Both issues – nuclear weapons and EC membership – were imposed from outside Norway and both chipped away at the monolith of Labour Party rule and its claim to encompass a wide range of interests and opinions. Though the party attempted to keep sceptics within its embrace, a number lost faith. It was these groups that would challenge Labour's claim to define not just a government programme but also the 'national' interest, and they would do so by tapping into societal groups, that were coaxed away from a national consensus.

Conclusions

The above history of Norway up to 1961 brings out three points of relevance to the later study of Norway's relations with European integration. First, Norway had its own peculiar social and economic cleavages. Cultural differences associated with place and belief had their impact on politics in the nineteenth century and endured, albeit as a minor key, throughout the twentieth century. Class-based divisions may have been of importance in the first thirty years of the state, but increasingly it was only the shadow of the labour–capital division that was reflected in national politics. The reality was consensus and cooperation. The height of Labour hegemony was from 1945 to 1961 when the party dominated Norwegian politics and managed something not achieved in many other states (with the possible exception of Sweden); it orchestrated the agents of civil society and it coopted the symbols and the feelings of nationhood. It did this mainly by using the institutions of state and society to benefit materially a wide swathe of the country without obviously bringing detriment to business, capital or minority social groupings. The Labour movement used the assets of a small state (and a homogeneous one) to build its Norwegian home.

Second, Norway was born as a small state in the international community. It had little economic power and practically no military strength. Nevertheless, it had importance in one or two areas – whaling in the inter-war period and merchant shipping throughout – and also tried, at an early stage, to build up moral influence based on its virtues as a small, democratic state.

Finally, the key dates of 1814–15, 1905 and 1945 represent triumphs in the struggle to establish and then maintain Norwegian autonomy. On each of these occasions, outside assistance was needed – diplomatic in the first two, military in the last – mainly from the UK and then the US. A final key date – 1949 – was more a recognition of the limits to autonomy and the need for institutionalized influence with Norway's main allies. In trade matters, within the general Western framework, Norway managed to retain a fair amount of autonomy. Nevertheless, the outside world was about to impinge on this land of the Norsemen.

3 Norway battles with European integration

> The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
> Gang aft a-gley.
>
> Robert Burns

With the British application for membership of the European Communities in 1961 a battle started in Norway that was to last for a third of a century. It was not just over whether one country should join a particular institution, but a reflection of the mind, heart and soul of the country. It led to the downfall of governments and the undoing of the best laid schemes. It was also a tale of differing versions of how a small state might best flourish in a rapidly changing and potentially hostile environment.

Norway's first 'no'

The international environment

The period from the first application of Norway to the EC in 1962 until the Norwegian 'no' in September 1972 coincided with the move from the Cold War into *détente*. A Norwegian report stated that by the early 1970s the country's strategic situation had deteriorated because of the Soviet deployments, and stressed the need to maintain the allied military presence (*Stortingsmelding* 9 1973: 17). More generally the 1960s saw a move away from confrontation in Europe towards the creation of a *status quo* settlement, with tension eased between the two blocs, especially in Central Europe. Norway found itself in a period of diplomatic *détente* but with its own military situation not obviously benefiting.

In Western Europe, President de Gaulle blocked the UK's entry into the EEC in January 1963 on the grounds that the conditions of such an 'insular ' and 'maritime' country differed 'profoundly from those of the continentals'. The other applicant states, such as Norway, were merely referred to as being 'linked to her [the UK] through the free trade area, [which] for the same reasons as Britain, would like or wish to enter the

common market' (cited in Stirk and Weigall 1999: 171–2). The decision allowed the Norwegian government to avoid a period of extended negotiations – the late application meant that Norway's had hardly started in Brussels before de Gaulle's veto – followed by what was foreseen as being a bout of political conflict. Instead Norway joined the other EFTA countries in reducing the barriers to industrial free trade.

A second British application in 1967 was again turned down by de Gaulle, leaving little time for discussion of its consequences in the other applicant states. The third round of applications started after de Gaulle resigned in 1969 and his successor, Georges Pompidou, considered that the time was right for the UK to be part of the EC.

The background to the negotiations for membership by the four applicant states, including Norway, during 1970 to 1972 was one of economic uncertainty. The system that had underpinned the economic recovery and growth of the Western world after the Second World War, the Bretton Woods institutions, was based on the strength of the dollar and it being tied to gold. By 1971 the dollar was devalued and its international exchange rate allowed to float. The hegemony of the dollar was challenged.

Norway the state: cracks appearing

The 1960s saw a weakening of the political hegemony exercised by the Labour Party in post-war Norway. The Labour Party had lost its overall majority in the 1961 election, and by the summer of 1963 the Gerhardsen government had been voted briefly out of office.

Many of the historic cleavages that had typified Norwegian politics[1] weakened and it seemed that the left–right divide was reasserting itself in the political system. However, the parties that made up the new centre-right coalition in 1965 still germinated the remnants of earlier divisions. The Conservatives were a more urban party, with the Liberals, Christian Democrats and Centre Party representing rural or small-town groups. The Conservatives and the Liberals were on one side on morality and religious issues, with the Christian Democrats and the Centre Party being more socially conservative. Most important, the Conservatives wished Norway to be part of the EC, and the Centre Party totally opposed this policy. Indeed, it was on this issue that the coalition was to collapse in 1971.

Nevertheless, the broad consensus about the welfare society that had existed since 1945 continued. The centre-right government's economic policies differed little from those of its Labour predecessor. Also the Labour Party, when in office, had continued its efforts at covering over the traditional cleavages. Both Labour and centre-right governments in Oslo continued to pursue regional policies that involved both subsidies and also tax equalization, leading central government to transfer tax income to the smaller authorities in larger proportions than to the bigger authorities (Grønlie 1995: 400–1).

Nevertheless, the agents of the state found their hegemony of the post-war period coming under increased stress from within (the change of government) and from outside with the intrusion of security and European issues into political life.

Norwegian society in a period of change

During the 1960s Norwegian society experienced social change similar to that seen in the rest of Western Europe as the post-war 'baby boom' generation grew up and consumerism became a part of life.

The service sector grew apace in the 1960s. The welfare state continued to expand and needed administrators as well as doctors and nurses, especially after the establishment of the inclusive social benefit system (Folketrygden) in 1967. Expenditure on social security and health increased fourfold during the 1960s and that on old age and disability payments fivefold. Many of the welfare activities that had been started by voluntary organizations and local authorities had been taken over completely by local authorities in the 1940s and 1950s and in the 1960s and early 1970s were taken on either by the counties or the state (Grønlie 1995: 403). The welfare state was becoming entrenched. A special effort was made during the 1960s to encourage growth in north Norway and in rural centres of population with the establishment of the Regional Development Bank in 1960.

