associations and ten peak associations admit to "contacts with" the Community. Although 14 percent of the trade associations only admit to contacts "less than once a year", 6 percent have contacts "more than once a month" and 2 percent "more than once a week". Also, four peak associations admit to contacts "more than once a week" (Sidenius 1991b, c).

The three-year period (1988–90) witnessed a substantial net growth in "contacts with" Community institutions. Twenty-nine per cent of Danish trade associations and eight peak associations increased this activity "much" or "somewhat" with regard to the Commission, 12 percent of the trade

associations and six peak associations report the same with regard to the European Parliament, 7 percent of the trade associations and three peak associations increased their "contact with" the Council, and, finally, 5 percent of the trade associations and two peak associations did so with respect to the Economic and Social Council (Sidenius 1991b, c). These findings clearly support the notion that lobbying is most intensive at the level of the Commission, but also that use of all points of contact has increased.

As to participation in EC working groups and committees, 23 percent of the trade associations admit to having engaged in such activity within the last three years, with a net-increase in the level of activity indicated by 7 percent, whereas eight peak associations admit to having been "active", five at a higher level than previously (Sidenius 1991b, c).

Although less than ten associations have their own EC representation in Brussels, they employ various channels of contact with the Community. Contact is established "often" or "occasionally" directly from headquarters in Denmark (39 percent of trade associations and nine peak associations) or through Euro-associations (36 percent of trade associations and nine peak associations). The data show that contact through Euro-associations is by far the most usual channel, a fact also supported by interview data. Outside these channels trade associations establish contact through Danish peak associations (23 percent), and trade associations as well as peak associations establish contact "with other Danish associations" at the same hierarchical level (13 percent of trade associations and six peak associations) or "through Danish public authorities" (21 percent of trade associations and three peak associations). We find that the associations seldom use independent lobbying consultants (Sidenius 1991b, c).

Danish associations in the urban trades have not developed new relations with each other regarding EC matters. On the contrary, cooperation in these matters is seen as less necessary and less important than in national subject matters. In EC matters, however, bilateral relations on an *ad hoc* basis are developed with sister associations in other member countries, and 52 percent of trade associations and all peak associations are members of one or more Euro-associations, e.g. UNICE, ORGALIME and CEFIC (Sidenius 1991b, c).

Generally, Danish associations do not wield much political power in the Euro-associations of which they are members and cannot therefore be expected to have a large impact on the decisions of these associations, but many Danish associations nevertheless work through them, because they are seen as the best possible tools available in general industrial questions. This finding agrees with the findings concerning Danish agricultural associations and COPA, indicating that the urban trades also lobby for specific interests either on their own or together with Danish public authorities.

One reason for this is the fact that effective lobbying for specific interests together with other associations or through Euro-associations requires more resources and persistent efforts than relatively small Danish associations are able or willing to invest. This point is illustrated by the actual functioning of the representations of Danish urban trade associations in Brussels. They are used primarily for information gathering and distribution, for maintaining continuous contacts with Euro-associations, and for contacting lobbyists from other member countries on an *ad hoc* basis. In other words, lobbying activities have to do more with procurement of information than with attempts at directly influencing decisions.

The general organizational set-up plays a role in the modest lobbying performance. EC matters are integrated in all aspects of associational activity, implying coherence and continuity of course, but also limiting the room for manoeuvre for the representation in Brussels. Another and even more important reason is that many recent proposals have been drafted so hastily that only personal and well-established contacts can provide influence. And, as in the case of public lobbying, the initiatives for the strategic deployment and utilization of Danes in the Community institutions do not as yet match the activities of some other member countries.

Common Features of Private Interest Adaptation

In a way the strong Danish liberal-corporatist tradition for a closely-knit pattern of cooperation has *not* been weakened as a consequence of Danish membership of the Community. On the contrary, paralleling the growing importance and volume of EC decision-making, business in general, and trade and peak associations in particular, have upgraded considerably the national channels of influence and intensified contacts and cooperation with national authorities. This upgrading, on the other hand, bears witness to the fact that Danish politics is becoming more and more involved with the larger Community system, a system not at all corporatist, but highly pluralist – in this respect really more like the USA than many European countries, not least the Scandinavian ones. From a broader perspective one can thus say that private interests are thrown into a larger political system more pluralist than the accustomed national one to which they are accustomed. Danish business has not as yet accommodated to this situation.

