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ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE

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and the Constituent Role
of the European Parliament

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EUI Working Paper RSC No. 94/19

European University Institute, Florence

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A 'FEDERATOR' FOR EUROPE:
ALTIERO SPINELLI
AND THE CONSTITUENT ROLE
OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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I. From the *Manifesto di Ventotene* to the Resistance experience: The formation of a strategy for European Union

"The dividing line between progressive and reactionary parties no longer coincides with the formal line of more or less democracy, or the pursuit of more or less socialism; but the division falls along a very new and substantial line: those who conceive the essential purpose and goal of struggle as being the ancient one, the conquest of national political power, and who, albeit involuntarily, play into the hands of reactionary forces, letting the incandescent lava of popular passions set in the old moulds, thus allowing old absurdities to arise once again; and those who see the main purpose as the creation of a solid international state, who will direct popular forces toward this goal, and who, even if they were to win national power, would use it first and foremost as an instrument for achieving international unity".¹

While Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi were drafting this famous passage of their *Manifesto di Ventotene*, they were being confined on the small island of Ventotene as anti-fascist militants. Disillusioned by the failure of the socialist and liberal ideologies to grasp the fundamental cause of international anarchy and offer a solution, Rossi and Spinelli found in federalism a new guiding principle for an understanding of their time and a possibility of redirecting its course toward a new era of world order. In their analysis, it was the identification of the state with the nation to bring centralisation of authority within the nation and imperialist wars outside.

The nation was no longer viewed "as the historical product of co-existence between men who ... have acquired greater unity in their customs and aspirations" but as "a divine entity, an organism which must only consider its own existence, its own development, without the least regard for the damage that others may suffer from this". The real cause of international anarchy was seen as "the absolute sovereignty of national States", which is the source of power politics in the international sphere and of totalitarianism in the national one, where "individual freedom is reduced to nothing since everyone is part of the military establishment and constantly called on to serve in the armed forces".

The basic trends of the historical course, i.e. the internationalisation of the process of production, the formation of the world system of states, and the supremacy of states with continental dimensions seemed to be no longer controlled by the nation-state. According to Spinelli, the nation-state had become the main obstacle to the renewal of society and its crisis made it possible to reconstruct Europe on a federal basis.²

If the struggle for a progressive society were to remain restricted within traditional national boundaries it would be "very difficult to avoid the old contradictions" which had produced anarchy, wars, and danger to European civilisation. The federalist movement had to reject the "old political approaches", and therefore to avoid the "reconstruction of the states destroyed in the storm". "The question which must be resolved first", Spinelli and Rossi pointed out, "failing which progress is no more than mere appearance, is the definitive abolition of the division of Europe into national, sovereign States". The collapse of the majority of the European states under the German steam-roller had already given the people of Europe a common destiny: either to submit to Hitler's dominion, or enter a democratic federation. "Feelings today are already far more disposed than they were in the past to accept a federal reorganisation of Europe".³

A mere League of Nations could not bring peace "because it is impossible to guarantee international law without a military force capable of imposing its decisions, and by respecting the absolute sovereignty of the member-states". It appeared also indispensable to depart from the principle of self-determination, which produced the Balkanisation of Europe after Versailles: "every population was supposed to be left free to choose the despotic government it thought best, in other words virtually assuming that the constitution of each individual state was not a question of vital interest for all the other European nations".⁴

The goal of the European federation was the "emancipation of the working classes and the creation of more humane conditions for them". Spinelli and Rossi did not ask for a radical abolition of private ownership of the material means of production. "Wholesale nationalisation of the economy under state control", Spinelli and Rossi remarked, "was the first, Utopian form taken by the working classes' concept of their freedom from the yoke of capitalism". But when this state control was achieved it did not produce socialism but led "to a regime where the entire population is subservient to a restricted class of bureaucrats who run the economy". The fundamental principle of socialism is that "far from dominating man, economic forces, like the forces of nature, should be subject to man; guided and controlled by him in the most rational way, so that the broadest strata of the population will not become their victims". The building of a united, socialist Europe needed "rational solutions" to replace "irrational ones": "private property must be abolished, limited, corrected, or

extended according to circumstances and not according to any dogmatic principle".⁵