Membership of EFTA allowed Norway gradual tariff-free access to the important Nordic and British markets for its industrial exports and for other favoured products such as frozen fish fillets. However, it also meant that the Norwegian domestic market would be opened up to Swedish and British exporters. So while, during the 1960s, Norwegian exports continued their steady rise as a share of GDP, reaching 22 per cent in 1970, imports as a share of GDP rose from 31.6 per cent in 1960 to 33.1 per cent in 1970. It was also a period of great economic growth for Norway (Statistics Norway 2000: 252).

The conditions that had prevailed during the first two decades after the war and had been so benign for rebuilding Norway in the image of the Labour Party started to change as the 1960s progressed. The social and political scene evolved and the international trade and economic situation also offered challenges. It became less feasible to shelter Norwegian economic life from the outside world, though the actual imprint of the international institutions, such as EFTA and GATT, was fairly mild during the decade. It was the unfulfilled prospect of membership of the EC that made a distinct impression on political life and threw into relief a number of points about Norwegian identity.

Economic changes were affecting Norwegian life. The country had long since ceased to be one with a sizeable primary product sector, though both agriculture and fisheries held sway among voters and politicians out of all

proportion to their importance in the country's economic life. Many people in the towns and cities were but one generation away from the land or sea. Furthermore, the policy of expanding exports and imposing strong controls within the domestic economy met a number of challenges during the 1960s. Increased personal wealth and greater market choice afforded by the opening up of the Norwegian market led to a burst of consumer spending.

Grønlie (1995: 382) mentions that the economic growth in Norway 'had a more revolutionary feel to it' than that in the immediate post-war period. It was based more on exports and led to a rise in service industries and 'new urban societies and the development of built-up areas'. Nevertheless, the old links between the 'social partners' remained – the 'corporate pluralism', especially deals between the trade unions and employers' associations, by which Stein Rokkan (1967) typified Norway seemed little affected by these social changes.

Norway the nation: a warning

The general thesis of the previous chapter is that by the start of the 1960s the concept of nation was one that had been tamed and taken on by the labour movement in Norway, with the Labour government in the vanguard. Divisions had appeared during the nineteenth century, as there were competing visions of the nation. These seemed to be healed in the lead-up to independence, though some re-emerged in the inter-war period. As economic depression enveloped Norway, there was the danger of country and town, labour and capital, the centre and the regions fighting for scarcer and scarcer resources. Instead the moment passed as the international economy began to recover and the Labour Party assumed power with the help of the Agrarian Party. Labour became a national movement that brought together the urban and the rural, management and the worker, Oslo and north Norway. This was facilitated by the cultural heritage of unity of town and countryside.

The bitter experience of the war and the need for post-war reconstruction not only united the country further but also provided extra implements of social and economic control (Hodne 1983: 131). Neumann (2002a: 106) points to how the war had helped Labour by galvanizing its leadership, by marginalizing further the divisive elements of language and class and by allowing those parts of the state 'which had stuck it out in London' – the king and the government – to become symbols of the nation.

By the early 1960s the Labour Party was not just dominant in the political arena but also in many areas of the social and economic space. If 'the awareness of a national identity' involves 'the consciousness of belonging to the same nation, [and] makes distant people spread over large territories feel politically responsible for each other' (Habermas 1996: 286), then much of the glue of Norwegian nationhood in the two decades after the war was provided by the labour movement with its tentacles reaching into the country's societal groups. It was not too difficult as, even by the early 1970s, Norway had '*one* school system, *one* church, *one* secondary school system . . . and *one* broadcasting and television system' (Torgersen 1974: 220, emphasis in original).

However, some of the adhesive started to come unstuck during the 1960s. The political changes removed Labour from the pinnacle of power, though it was still a force with which to be reckoned. International issues ate away at party unity, leading to a left-wing breakaway. Social and economic developments offered a more long-term threat, the rise of the consumer as king. Soon what Thorstein Veblen called 'the pecuniary canons of taste' – fashionable clothes, cars, televisions, foreign holidays – would start to challenge the symbols of nationhood. However, at that stage it was more the case that Labour's inclusive vision of that nation was beginning to be challenged. The original opponents of the first application for EC membership in 1961 were not slow to take up the flag. They noted that a united people had stood behind the great decisions of 1814, 1905 and 1940, but that 'the current *Storting* did not have the people's mandate to give up Norway's sovereignty and national independence for such a purpose' as EC membership (cited in Bjørklund 1982: 381–5). This group – 'the 143' – reflected 'the 43', being the forty-three organizations and associations that had sent a letter of protest to the German occupying powers in 1941, and those who had protested against nuclear weapons in 1960, 'the 13' (Bjørklund 1982: 21, 30). The decision to call on national feeling in the political arena was no longer the prerogative of the Labour Party.

Voting 'no' (1) A national revolt?

The applications and the campaign

From September 1965 Norway had a centre-right government consisting of the Conservatives, the Centre Party, the Christian Democrats and the Liberals. Of these, the Conservatives were in favour of EC membership, the Centre Party was against and the Liberals and Christian Democrats were split. Nevertheless, after the 1967 British move, the government decided to recommend that Norway should apply for negotiations with the EC for full membership, based on the 1962 conditions of British membership, safeguards for primary industries and a consultative referendum (*Stortingsmelding* 86, 1967: 99–100). This government report spoke of the application representing 'the best means of clarifying the basis for Norway's relations with the EC' (ibid.: 99) rather than a commitment to membership, thereby allowing sceptics to accept it, albeit holding their collective noses. However, the actual application – formulated by the

Foreign Ministry under the pro-membership Conservative minister, John Lyng – spoke of membership as the objective, with the negotiations serving to overcome any obstacles to that end (*Stortingsmelding* 92, 1970: 29).

The Storting voted in favour of the new application by 136 votes to 13, with the minority consisting of four Centre Party, three Christian Democrat, four Labour Party members and the two members from the Socialist People's Party (*Stortingstidende* 1967: 4557–8). Members of the government probably felt that the whole exercise was more like a stately political quadrille rather than the start of serious negotiations, as President de Gaulle was still in power and he had not changed his view of the 'Anglo-Saxons' (Lyng 1976: 213, 233). They were not wrong. In December 1967 de Gaulle again vetoed the British application without negotiations even starting.

So the Storting again voted for a renewal of the Norwegian EC membership application in June 1970. The vote was 132 votes to 17, with four votes switching from the 'no' side since 1967. Negotiations with Norway began in earnest after June 1971. However, in June 1970, the EC announced the basis of a Common Fisheries Policy, created without regard to the interests of the four applicant states, all of which had fishing interests and resources. Of the four, Norway's fishermen were most vocal in opposing the new EC scheme and when negotiators struck a deal with the EC in January 1972 it was immediately repudiated by the Norwegian fishermen's organizations and the Fisheries Minister resigned (Archer and Sogner 1998: 32).