The special structure of Danish business must be taken into consideration here. Whether in agriculture or manufacturing, most operational units are relatively small. This means that very few businesses have the resources necessary for self-supporting lobbying activities towards Community institutions. By far most of them have to rely on their national trade or peak associations and through them on the relevant Euro-associations for representation of their interests. This again means that only broad collective

interests get a hearing. More narrow interests may and in fact often do try to work through national official channels, either at home or in Brussels, which as a rule are very sympathetic and helpful.

Danish private lobbying towards the Community has been and still is rather reticent. This has to do with the small size of the operational units, but also with specific national characteristics – e.g. a tradition for low-key and compromise-prone lobbying styles (Bregnsbo 1992). It may also be seen in connection with traditional, though now dwindling, popular Euro-scepticism. On the other hand, the coming Single Market has undoubtedly meant an enormous boost in EC awareness among the general public, including private businessmen, and Danish private business has its share in the “explosive” growth of lobbying in Brussels mentioned previously.

Concluding Discussion

We began this analysis by posing several questions. We asked whether the sought-for practice of consensus and discipline could be upheld. We have answered in the affirmative. The Common Market Committee of the Danish *Folketinget*, unique in the Community, does not really weaken the tradition. Rather the Committee can be said to strengthen the hand of the Danish government in Brussels by supplying a broadly agreed upon mandate. The increased importance and volume of EC decision-making has meant quite a considerable leeway in practice for public agents at home and in Brussels, but without attacking the underlying philosophy. To this should be added the fact that deviations from the consensus line could be hazardous and could have unwanted political repercussions as a consequence owing to the precarious political situation of characteristically weak governments in recent years.

We also asked whether it was possible and desirable for individual institutions to go their own way, e.g. seeking alternative alliance partners. We answer again in the affirmative. The increased leeway mentioned above means precisely that. We witness a large amount of independent behaviour on the part of official agents, though still with all due deference to official ideology and sought-for consensus and discipline.

Another question had to do with the liberal–corporatist tradition. We asked whether it was in the process of being weakened. Our answer is that it is not being weakened. One can even say that it is being strengthened, again owing to the necessity for taking positions in Brussels that are firmly founded on negotiations and agreements at home, positions based on principles and continuity. On the other hand, it can be argued that private interests now confront an international system much more open and pluralistic in character than the national system. In this perspective one can

of course talk of an overall weakening of the liberal-corporatist environment of Danish private interests. Our main point, however, is that Danish national corporatism is not becoming weaker; rather, we contend, the opposite is true.

A final question deals with the general Danish tendency of public and private lobbying activities towards the EC. Undoubtedly, these activities have been on the increase, especially since the mid-1980s. There are two main reasons for this development. One is the Single Market to come into force on 1 January 1993. Public awareness in general, and official and business awareness in particular, has been rising dramatically, in Denmark as well as throughout the Community. The second reason is the fact that economic activities of all kinds are becoming more and more international. Danish officialdom and private business are rapidly getting used to this fact.

On the whole, our findings seem to agree with other national studies emphasizing the relative importance of the national arena (van Schendelen, ed., 1993), but also with Greenwood & Jordan (1993), who at the same time find "some evidence of change in the way British private interests are directing political action at the European level". We cannot wholly agree with Streeck & Schmitter (1992, 200 and 216-227) who, talking of the failure of "Euro-corporatism", foresee a "pre-New Deal liberal state", an American-style pattern of "disjointed pluralism" or "competitive federalism", rather than Scandinavian-style neo-corporatism. They are probably right in underscoring, as they do, the weakness of trade unionism at the European level, but not quite right in rejecting wholesale the idea of some kind of European corporatism developing over time. To be sure, Danish interests are hampered from a resource point of view by the small-scale nature of the operational units and even of the associations, but by joining forces across national and regional frontiers such weaknesses may be and are in fact being overcome. Our findings in this respect agree better with Greenwood & Jordan (1993) who talk of (on the part of business) "the increasing recognition of the importance of the European level", "a willingness to participate, and to use with effect, European Trade Associations" and the multi-dimensional pattern of action by business which has "increasingly become directed at European agencies rather than a reliance for working through British national levels". We certainly do not expect a sort of early integrationist's model of a centralized pattern of interest politics to appear overnight, but neither can we reject the possibility of the appearance of some type of Community corporatism, Scandinavian-type, in the future.