The federalist movement had to be formed by "those who have identified and accepted the European revolution as the main goal in their lives, who carry out the necessary work with strict discipline day in day out, carefully checking up on its continuous and effective safety, even in the most dangerously illegal situations". These recruits were to become "the solid network that will give consistency to the more ephemeral sphere of the sympathizers". In the age of the crisis in the nation-state, the main front of political struggle which discriminates the forces of progress from those of conservation was no longer identified in the conflict between the principles of socialism within the nation-states but in the conflict between nationalism and federalism. Traditional ideologies, insofar as they pursued the illusion of national renewal, were prisoners of this political formula, and suffer its decadence, and thus remained, according to Spinelli and Rossi, in the field of conservation.⁶

The federalist movement had the task of organising and guiding progressive forces towards a progressive political integration of mankind: "The time has now come to get rid of these old cumbersome burdens and be ready for whatever turns up, usually so different from what was expected ... Today, in an effort to begin shaping the outlines of the future, those who have understood the reasons for the current crisis in European civilisation and who have therefore inherited the ideals of movements dedicated to raising the dignity of mankind, which were shipwrecked either by their inability to understand the goal to be pursued or by the means by which to achieve it have begun to meet and seek each other out. The road to pursue is neither easy nor certain. But it must be followed and it will be!"⁷

Such a strong appeal did not go unheard by those who were fighting against fascism. When Spinelli left Ventotene in late July 1943, "no political formation was waiting for me", as he recollects in an autobiographical writing, "it was up to me to start a new and different movement for a new and different battle from scratch". Typewritten copies of the *Manifesto* were distributed among the Resistance forces on the continent; in August 1943 the Movimento Federalista Europeo was established in Milan and with it the beginning of a European federalist militancy: "The MFE does not seek to be an alternative to political movements which strive for national independence, political freedom, economic justice ... On the contrary, it is from these movements that the MFE draws its support and it works to establish those aims which represent the highest values of our civilisation". The duty of the MFE was to warn progressive forces fighting for freedom, democracy and socialism that it was an illusion to try to achieve their aims in individual countries and "assume that ultimately, and automatically" an international situation would arise in which "all

peoples would fraternize". The role of the MFE was to reverse the order of importance of political aims: "National independence, freedom, socialism will come alive and will exist as beneficial forces only when Federation ... is their basis and not their consequence". Militants had to infiltrate national progressive forces to reverse the order of importance of their aims and thus pave the way for their unity for a common strategy.⁸

In negating national borders as the boundaries of political struggle, the federalist militant was also able to create a new type of political behaviour, very close to Max Weber's conception of the 'political hero': "Politics consist of a slow and tenacious surmounting of great difficulties, which must be achieved with passion and discernment at the same time. It is perfectly true, as history has borne out time and again, that what is possible would never be achieved if someone in the world did not keep on trying to achieve the impossible. But whoever attempts to do so must be a leader, and not only that — in the sober sense of the word, he has to be a hero as well. And whoever is neither, must from the outset forge that temper which will allow him to remain steadfast when all hopes collapse, for otherwise he will not even be able to fulfil the small amount which can be achieved today. Only the man who is sure he will not fail, despite a world too stupid or vulgar, from his point of view, to appreciate what he is offering, and who can still stand up and say 'never mind, let's press on!', only such a man has a vocation for politics". Altiero Spinelli was the incarnation of that man.⁹

In late August 1943, the founders of MFE decided that it was necessary to continue Resistance in Italy and at the same time to contact the federalists in other countries. Spinelli and Rossi, the two leaders of the movement, were delegated as 'missionaries' of the MFE to Switzerland, "because it was difficult to think of and prepare for federalist action only in Italy". "In order to develop our action", Spinelli recollects, "we had to find in Europe, among the rubble and flames of war, just a handful of men ready to overcome the old national and ideological divisions, and to make the struggle for European federation the central task of their political action. We did not yet know them, but they were bound to exist somewhere, because the destiny and problems of our countries had become the same everywhere. We were certain that we would find them".¹⁰

In fact Spinelli and Rossi found them in Switzerland, where they began to reproduce and circulate federalist material in Bellinzona and Geneva. In this way they managed to contact other Italian refugees such as Luigi Einaudi and Ignazio Silone, Germans such as Hanna Bertholet, Hilda Monte and Ritzel, Frenchmen such as Soutou and Laloi and members of the Swiss Europa Union, a federalist movement founded in 1937.¹¹