Even before then, the negotiations had brought a larger political casualty. In March 1971 the centre-right government, riven with disagreement as the prospect of real negotiations neared, resigned and the Labour Party formed a minority government (Allen 1979: 109–13). The EC's Hague Summit in December 1969 and the British negotiations had started to arouse anti-membership feeling within Norway and in August 1970 the People's Movement against Norwegian Membership of the Common Market was formed with representatives from all the political parties and from a variety of social movements (Bjørklund 1982: 105–16). This motley crew was nevertheless able to muster a variety of arguments in its counter-report (Folkebevegelsen 1972) to the government's White Paper on membership (*Stortingsmelding* 50, 1972). In particular it picked out the dangers of Norwegians losing control over their economy to Brussels and having to suffer free-market policies and greater social injustice (Folkebevegelsen 1972: 7–17, 31–46, 188–204). For the opponents of membership, autonomy was the key for Norway; they had little faith that as an EC member Norway would have much influence on decisions that would then directly affect the country. This attitude was reflected particularly in the Centre Party. Their leader, the Prime Minister, Per Borten, indiscreetly leaked a document about the EC, and took the opportunity to end what was an

increasingly fractious coalition as membership loomed (Bjørklund 1982: 311–16).

The outcome

The new Labour government had opponents within its own ranks but was certainly more united on the membership issue than the outgoing coalition (Bergh 1987: 496–503; Lie 1975: 214–39). It was this new government that concluded the negotiations and campaigned for acceptance in the referendum held on 25 September 1972. Though the vote was in theory consultative, in fact all the political parties accepted that the result would be binding and the Labour government of Trygve Bratelli made the matter one of confidence. With a turnout of 79.2 per cent – some 6–7 per cent lower than in general elections at that time – the Norwegian electorate rejected EC membership with 53.5 per cent voting against. The Labour government resigned and the main opponents of membership formed a minority government. Why had a majority of the Norwegian voters defied their government and many leaders of their economic life and voted against membership of an organization that the British and Danes seemed content to join?

The reasons for the strong negative vote can, of course, be sought in the campaign itself. The 'yes' side only managed to start campaigning once the negotiations had finished in January 1972. It was run by industry and the union leadership, by the Labour government and the Conservatives, not used to campaigning together politically. They were not helped by outside events: a few days before the vote, Ferdinand Spaak, the energy director of the EC Commission, announced ideas for a common energy policy that implied that Norway's burgeoning offshore oil and gas discoveries could become a 'Community resource' (*Dagbladet*, 22 September 1972). The outcry in Norway showed that the feeling was that the EC was about to grab Norway's oil as it would do its fish. Furthermore, the relatively low turnout (79 per cent) seemed to suggest that a number of Labour voters, unable to vote against their own party on a matter that their Prime Minister had made one of confidence, stayed at home on their sofas.

The campaign and the result were nevertheless a reflection of some wider divisions within society. The narrative above has described Norway as a nation-state that, certainly until the 1970s, had a strong sense of being Norwegian. The Norwegians – or at least their leadership – had tried to gain sovereignty for their state in 1814 and throughout the nineteenth century had resisted any imposition of rule and institutions from Sweden. When the opportunity again came for the creation of a sovereign state, the enfranchised adult male population had overwhelmingly voted for it. During the Second World War there had been resistance to the enforced introduction of Quisling organizations in professional, work and social life. Well over 90 per cent of the country consisted of Norwegians, with the

Sami and Finnish-speakers in the north making up the only indigenous minority.

Set against this picture of a monolith was the presence of a number of socio-economic cleavages within society that were also reflected in the politics and in organizations and associations representing a variety of groupings. The main divisions, already noted, were religious (secular against fundamentalist Lutherans), linguistic (Riksmål versus Nynorsk), socio-geographic (rural–urban, periphery–centre) and economic (worker against owner-manager, primary sectors against industry, and sheltered versus 'open' industries) (Rokkan 1967: 389). Nevertheless, the Labour Party, dominant in public life since the 1930s, had managed to tap a deep-seated culture of consensus and, working through civil society and with a wide range of instruments of government, had forged a form of national unity.

The question of EC membership shattered this. It opened up the latent divides within society. By its nature, the issue also created fissures in the institutions of civil society. The EC's attractions were different for the various economic sectors. A customs union with most of Norway's main export market was a pleasing prospect for that section of industry – both workers and management – that had modernized after the war and had already benefited from EFTA. However, agriculture would have to give up its very protected position and face competition from farmers who were more efficient and who had a longer growing season than possible in Norway. Norway's sheltered industries also faced a more difficult time. Competition against the EFTA members' industry was just manageable, but opening to German competition, in particular, and adapting to the common external tariff could inflict mortal wounds.

Membership also offered a clear abrogation of autonomy in favour of influence. Those within the EC could affect the policies being made through a wide range of institutions, but, in exchange, they had to implement the outcome of the policy-making process, whether they liked it or not, as law. This was demonstrated in particular in the fishing industry. The industry would gain access to the EC market and would be able to feed into the decision-making of the Common Fisheries Policy. However, the basic outline of the policy had been determined before Norwegian entry and involved eventually opening up what the Norwegian fishermen regarded as their waters to vessels from other EC states and possibly from some non-EC countries. This would have limited the range of tactics that could be applied on the policy-making side.

This trade-off between autonomy and influence was reflected in the divisions over membership within Norway. Those that were closest to the levers of influence – the Labour Party and trade union leadership, those active in business and commerce – were most confident about the benefits of membership. Those that already had some distance from influence even within Norway – voters in the region, the grass roots of the trade unions,

those on the far left – as well as those who saw their national influence declining in a wider context – such as teachers, intellectuals, farmers and fishermen – formed the vanguard of the opposition to EC membership. The coalition under the banner of the People's Movement against the Common Market in 1972 resembled, at least in outline, the alliance between urban radicals and country folk that had formed the Liberals ninety years earlier (Bjørklund 1982: 331).[2]

The referendum marked a seminal moment in Norwegian politics and society: over half the voting electorate rebelled against a central plank of the administration's policy and stopped the government in it tracks. Furthermore, the whole campaign split the country as never before, not even on the alcohol and language issues, though many of the fissures were along the same fault lines as experienced in those campaigns. For a consensus-based society and political system, the bitter in-fighting between members of the same families, trade unions and parties came as something of a shock. For Labour, it was the end of its rule as ringmaster of Norwegian society and the Norwegian nation.