NOTES

1. The following results are based on data from a questionnaire sent to a random sample

- of 1486 manufacturing companies drawn from a population of about 8000 manufacturing companies with more than five employees.
2. The following results are based on data from a questionnaire sent to all 150 national trade associations and all 11 peak associations within the urban trades; 132 trade associations and all 11 peak associations responded (88 percent and 100 percent respectively). Data were collected from November 1990 to March 1991.

REFERENCES

- Andersen, S. S. & Eliassen, K. A. 1991. "European Community Lobbying", *European Journal of Political Research* 20, 107-126.
- Bregnsbo, Henning 1989. "Dansk lobbyisme mod år 2000", *Fremtidsorientering* 6, 33-39.
- Bregnsbo, Henning 1992. "Lobbying the EC. The Case of the European Tobacco Industry and the EC Anti-Smoking Initiatives", in Kelstrup, M., ed., *European Integration and Denmark's Participation*. Copenhagen: Forlaget Politiske Studier.
- Bregnsbo, Henning & Sidenius, Niels Chr. 1993. "The National Lobby Orchestra", in van Schendelen, R., ed., *National Public and Private EC Lobbying*. Aldershot: Dartmouth, forthcoming.
- Buksti, Jacob A. & Nørby Johansen, L. 1977. *Danske organisationers hvem-hvad-hvor*. Copenhagen: Politiken.
- Buksti, Jacob A. & Martens, Hans 1984. "Interesseorganisationer i EF" in Thune, C. & Petersen, N., eds., *Dansk Udenrigspolitisk Årbog 1983*. Copenhagen: Jurist- og Økonomforbundet.
- Bøgelund, Eva 1988. "Lobbyisterne må på banen", *Djøfbladet*, 19, September 30.
- Børsens EF-håndbog 1991/92* 1991. Copenhagen: Børsen Bøger.
- Christensen, J. Grønnegård 1971. "Integrationens indflydelse på de nationale administrative strukturer i De europæiske Fællesskaber", *Nordisk Administrativ Tidsskrift* 52, 241-262.
- Christoffersen, Henning 1989. *Tanker om Danmark i det nye Europa*. Copenhagen: Børsen.
- Damgaard, Erik, ed. 1980. *Folkets veje i dansk politik*. Copenhagen: Schultz.
- Damgaard, Erik 1990. "Parlamentarismens danske tilstande", in Damgaard, E., ed., *Parlamentarisk forandring i Norden*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Drachmann, Hans 1991. "Politikernes nye førerhund", *Politiken*, November 13.
- EF direkte! En guide til EF og Det Indre Marked* 1991. Copenhagen: Redaktion Deadline.
- Gardner, James N. 1991. *Effective Lobbying in the European Community*. Deventer: Kluwer.
- Grant, Wyn 1989. *Pressure Groups, Politics and Democracy in Britain*. London: Philip Allan.
- Greenwood, Justin & Jordan, Grant 1993. "A Changing Kaleidoscope", in van Schendelen, R., ed., *National Public and Private EC Lobbying*. Aldershot: Dartmouth, forthcoming.
- Gulmann, C. & Hagel-Sørensen, K. 1990. *EF-ret*. Copenhagen: Jurist- og Økonomforbund.
- Klausen, Kurt Klaudi & Jensen, L. Thore 1991. "EF og kommunerne", *Politologiske skrifter fra Institut for Erhvervsret og politologi*, Nr. 1. Odense: Odense Universitet.
- Mazey, Sonia & Richardson, J. 1991. "Lobbying styles and European integration", Paper, ECPR workshop, Essex.
- Olsen, Ole Jess & Niels Chr. Sidenius 1991. "The Politics of Private Business, Cooperative and Public Enterprise - Denmark". Roskilde and Aarhus: Roskilde Universitetscenter and Aarhus Universitet, mimeo.
- Rasmussen, Hjalte 1985. *Internationale organisationer*. Copenhagen: Gad Forlag.
- Rasmussen, Hjalte 1991. "Dommerskab og politikerskab Jura i EF", *Økonomi og Politik* 64, 23-34.
- Schendelen, R. ed. 1993. *National Public and Private EC Lobbying*. Aldershot: Dartmouth, forthcoming.
- Seidelin, Michael 1991. "Europas bønder i krig mod EF-reform", *Information*, September 25-29.
- Sidenius, Niels Chr. 1991a. "Survey Data: Manufacturing Companies", Aarhus: Aarhus Universitet, mimeo.
- Sidenius, Niels Chr. 1991b. "Survey Data: Trade Associations", Aarhus: Aarhus Universitet, mimeo.