Rossi and Spinelli's first attempts to contact leaders of the European Resistance, in mid-September 1943, failed because of mistrust and secrecy, but

with the help of the socialist Swiss journalist François Bondy they won the confidence of Jean-Marie Soutou, the Geneva representative of the Mouvements Unis de Résistance, and of William A. Visser 't Hooft, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, who then became closely involved in the attempt to build "a federalist movement transcending national frontiers". Convinced that a European federation would not come about unless the peoples of Europe organised themselves into a political organisation aiming to achieve primarily that aim, Rossi and Spinelli invited (with a "Lettre ouverte"), all the anti-fascists to help organise "a preliminary congress ... to make plans to co-ordinate a joint campaign by progressive elements in all countries". "In Switzerland", Rossi and Spinelli stated in the letter, "there are today citizens of France, Germany, Italy and other countries who have taken refuge in this corner of Europe from Nazi and Fascist persecution. Here, in contact with one another, are men who have fought, are fighting and will continue to fight for peace and freedom. We hereby invite them to discuss together the problems of the reconstruction of Europe, in which they will soon be called upon to take part, and to issue a solemn declaration of our common aims".¹²

Visser 't Hooft offered his own home in Geneva as a venue for the proposed conference. Between March and July 1944 Resistance fighters from Denmark, France, Italy, Norway, Holland, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia and representatives of a German anti-nazi group — Hanna Bertholet and Hilda Monte — issued a declaration which stated the case for a federal Europe after the war, and was ratified by the national movements in late July.

At the meeting of March 31 the representatives agreed that "Resistance means not merely the rejection of a false ideology, but also the affirmation of positive values", and asserted in a text which became Declaration I, that "all the sacrifice and suffering endured for the same cause have created ties of brotherhood among [the resistance movements] and have given birth to a new consciousness of European solidarity of the free peoples, the maintenance of which will be one of the essential guarantees of peace".¹³

At the second meeting on 29 April, Spinelli and Rossi submitted a draft declaration which after the confrontation of "fairly wide differences of opinion", was amended and adopted as Declaration II in the form of a Manifesto in six points. Having identified in the "dogma of the absolute sovereignty of the State" the cause of international anarchy, and in the unity "in a single federal organisation" the way out of recurrent world wars, the document stated it was impossible "to tackle the task of creating a federal world organisation immediately". "A less ambitious world organisation — which should however permit development in a federal direction" should be built, and within its framework should be "a more radical and direct solution ... for the European problem". Since European peace was the "keystone in the arch of world peace",

only a federal union would enable "the German people to join the European community without becoming a danger to other peoples" and made "it possible to solve the problem of drawing frontiers in districts with mixed population", thus preventing minorities being "the object of nationalistic jealousies". Only a federal union would be "in a position to protect democratic institutions and so prevent politically less developed countries becoming a danger to the international order". Only a federal union would permit the reconstruction of Europe, the liquidation of monopolies, national self-sufficiency and the solution "of most of the problems which during recent years have disturbed international relations".¹⁴

The European Constitution had to be based "upon a declaration of civil, political and economic rights", guaranteeing democratic institutions and rights of minorities, and had to limit the spheres of competence of the federal government to that of defence, foreign policy, international exchange and communications. The federation should be from the beginning "open to all countries which entirely or partly belong to Europe and which wish to join it and are qualified to do so". Germany and her satellites should become "part of the economic reconstruction of the regions they have devastated", and a federal control exercised "to build up a decentralised democratic state free from the last trace of Prussian militarism and bureaucracy". German heavy industries should become integrated "in the European industrial organisation so as to prevent their use for German nationalistic ends".¹⁵

In June 1944, having concluded the federalist mission in Geneva, Spinelli returned to Italy working for the Secretariat of the Partito d'Azione-Alta Italia, working closely with Ferruccio Parri and Leo Valiani. Another early federalist, Luciano Bolis, followed Spinelli and in January was imprisoned in Genoa, while he was bringing messages to patriots in Milan. Guglielmi Jervis, Franco Venturi, T. Galimberti and Mario Alberto Rollier — founders of the MFE — were engaged in the Resistance in Piedmont as members of the Partito d'Azione.¹⁶

The influence of the *Ventotene Manifesto* and of the Geneva declarations is particularly marked in the "Programme" of the Mouvement de Libération Nationale of the Lyons region — a union of the Mouvements Unis de Résistance of the southern zone with certain northern resistance groups (Défense de la France, Résistance and Lorraine) — of August 1944, a few days before the liberation of Lyons on 3 September: "1) Respect for the individual personality, social justice, the security and free development of national life ... can be fully achieved only by a federal organisation of the world. To build up such an organisation is a tremendous task for the future which cannot be successfully tackled unless a solution has first been found for the problem of Europe, origin of the catastrophes which periodically shake the world. 2) We think it impossible to build up a prosperous, democratic, peaceful Europe while the