Between 1972 and 1994

The international environment

The context within which Norway operated its European policy from the first referendum in September 1972 to the second vote in November 1994 was one of substantial change geo-politically and one that saw the European issue intrude on the Nordic region through the action of an unexpected agent – the Swedish Social Democrats. Their action eventually placed the question of Norwegian membership back on the menu for consideration by Norway's politicians and people.

The period between the two Norwegian referendums saw the context of Norway's external policy change considerably in the strategic field, in the question of the division of resources and in developments within Europe.

From the early 1970s to the 1980s, Norway's strategic importance increased. The country was sandwiched between a growing Soviet naval presence in northern waters and a more responsive US.

By the end of the 1980s, with the new leadership in the Soviet Union, the tension between East and West began to subside, leading to the end of the Cold War and of the Soviet Union. All that Norway, and its NATO allies, had seen as their opponents had disappeared. What did this mean for Norway's security situation? The direct threat perceived from the Soviet Union to Norwegian security disappeared but was replaced by an increase in the general instability of Europe, especially with the onset of the conflict in former Yugoslavia. Norwegian politicians considered that the country had to be involved, preferably through multilateral

institutions, in managing regional conflicts in Europe. However, there was also the fear that, as the focus shifted away from northern Europe, Norway would find itself marginalized in the minds of its traditional protectors, the UK and the US.

The start of the first Iraq conflict in 1990, upheavals in the Middle East and the Balkans and civil wars and terrorism around the world certainly led to a more uncertain international environment for small states such as Norway. As shown by subsequent events, it became difficult for a small ally of the US and the UK not to be involved when its coalition leaders require participation.

Within Europe the widening of the EC had taken place on 1 January 1973 with the UK, Denmark and Ireland joining. The EC had also taken on a programme of deepening cooperation with plans for economic and monetary union, though these soon ran into the sand.

After it had signed a free trade agreement with the EC in 1973, Norway was part of a trade network that had developed in Western Europe. At its heart was the EC with its nine members – the original six plus the UK, Ireland and Denmark. Like the spokes of a wheel, each of the remaining EFTA states – Portugal, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Norway and Finland (Iceland and Liechtenstein joined later) – were linked to the EC by free trade agreements that were substantially the same and which achieved industrial free trade by 1977. The EFTA countries had already created industrial free trade between themselves. Contacts between EFTA and the EC remained at the technical level, with other aspects of cooperation being dealt with on a bilateral basis between the EC and the individual EFTA states. After a debate in the Storting in 1979, it was agreed that Norway should extend its cooperation with the EC, and regular, formal meetings with the Commission and the President of the Council of Ministers were set up during 1981 (Frydenlund 1982: 78–91).

Two sets of events made a consideration of the EFTA–EC relationship more important by the end of the 1980s. First, there was the enlargement of the EC to include three Mediterranean members, Greece in 1981 and Portugal and Spain in 1986. Second, the 1985 Milan European Council agreed to the White Paper on the Single European Market which led to the Single European Act of 1986. These events widened and deepened the EC, making it more attractive and more costly to be outside. For Norway two other elements were becoming more important in its relations with the EC. Closer ties had been established with the European Political Cooperation of the EC states, stressing the foreign and security element in talks (Frydenlund 1982: 78–84), perhaps reflecting some of the uncertainties of the period. Also the EC had become an important recipient of Norwegian oil, helping to free it from substantial dependence on Middle Eastern sources and increasing the share of Norway's total exports going to the EC from about 47 per cent in 1973 to 70 per cent in 1980 (Sæter 1985: 177).

The state in a time of crisis

If global developments during the *détente* years set up a number of issues on the international 'menu', the opportunities represented by the domestic political environment provided some constraints.

The referendum day of 25 September 1972 was not the end of the affair. There followed, in a period of international crisis, an earthquake in Norwegian politics that damaged the dominant position of the Labour Party. After the referendum, the Labour government resigned and was replaced by a minority centrist coalition consisting of that part of the Liberal Party that had opposed membership, the Christian Democrats and the Centre Party. The limited mandate of the government was to negotiate an industrial free trade agreement with the EC, and this was signed in April 1973 and came into force in July 1973.

The general election of September 1973 reflected the change in Norwegian politics. The Socialist People's Party linked up with many in the Labour Party who had opposed membership and formed the Socialist Electoral Alliance which emerged from the election with a stunning sixteen seats. A new anti-tax party, the Anders Lange Party (which was eventually to become the Progress Party) gained four seats. The Liberal Party split into two, the anti-membership Liberals were reduced to two seats and the pro-membership breakaway failed to be represented in the new Storting. The Labour Party suffered a sizeable rebuke from the electorate, with its share of the vote dropping from 46.5 per cent in 1969 to 35.3 per cent in 1973. Despite this poor result, the Labour Party, assured of the general support of the Socialist Electoral Alliance members in the Storting, came back into power until 1981 (Julsrud and Malmø 2002: 7–9).

Nevertheless, it was a chastened party, not only much reduced and aware of being outflanked by the new party to its left, but one that had emerged from an internecine battle not seen since the 1920s. Its task in government was not just to heal itself but also to heal the country. This meant that the whole question of Norway's relations with the EC had to be taken out of party politics and run on a strictly technical non-partisan basis. This effectively removed the question of a renewed Norwegian application for EC membership from the agenda for ten to fifteen years.

Furthermore, after the referendum in 1972 the party leadership was in a weakened position on international matters – it had already been challenged once and lost; could it perhaps happen again on, for example, nuclear matters? This thought encouraged a wider range of party activists to broaden their agenda. Also the generation change was to have consequences on foreign policy, as noted by the then Labour Foreign Minister. Those influenced by the wartime were being gradually replaced by 'a generation that had got its impression from the Vietnam War' (Frydenlund 1982: 10).

Norwegian politics in the fifteen years before the second referendum

was prosaic after the poetry of 1972. A succession of relatively weak governments wrestled with economic issues, largely determined from outside. The rise of the oil economy, normally a bonus for any Norwegian government from the late 1970s, was adversely affected by a fall in petroleum prices, as in 1985–86. The Conservative administration from 1981 to 1983 and the Labour government of Gro Harlem Brundtland, in power from 1986, seemed to choose the economic virtues of a sound currency and price stability over full employment, though a premium had to be paid to hold fast the value of the krone (Moses and Tranøy 1995: 113). With its dependence on the oil sector of the economy and with the liberalization of its credit market, Norway's domestic economic policies were becoming increasingly dependent on the international situation. It was no longer possible to carry out a policy of 'tax and spend' in the conditions of the 1980s as the Labour Party had done ten years earlier.