- of 1486 manufacturing companies drawn from a population of about 8000 manufacturing companies with more than five employees.
2. The following results are based on data from a questionnaire sent to all 150 national trade associations and all 11 peak associations within the urban trades; 132 trade associations and all 11 peak associations responded (88 percent and 100 percent respectively). Data were collected from November 1990 to March 1991.

REFERENCES

- Andersen, S. S. & Eliassen, K. A. 1991. "European Community Lobbying", *European Journal of Political Research* 20, 107-126.
- Bregnsbo, Henning 1989. "Dansk lobbyisme mod år 2000", *Fremtidsorientering* 6, 33-39.
- Bregnsbo, Henning 1992. "Lobbying the EC. The Case of the European Tobacco Industry and the EC Anti-Smoking Initiatives", in Kelstrup, M., ed., *European Integration and Denmark's Participation*. Copenhagen: Forlaget Politiske Studier.
- Bregnsbo, Henning & Sidenius, Niels Chr. 1993. "The National Lobby Orchestra", in van Schendelen, R., ed., *National Public and Private EC Lobbying*. Aldershot: Dartmouth, forthcoming.
- Buksti, Jacob A. & Nørby Johansen, L. 1977. *Danske organisationers hvem-hvad-hvor*. Copenhagen: Politiken.
- Buksti, Jacob A. & Martens, Hans 1984. "Interesseorganisationer i EF" in Thune, C. & Petersen, N., eds., *Dansk Udenrigspolitisk Årbog 1983*. Copenhagen: Jurist- og Økonomforbundet.
- Bøgelund, Eva 1988. "Lobbyisterne må på banen", *Djøfbladet*, 19, September 30.
- Børsens EF-håndbog 1991/92* 1991. Copenhagen: Børsen Bøger.
- Christensen, J. Grønnegård 1971. "Integrationens indflydelse på de nationale administrative strukturer i De europæiske Fællesskaber", *Nordisk Administrativ Tidsskrift* 52, 241-262.
- Christoffersen, Henning 1989. *Tanker om Danmark i det nye Europa*. Copenhagen: Børsen.
- Damgaard, Erik, ed. 1980. *Folkets veje i dansk politik*. Copenhagen: Schultz.
- Damgaard, Erik 1990. "Parlamentarismens danske tilstande", in Damgaard, E., ed., *Parlamentarisk forandring i Norden*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Drachmann, Hans 1991. "Politikernes nye førerhund", *Politiken*, November 13.
- EF direkte! En guide til EF og Det Indre Marked* 1991. Copenhagen: Redaktion Deadline.
- Gardner, James N. 1991. *Effective Lobbying in the European Community*. Deventer: Kluwer.
- Grant, Wyn 1989. *Pressure Groups, Politics and Democracy in Britain*. London: Philip Allan.
- Greenwood, Justin & Jordan, Grant 1993. "A Changing Kaleidoscope", in van Schendelen, R., ed., *National Public and Private EC Lobbying*. Aldershot: Dartmouth, forthcoming.
- Gulmann, C. & Hagel-Sørensen, K. 1990. *EF-ret*. Copenhagen: Jurist- og Økonomforbund.
- Klausen, Kurt Klaudi & Jensen, L. Thore 1991. "EF og kommunerne", *Politologiske skrifter fra Institut for Erhvervsret og politologi*, Nr. 1. Odense: Odense Universitet.
- Mazey, Sonia & Richardson, J. 1991. "Lobbying styles and European integration", Paper, ECPR workshop, Essex.
- Olsen, Ole Jess & Niels Chr. Sidenius 1991. "The Politics of Private Business, Cooperative and Public Enterprise - Denmark". Roskilde and Aarhus: Roskilde Universitetscenter and Aarhus Universitet, mimeo.
- Rasmussen, Hjalte 1985. *Internationale organisationer*. Copenhagen: Gad Forlag.
- Rasmussen, Hjalte 1991. "Dommerskab og politikerskab Jura i EF", *Økonomi og Politik* 64, 23-34.
- Schendelen, R. ed. 1993. *National Public and Private EC Lobbying*. Aldershot: Dartmouth, forthcoming.
- Seidelin, Michael 1991. "Europas bønder i krig mod EF-reform", *Information*, September 25-29.
- Sidenius, Niels Chr. 1991a. "Survey Data: Manufacturing Companies", Aarhus: Aarhus Universitet, mimeo.
- Sidenius, Niels Chr. 1991b. "Survey Data: Trade Associations", Aarhus: Aarhus Universitet, mimeo.