various States of Europe are divided by political barriers and tariff barriers and preserve their national sovereignty; a League of Nations composed of sovereign States would be just a trap. We therefore fight for the creation of a democratic European Federation, open to all European peoples, including Great Britain and the USSR. 3) The national states must federate and transfer to the Federal Government the right to organise the economic life of Europe; the sole right to have an army and to suppress any attempt to re-establish a Fascist régime; to be in charge of foreign affairs; to administer those colonies which are not yet ripe for independence; to create a European citizenship in addition to a national citizenship. The Federal Government shall be democratically and directly elected by the peoples, not by the national States. 4) A European federation does not conflict with national life in its progressive aspects. The national governments will be subordinated to the Federal Government in those matters which concern the Federal States as a whole. The national governments will, however, have their own laws, and will be autonomous in the administrative, linguistic and cultural spheres. 5) Such a federation alone will be able to eradicate the roots of fascism and race hatred by establishing public ownership and control of German heavy industry on a European scale, by destroying the Junker and officer caste, and thus permitting the German people ultimately to join the European community without becoming a danger to other peoples. Such a federation alone can guarantee peace and prosperity to the peoples of Europe and pave the way to economic progress and true democracy. Such a Federation alone, by its very example, can inspire the peoples of the world to move towards a World Federal Organisation".¹⁷

In order to give effect to the Geneva and Lyon programme the first European Federalist Conference was held in Paris in March 1945. The idea of the conference was first put to Spinelli in November 1944 by the Comité Français pour la Fédération Européenne, which had ratified the Geneva declarations. Spinelli left Milan for Switzerland in December and reached Paris clandestinely, where he and Ursula Hirschmann — later to become his wife — organised the conference. The participants included André Philip and Daniel Mayer of the Socialist Party, Baumel of the Mouvement de la Libération Nationale, Camus of Combat, Ferrat of Lyon Libre, Brizon of Libertés, Zaksas of Libérer et Fédérer and Maurice Guérin of the Confederation of Christian Workers. In addition there were representatives from Great Britain, Switzerland and Italy, and émigrés of Greek, Austrian, Spanish and German origin.

In practice the Paris Conference came to nothing. It was "the late flame of Resistance federalism". After the liberation, political struggle had returned to national borders. European states had been reconstructed on the old lines, but for the American and Russian hegemonies it became more and more apparent that they were states with a 'limited sovereignty'. The powers which federalists

would have transferred to a supranational level were to be exercised in fact by the two great external powers. European states were no longer masters of their destiny, but "dust without substance".

In spite of its political failure, the Paris Conference was, however, the beginning of a process which, in the space of a few years, brought about the founding of the Union of European Federalists, the first transnational European federalist organisation. Once again the initiative came from Spinelli, who won the confidence of many European federalists and was their most authoritative moral and intellectual leader. "Not only did the Resistance originate in Italy", Vaughan pointed out, "but its federalism, its 'Europeanism' found its first clear expression in Italy too".¹⁸

Despite the failure of federalist Resistance in bringing about a federal order in post war Europe, European federalism had been, as Lipgens has shown, "a plant that had sprung up everywhere in occupied Europe". There were three fundamental ideas which inspired the Resistance: a war of national liberation for independence; a war against totalitarianism in the name of democracy; and a war for a new political settlement against every attempt to restore the *Ancien Régime*. This last idea animated federalist patriots: they were attempting to end the era of the nation state and to begin a new one, that of the international state. Europe was no longer seen by federalists as a great expanding force — as it was seen by liberals and democrats in the nineteenth century — but as a town under siege. The unity of Europe was necessary in order to overcome the crisis of western civilisation and to create a larger loyalty: going beyond the artificiality of national boundaries to the point of embracing the whole of mankind. The Resistance was therefore the beginning of the political struggle for European federation and was also the field where the federalist forces were selected for post-war reconstruction. It was not an accident that after the war federalist forces collapsed in Britain, almost disappeared in France, were numerous in Germany, and grew steadily in Italy. The strength of the movement reflected the moral stature of the leaders and their followers behind them. The Resistance selected the forces.¹⁹