While such a choice was appreciated internationally, it was not always understood by the average Labour voter. The Labour Party lost five percentage points and ten seats in the 1989 election and the Conservatives and centrist parties again came into office to face a bank crisis in Norway.

As unemployment escalated in 1989 through to 1991, the new centre-right government, followed by a minority Labour administration, found that they had fewer economic levers in their own hands. Monetary and fiscal policy was increasingly being seen in an international context, and a trading country such as Norway could not afford to lose its competitive advantage. Instead wages had to be kept down and the labour market flexible. The Labour government encouraged a 'Solidarity Alternative', a shadow of earlier corporate deals, whereby the major trade unions moderated wage demands in an effort to maintain low unemployment.

The economy continued to open up to the world in the early 1990s, sometimes with difficult consequences. The effective coupling of the Norwegian krone to the German Mark after 1986 meant that interest rates in the country were being determined in Frankfurt (Moses and Tranøy 1995: 117–18). Then Norway tied its currency to the EC's Exchange Rate Mechanism and European Monetary System which collapsed in autumn 1992. Thereafter the decision to allow the krone to float meant that it shadowed the German Mark. Nevertheless, the economy was again partly sheltered from many of the harsh realities of the early 1990s by its offshore petroleum activity.

In effect, the Norwegian state was becoming increasingly penetrated during this period as its economy became more internationalized. The state monolith created by the Labour Party in the immediate post-war period was chipped away internally as the party wrestled with divisive international issues, and was obliged to lower its defences externally as the Western economies became more open. Still, the influx of oil money – and deliberate political choice – meant that the Norwegian state was able to maintain the welfare society, albeit in a period of change.

A society in flux

The period from 1972 to 1995 can be termed the 'oil years' during which this product increasingly affected the basis of economic life. The country became less dependent on the primary products of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and the tertiary service sector continued to burgeon. Norway became a more urbanized country and the population profile started to age. By the end of the period Norway was also becoming a destination for a rising number of immigrants and asylum-seekers from outside the EU area. By 1995 the country looked quite different from the Norway of 1972 – the past was indeed a foreign country. It had come to resemble much of the rest of Western Europe in socio-economic terms, with one main difference. It was richer.

For Norway, as many other West European countries, the 1970s represented a period of considerable socio-economic change. However, the country emerged from the decade stronger than many of its neighbours, thanks mainly to the presence of oil and gas offshore. In the period from the 'no' vote until the early 1980s, Norway experienced a tremendous outburst of public spending and investment. Money was in particular being invested in developing the offshore oil and gas activity, especially after the oil price increases in 1973/4.

After losing seats and votes in the 1973 election (see p. 51), the Labour government went on a spending spree. It started to pay back its core voters by putting money into health, old age and family welfare. With an international recession after 1974, the rate of unemployment increased throughout the late 1970s, as did the bill for benefits. The welfare state had been entrenched at a time before the oil and gas industry was making a significant contribution to the economy.

At the time of the referendum on EU membership, the Norwegian economy, thanks to the revival of oil and gas prices, had 'managed to avoid the recession experienced by its European neighbours' (Economist Intelligence Unit 1994: 16), building starts had begun to rise, inflation was low, the current account balance of payments surplus was expanding and even unemployment was beginning to fall from its high of 6.1 per cent of the work force to under 5 per cent (ibid.: 16–19).

The social changes that had taken place between the two referendums were mainly continuations of those experienced in the 1960s. Norway increasingly became a tertiary economy with more people working in offices than in industry or agriculture. Especially from the 1970s a greater proportion of women went to work and found jobs, particularly in the public sector. The proportion of people working and living in urban regions increased: the percentage of the population resident in densely populated areas increased from 65.9 per cent in 1970 to 72.4 per cent in 1990. Unemployment remained comparatively low, closer to the US figure than the other, higher, West European rates.

One change from 1972 was that Norway was becoming a country of immigration. Having seen a quarter of a million people leave the country from 1900 to 1930, and stability from 1930 to 1970 when there was a net exodus of only 800 people, 190,000 more people settled than left from 1970 to 2000 (Statistisk sentralbyrå 2000). The attraction of the Norwegian economy was one magnet for immigrants. By the end of 1994 a sizeable number of refugees had entered Norway from former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Sri Lanka and from the Kurdish area of Iraq, fleeing from the conflict in those areas (Statistics Norway 1995: 73–4). Events in the outside world were affecting society in a fairly direct manner.

The immigrants and refugees represented a source of working-age people. From an economic perspective, they were a welcome addition to an otherwise ageing population. Immigration was also one way of filling a growing shortage of skilled persons and to help staff some of the lower-paid services.

In summary, from the first to the second application, Norway had become a richer, older, more urban society and was beginning to experience significant numbers of immigrants in its larger cities. The working population was more involved in service industries and, while unemployment had increased, it was still lower than in most other West European states. The traditional unions that had supported Labour were weakened, and the party, when in power, found it difficult to uphold the notion of the 'Solidarity Alternative' very much based on the union–employer agreements of earlier years. The economy had become more open to outside influence, especially after controls on capital had been loosened. The exploitation of offshore oil had dominated Norway's economic situation during this period and had meant that the country had managed to ride many of the economic storms suffered by other West European states. It also allowed Norway to maintain its standard of living and welfare state, albeit with a greater distance between rich and poor than before. However, the levers of control over the economy that had been in the hands of the Norwegian governments of the 1950s and 1960s were slipping away from their grip especially as other countries – the US, the UK, then the states in the EU – developed more liberal economic policies against which advanced economies were measured.

A nation awoken

The grip that the labour movement, with the Labour Party in the vanguard, had exercised over state and society in the post-war period was already weakening by 1972 and had been challenged further by the first referendum on EC entry. This undermined the Labour hegemony, with alternative voices claiming to speak for the 'soul' of the nation emerging in 1972. The definition of nationhood had been separated from that advanced by Labour and which involved unity (behind the government), solidarity (with the welfare state) and international involvement (in the UN, NATO and other institutions). The counter-view, such as that expressed by opponents in the 1972 referendum, did not dispute the general themes, just their operationalization. The unity was to be behind the flag, a higher and more exclusive symbol than any offered by Labour; solidarity was needed to protect the welfare state but was against threats from outside; and international involvement was to be with the Third World and was sceptical about the West. In other words, it was based on certain fears: of those who would replace the flag with another (the European one, for instance), of those who would undermine the Norwegian way of doing things in both society and the economy, and of those who threatened the peace and environment of the world.