- Sidenius, Niels Chr. 1991c. "Survey Data: Peak Associations", Aarhus: Aarhus Universitet, mimeo.
- Sidenius, Niels Chr. 1991d. "The Consequences of the Internal Market on the Political Contacts and Organisation of Danish Business Peak Associations", Paper, ECPR workshop, Essex.
- Sidenius, Niels Chr. 1991e. "The Impact of the Internal Market on the Political Contacts and Intra-Business Cooperation of Danish Industrial Firms and Trade Associations", Paper, NS-RSA conference on "Periphery Strategies in European Integration" at Sandbjerg Castle, Sønderborg, Denmark, 27-29 November 1991.
- Streeck, Wolfgang (with Philippe C. Schmitter) 1992. "From National Corporatism to Transnational Pluralism: Organized Interests in the Single European Market", in Streeck, W., *Social Institutions and Economic Performance*. London: Sage.
- Sørensen, C. Lehmann 1978. *Danmark og EF i 1970erne*. Copenhagen: Borgen.
- Statistisk Årbog* 1989. Copenhagen: Danmarks Statistik.
- Tygesen, K.E. 1986. "Den danske EF-beslutningsproces", in Haagerup, N.J. & Thune, C., eds. *Folketinget og udenrigspolitikken*. Copenhagen: Jurist- og Økonomforbund.
- Viemose, S. 1990. *Lobbyisme*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal.
- Williamson, Peter J. 1989. *Corporatism in Perspective*. London: Sage.
- Wilson, Graham K. 1990. *Business and Politics*. London: Macmillan.
- Worre, Torben 1990. "Danskerne og Europa", in Feldbæk, O. & Lund, E., eds., *Festskrift til Niels Thomsen*. Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag.

Interviews

- Helle Bundgaard, Head of Department, Danish Industries Employers' Federation
- Klaus Bustrup, Secretary General, The Danish Agricultural Council
- Peter Kielgast, Secretary General, The Danish Pharmaceutical Association
- Lars Kolte, Head of Department, The Danish Bank (former cabinet deputy for Henning Christophersen)
- Søren Krohn, Deputy Director, The Federation of Danish Industries
- Hans Martens, Management Consultant
- Jørgen Ørstrøm Møller, Deputy Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Poul Ottosen, Head of Division, Ministry of Agriculture
- Peter Petersen, Head of Section, Ministry of Industry (former Industrial Attaché at The Permanent Representation in Brussels)
- Jørgen Rønne, Head of Division, The Danish Employers' Confederation
- John Bæk Sørensen, Principal, Ministry of the Environment