The Norwegian nation changed in the twenty-two years between the two referendums so that these appeals were no longer so telling, though others became more attractive. The increased internationalization of the economy matched by a substantial rise in wealth meant that the outside world was more familiar than in 1972 and certainly the European part could not easily be used as the 'bogey-man'. Many of the problems that were arising – terrorism, mass migration, diseases – were not ones that Norway could deal with alone, and the Third World was no longer seen as just a place to be helped but also the source of many of the threats and uncertainties.

However, Norway's oil wealth and its increased materialism meant that the debate about the nation was more along the materialist/post-materialist divide (Inglehart 1990). A more materialist view would see Norway as one of the world's richest countries in *per capita* terms, where the market reigns and international commercial culture has become more dominant, as has the English language. The post-materialist view looks at the alternatives to this story and places the emphasis on quality of life and environmental protection, values that have a resonance in the Norwegian nation. These would involve ecological issues, gender equality and solidarity with underprivileged groups. This divide can be seen in the political parties with perhaps the Progress Party and the Conservatives being the most 'materialist' and the Centre Party and the Socialist Left the most 'post-materialist'. It also divides the elements of civil society, with the unions tending to be more materialist and the environmental organizations, such as Bellona, more post-materialist. While the Labour Party can be seen as a traditional materialist party, there is a sizeable group within the party, especially the youth organization, that has espoused an alternative way. The party continues to be split, but along new lines.

Voting 'no' (2) A rational choice?

The application

In 1984 EFTA and EC Ministers agreed on a 'European Economic Space' to link the two organizations, though its content remained somewhat vague. The enlargement of the EC and the move to a single market also led the Norwegian Foreign Ministry to consider the country's relations with the EC in a 1987 report entitled *Norway, the EC and European Co-operation* which stressed the EC–EFTA link as a form of improving relations between the two sides. When the question was discussed by the Storting in June 1988, the government policy, based on this report, proved relatively uncontroversial. Nevertheless, the Conservatives called for Norwegian EC membership and the Centre Party warned against adjustments to the EC that Norway had already made (*Stortingstidende* 1988: 3880–923). Perhaps they had good reason: already in 1988 the Prime Minister had circulated all civil servants asking that any future changes in existing laws and regulations should be compared with EU legislation and any deviation would have to be explained. This suggests a 'pace-setting' tactic in the making, at least allowing Norway to be 'on the inside' should it become more intimately involved in the Single European Market.

Negotiations started between the EFTA states and the EC in June 1990 over a European Economic Area (EEA) agreement. The aim was to extend the Single European Market to the EFTA members on a reciprocal basis. By October 1990 this proposal had intruded on Norwegian politics. The Centre Party refused to accept the European Commission's rejection of an exemption from EC regulations for Norway to allow it to favour Norwegian business over foreign investors. In the eyes of the Commission, granting such a request would have undermined the very basis of the single market. For the Centre Party, a foreign take-over of Norwegian resources was also unacceptable and a betrayal of national policies going back to the early days of independence (see p. 28). The party resigned from the centre-right government which then fell from office and the Labour Party took back the reins of power.

It took until October 1991 to reach an agreement on the EEA but the whole package was unravelled by a ruling from the European Court of Justice and it was February 1992 before a revised treaty was ready. In October 1992 the Storting considered EEA membership under paragraph 93 of the constitution that stipulated the need for a three-quarters majority of the Storting in the case of a delegation of sovereignty to an international organization. An attempt by the Centre and Socialist Left parties to have a referendum on the EEA agreement was voted down by Labour and the Conservatives. In the end the government had the necessary majority with 130 votes in favour of the EEA and thirty-five against. The opposition consisted of the combined forces of the Centre Party and the

Socialist Left, three from the Christian Democrats, two from the Progress Party and two from Labour (*Stortingstidende* 1992: 179). The EEA came into force from 1 January 1994 (see Chapter 4).

Membership of the EEA had clear benefits for Norway, opening up the larger EC market for its exports. However, it meant a further loss of autonomy on a range of key market matters. For the Labour government it provided an opportunity to ease the country into acceptance of the more important goal, that of full EC membership. It seems that the Labour leadership had originally hoped that the EEA would be brought in from 1 January 1993 and, after a few years of 'socialization' in the single market the public would come more easily to accept full membership of the EC, or the European Union (EU) as it would be by then (Archer and Sogner 1998: 49). However, these hopes were dashed when the Swedish Social Democrat government, followed by the Finns, submitted applications for full membership in 1991. By April 1992 the Norwegian Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, announced that it had been decided to apply for full EC membership.

By the end of 1992 EU membership was placed before the Storting and 104 of the representatives voted in favour of a membership application, with fifty-five against. The opponents included all eleven of the Centre Party and all seventeen of the Socialist Left Party, twelve of the fourteen Christian Democrats and fifteen of the sixty-three Labour members. The Conservatives' thirty-seven members and the rest of the Labour Party and most of the Progress Party's twenty-two members made up those in favour (*Stortingstidende* 1992: 341). It is worth noting that the number against membership exceeded that required to prevent membership under paragraph 93 of the constitution.

The result

The final referendum result of 52.2 per cent against membership and 47.8 per cent for, with a turnout of 89 per cent, showed a pattern similar to that seen in the 1972 result. The urban administrative centre and south-east of Norway tended to vote in favour, while the rural peripheral west and north tended to be more against membership. On the whole the left was more opposed to the EU and the right more in favour. Workers were antipathetic, leading officials were for. Two important changes from 1972 could be noted in the figures. The first was that a majority of women in 1994 voted 'no': 57 per cent of women voted against membership, but 52 per cent of men voted 'yes' (Bjørklund 1994: 3). The gender difference in the 1972 figure had been very small. Second, in 1972 there was some indication that employees in the private sector had been more opposed to membership than those in the public sector. By 1994 the private sector's employees had become supporters of membership, while those in the public sector opposed it. Furthermore, those working in the public sector

had grown in number since 1972. Only 65 per cent of Labour voters voted 'yes' to the proposition advanced by their government (Archer and Sogner 1998: 78–9).

The referendum result had scarcely altered from 1972. However, the outcome was different. The Labour government had not made the issue one of confidence and thus did not resign. In fact, it had been tolerant of opponents within its own ranks, and did not have to face any splits as in 1972–3. Furthermore, Norway was already a member of the EEA so did not have to negotiate a supplementary treaty with the expanded EU. The choice in 1994 was more about the appropriate relationship Norway should have with the EU rather than, as it appeared in 1972, that of turning the Norwegian world upside down. Nevertheless, Norway was left as part of the depleted EFTA side of the EEA: Austria, Finland and Sweden had defected to the EU and the Swiss people had rejected the EEA, preferring their own agreement with the EU. Thus Norway was left to face the expanded EU in the context of the EEA, with only Iceland and the miniature principality of Liechtenstein at its side.

The reasons why: state, society and nation

Why did a majority of the voting electorate say 'no' to Norwegian membership of the EU in 1994? The answers reflect the interaction of the primacy of politics, of interest groups and of ideas and identity, as outlined in Chapter 1.

One explanation is that the government lost the vote. It did so by making a number of strategic and tactical mistakes. The first was probably one it could not avoid – starting the 'yes' campaign so late. The opponents of membership had started to construct their organization in 1989 when the first hints of renewed consideration of EC membership were coming from the Conservatives and the leadership of the Labour Party. On the other hand, the proponents had to wait until the end of membership negotiations with the EC (from November 1993 the European Union, EU) before being able to sell their package to the voters. Second, its campaign was too nebulous and failed to unite around one decisive theme. At one stage it seemed that the Prime Minister wanted to use security as a major reason for membership but this was not at all salient among the population, who considered that NATO membership dealt with that issue (Brundtland 1994b). Finally, the government probably missed an opportunity by not declaring the vote one of confidence. This had had the likely effect in 1972 of keeping at home a few percent of anti-membership Labour voters, thereby undermining the final 'no' vote. Opinion polls showed about 40 per cent of Labour voters in favour of membership, 36 per cent opposed and 25 per cent undecided (Archer and Sogner 1998: 71). If a similar effect had been seen in 1994, the result might have been a slim 'yes'. However, Mrs Brundtland was not prepared to split her party

permanently and possibly lose power, and a repeat of the 1972 threat would have been seen as an act of arrogance by Labour. Also, given the decline in party loyalty, fewer anti-EU Labour voters would probably have stayed at home than was apparent in 1972.

Blaming the result on the government might have had some credibility if there had been a majority for membership in the polls before the campaign and this had been dissipated by the government's handling of its own case (as happened in the 2000 Danish referendum on joining the EMU). In the case of the 1994 Norwegian referendum, there was no indication of an innate majority in favour of membership at any time in the years and months before the referendum (Aardal and Jenssen 1995: 31–43).

A second explanation is to stress the role played by the socio-economic groups. The result reflected the economic interests of the country. This argument was made by Raimo Väyrynen concerning Finnish EU membership, which he saw as a result of a 'kind of loose elite bargain' (1993: 44). It is broadly supported by Tor Bjørklund in the context of the three Nordic states that applied for EU membership in the early 1990s, though he notes that the economic arguments were by no means crystal-clear and could have been satisfied by EEA membership (1996: 33). The view is most cogently portrayed by Christine Ingebritsen:

> the political influence of leading sectors (Norwegian oil, Swedish manufacturing, Finnish manufacturing and forestry, Danish agriculture and industry, and Icelandic fisheries) is a systematic way to understanding the politics (and economics) underlying the discourse about European integration ... Nordic constructions of the EC ... reflect the preferences of prominent, well-organized groups within each society.
> (Ingebritsen 1998: 43)

Ingebritsen (1998: 43) tempers this opinion by two other factors: '[s]ecurity imperatives may override the political and economic influence of sectors' and the 'sectors are caught in a two-level game', meaning that between the inter-state and the domestic political levels. The first element has more relevance to the case of Finland than to that of Norway.

Ingebritsen (1998: 143) claims in the case of Norway that '[a]s a consequence of societal resistance, the state was unable to join the EC in 1995, as the government had hoped'. This societal triumph was a response to the requirements of the leading economic sectors. According to Ingebritsen (1998: 119) this was because the oil and gas sector had its own 'opt-out' from the single market and the state-subsidized sectors of agriculture, coastal fisheries and small manufacturers 'mobilized against governmental cooperation with the EC ... As a petroleum exporter free riding on an open European energy market, Norway found its subsidized traditional sectors a major obstacle to accession'. In relation

to EC membership, oil gave Norway 'the economic capacity for society to wait' (ibid.: 139).

Clearly the opposition by key elements of Norwegian economic life assisted the campaign against EU membership. Indeed, the Norwegian Farmers' Union (Norges Bondelag) helped substantially to bankroll the 'No to the EU' (Nei til EU) campaign. However, the EEA, which represented an equal challenge to the economic groups – and was opposed by them – attracted neither the parliamentary nor the public opposition that full membership did. A poll in August 1992 (Opinion for *Aftenposten*, cited in Ingebritsen 1998: 179–80) showed over 58 per cent of those asked to be in favour of EEA membership, a height never scaled by the 'yes' side in the EU membership campaign.

The key element in the defeat of Norwegian EU membership was the referendum itself. What the socio-economic explanations fail to provide is a 'cause and effect' link between the lead sectors and the voters. Indeed, a detailed examination of the arguments advanced in the 1994 referendum – which might provide some hint of the link – shows how varied both the 'pro' and the 'con' causes were, with economic factors not being the most important element, supranationality taking first place (Rugdal 1995: 45–64).

The third type of explanation looks more to identity. This can be seen especially in the works of Ivar Neumann (2001, 2002a) who looks at the Norwegian discourse over EU membership which he claims 'played itself out in, and therefore on, the nay-sayers' own terms. That went particularly for the two terms "state" and "nation", but also for the terms "people" (*folket*) and "Europe"' (Neumann 2002a: 90). Neumann traces the rise of these terms in Norwegian public discourse, in particular how the parliament, the Storting, was portrayed as the link between the nation and the people, whereas the representatives of the state, the civil service (*embetsmenn*), had no such coupling. He claims that the success of the 'no' side, both in 1972 and in 1994, was its ability to portray Rokkan's notion of the cleavage between 'a centrally placed bureaucracy and a peripherally dispersed people' as a key strand in Norwegian history (ibid.: 124–5). This positioned the 'no' side – as with 'the 143' in 1961 – as heirs to those who had drawn up the 1814 constitution, won the battle for responsible government in 1884, pressed for independence before 1905 and vowed to fight on in April 1940. In so far as this discourse ties 'Norway' 'with the people and "the EU" with bureaucracy, Norway may be represented as a political project which is incompatible with Europe' (ibid.: 125). The no-sayers won the argument in 1994, as they had done in 1972, and it scarcely mattered who won the vote.

This is a powerful interpretation of Norway's relations with the process of European integration, and one that finds some sympathy here. It views the results of the 1972 and 1994 referendums as not yet just the result of government mismanagement of the campaign or as reflections of sectoral

interests, but as echoes of the deeper discourse about Europe (and Norway). Even if the Norwegian electorate voted for EU membership in a future referendum, the conflict would remain unless challenged by material pressures over time (Neumann 2002a: 125).

Yet this is not the complete story. Indeed, as Neumann recognizes elsewhere (2001: 141–5), the dominance of the Labour Party from 1935 to the 1960s saw a fusing of state and society. The Labour movement had, from 1935, undertaken the care and maintenance of the nation (and had certainly portrayed itself in that role) and had done so both through the instruments of the state (especially central and local government) and through the agents of civil society. Especially from 1945, the Labour Party presided over and partly orchestrated extensive socio-economic change in the country that masked many of the 'traditional' cleavages. Had Norway, together with the UK, Denmark and Ireland, had the option of EEC membership in 1963, the Labour government would probably have been able to persuade a majority of voters to agree to membership. Of course, what was on offer then was more like a trading bloc, especially if one listened to the British Ministers, as Oslo tended to do. A necessary precondition would have been Einar Gerhardsen, then Labour Prime Minister, supporting membership. The capture of the agents of society by the state works both ways – representatives from agriculture and the trade unions might have persuaded a sceptical Gerhardsen that Norway should stay out.

Between 1963 and 1972 the grip of Labour over the nation weakened. The 1961 election, in 1963 when the government lost power in the summer months, and the 1965 election etched away first at Labour's parliamentary position, then at its hold on government. The gaps between the centre and the counter-culture started to reappear, not least over external policy issues such as defence and Europe. Associations such as those representing fisheries and agriculture started to distance themselves from a party no longer in government and with a European policy inimical to their basic requirements.

In 1972 it might have appeared possible to return to the heady days of 1945–61. After all, Labour had won 46.5 per cent of the vote in the 1969 election. Turning the referendum into a vote of confidence faced the country with a 'Labour or chaos' alternative that the voters failed to heed. The discourse on Europe may have been dominated by those who linked the people and Norway against the bureaucracy and Europe partly because Labour's alternative cry of 'the party and the people' no longer rang true.

By 1994 the hegemony of Labour over the Norwegian state and society had been further eroded. Though the oil economy had placed useful economic instruments in the hands of government, these tended just to underpin the reliance of societal groups – state employees, welfare recipients as well as farmers and coastal fishermen – on the *Norwegian* state rather than the EU. These groups had undertaken a partial capture of the state in the

period of weakened government after 1972. The discourse in the EU debate of 1994 among the public, if not the politicians, was more varied than in 1972 (Ringdal 1995: 52–7) and tended to be about the specific question of whether membership was the right form of link with the EU and about self-interest, rather than primarily about issues of national identity.

Conclusions

This chapter has shown how Norway was swept along with the British flotilla towards European integration in the 1960s. However, between the first British application in 1961 and the Norwegian referendum in September 1972, Norway underwent both considerable social and economic change and political development, with the Labour Party losing its grip on power. Furthermore, a different image of the nation was arising that challenged that which the Labour hegemony had created since 1945. The referendum opened up latent divisions in society. It showed that a majority of the electorate were prepared to forswear the influence offered by the membership to keep their country's autonomy in certain key areas.

Both internationally and internally, Norway experienced extensive change from 1972 to 1994. It became an oil-rich, mostly post-industrial society in post-Cold War Europe. It had to face a world torn by ideological and economic rifts and riven with conflict. The EC had become the EU of the fifteen, ready to expand to twenty-five by mid-2004. Norway participated in the Single European Market through the EEA and in the Schengen agreement. Norwegian politics, meanwhile, had become more fragmented, with the Labour Party merely *primus inter pares* in a time of turbulence in the economy as well as in political life.

The referendum vote in 1994 seemed a reflection of the one in 1972, though that probably did not reflect what could have been a stronger 'no' vote in 1972 had the Labour government not made the matter one of confidence. The negative result can be dismissed as a result of poor government tactics. A more substantial case has been made for it reflecting sectoral interests but there is also the notion that the division demonstrated by the vote reflected a longer-lasting divide in Norwegian identity, with the opponents of membership taking up the cause of 'the people' and 'the nation' against the state and Europe.

An interest-based explanation of Norwegian popular opposition to aspects of European integration would deal with 'the benefits of increased cooperation and the drawbacks of reduced national autonomy' (Petersen 1998: 43). However, to make such an evaluation, the electorate (let alone the interest groups) must have had a concept of what their own country could mean for them as well as of European integration. For those against membership, Norway was better not just in material terms, but also in

terms of values. For example, in 1992 the Norwegian Farmers' Union saw Norwegian agriculture as a business but also 'part of our history and cultural heritage' (*Stortingsmelding* 40 1994: 470). The Labour opponents of membership placed their stress on the contrast between Norwegian society and that represented by the Maastricht Treaty, which they saw as 'colder', more competitive and with higher unemployment and crime (Gerhardsen *et al.* 1994: 3).

An 'interest group plus security' approach may explain why certain groups of Norwegian voters and politicians resisted (or were in favour of) particular types of European integration. But it does not necessarily explain why the electorate did not have the same level of enthusiasm for particular types of integration (especially the political) as did many Norwegian politicians and some interest groups. Thus people's beliefs about the values imbued in the Norwegian nation were not well represented by politicians, who were seen to adopt an increased adaptive acquiescence towards the EU. Under certain circumstances, the identity of a section of the electorate triumphed over what the state defined as interests. In the first referendum, those interest groups – agriculture and fisheries – that thought they would suffer from EC membership were able to capture an important part of the national discourse. In the second referendum this was less necessary, as a sufficient section of the population could be persuaded to vote 'no' for the sake of *their* interests (their public service jobs, their welfare benefits, their standard of living).

The need for dialogue between the interest and identity explanations has been recognized by Christine Ingebritsen (2003; also Ingebritsen and Larsen 1997) and can be seen in the works of Sieglinde Gstöhl (2002: 13, italics in original), who considers that 'both material and ideational factors must be considered'. She argues that '*the lower the economic incentives and the higher the political impediments to integration are, the more reluctant a country's integration policy will be*...' and that in these conditions 'the more important will be the maintenance of operational sovereignty relative to the acquisition of international voice opportunities'. When the economic elites favour integration, the economic incentives are high; when the political elites favour it, the political impediments are lower (ibid.: 14).

The crucial question is about the interaction of identity and interests. This chapter has traced the way that the arbiter of Norwegian interests and the focus of identity in the immediate post-war period, the Labour Party, lost its hegemonic grip from the first round of applications in 1961–2 to the crucial year of decision in 1972. With a state in favour of EC membership and interests divided, the answer to Gstöhl's calculation was tipped by 1972 through the anti-membership interests coopting aspects of the national identity that demanded the maintenance of autonomy and the rejection of influence. By 1994 the government was again in favour of membership, the interest groups were even more divided and the traditional opponents were willing to play the same national tune as in 1972.