There are two reasons why Italy has been the most influential and dynamic starting-point of federalist Resistance, and why the moral and political leadership of the European federalist movement has continued since the war. Firstly, the Resistance in Italy was opposed to the fascist state, which represented the terminal stage of the crisis of the nation state. Secondly, Spinelli's federalist project was strategically effective because of his early Leninist experience, which was a hard school of political discipline. Yet it would be impossible to understand the formidable impact of the *Ventotene Manifesto* on following generations without considering the circumstances of Spinelli's conversion from Leninism to federalism. An autobiographical passage

which relates to the years of internment in Ventotene is most enlightening: "When asked by Rossi who as Professor of Economics had been authorised to correspond with him a long time before, Einaudi sent two or three books on English federalist literature which had flourished at the end of the thirties thanks to Lord Lothian's efforts ... Their analysis of the political and economic perversion of nationalism, and their reasoned presentation of the federalist alternative, have remained in my mind to this very day as a revelation. Since I was seeking clarity and precision of thought, my attention was not attracted by the nebulous, contorted and hardly coherent ideological federalism of the Proudhonian or Mazzinian type, which thrived in France and Italy, but by the polished, precise and anti-doctrinaire thought of the English federalists ... who proposed to transplant to Europe the great American political experience".²⁰

Having assimilated and spread the lesson of the British federalist school on the continent, Spinelli and the MFE developed a coherent strategy, and could create a new type of political behaviour, showing that it could be supported by an increasing number of militants. The reversal of the priorities (i.e. the political struggle was designed not to obtain national, but European power) gave Spinelli the theoretical categories to overcome the achievements of the British federalists, who could not regard federalism as a priority political choice, and considered it accessory -- even if fundamental -- to the concepts of liberalism, democracy and socialism. "Without revolutionary theory", Lenin had taught Spinelli, "there can be no revolutionary movement".²¹

Spinelli's political strategy was formed on the fundamental conviction that national governments are at once means and obstacles to European unification. They are the means because the European context is necessary to the survival of the nation-state. They are the obstacles because in the last resort national governments are the defenders of absolute national sovereignty. The creation of a European context for taking decisions concerning defence, currency and economic life, had three important consequences. The first is that the final seat of power for European states is shifted from the national to the European context. The second is that, because of this, it became necessary to have a European policy (conceived and managed in the European context, in co-operation with other countries) alongside national policy (conceived and managed in the national context). The third is that such a European policy creates a power vacuum — only partly covered by American leadership — which must be filled. The history of European integration is, according to Spinelli, the history of attempts to fill this vacuum.

There were only two possible ways, in Spinelli's analysis, to fill this power vacuum: either by starting with a European government of a federal nature, or by moving towards this federal goal with a step by step convergence of the national policies of the different countries. The first solution (followed by

Spinelli and which, in two historical occasions, almost succeeded, as will be discussed later) puts federation at the beginning, conceiving it as the goal of a constitutional struggle. The second solution (followed by Jean Monnet and in fact adopted by European governments) places federal power at the end of a gradual process, and could be conducted by an intergovernmental mechanism mobilising the national forces interested in European solutions.

The advantage of Monnet's strategy is that it can involve the active forces of the nations without asking for a constitutional reform. The disadvantage of this strategy is that it cannot be carried out in a democratic manner because it requires European decisions which are no longer controlled by national parliaments and not yet controlled by the European Parliament. Hence the 'democratic deficit' of the Community.

The advantages of Spinelli's strategy are derived from the fact that with federal power at the starting point, it would be up to European democracy to determine ways and means, structures and deadlines for European unification. The disadvantage consists in the extreme difficulty of setting up a constituent assembly at the beginning of the process, with the parties still closely tied to the national powers.²²

Since unification can only be achieved through a democratic process, Spinelli acknowledged the fundamental role national governments play, being the seat of democratic consent. The historical development towards European federation is seen by Spinelli closely connected with the historical development of European democracy itself. Being national governments also the obstacles to the achievement of the federation (because by their nature of being the defenders of national sovereignty, they reject a full fledged European federation involving an irreversible transfer of sovereignty to a supranational authority), it created a contradiction bound to generate recurrent crises in European politics.

The strongest opposition to the transfer of sovereignty comes, in the analysis of Spinelli, from permanent officials (such as diplomats, civil servants and the military), because the loss of power and status they would suffer. Political actors (such as heads of governments and their ministers) seem, on the contrary, more willing to promote a process of transfer of sovereignty. Having no permanent positions of power to defend they can play a larger role within a wider European political context.

Pressure on national governments and political parties can be exercised, according to Spinelli, only by an independent movement. The movement should not be structured as a political party, but as an inter-parties body, uniting federalist and Europeanist forces active in all parties. In order to be successful, the movement would have to assume the character of a supranational organisation, uniting all federalists beyond their national allegiance, commanding a loyalty able to promote a co-ordinated European-based action.

The strongest chances for the movement to influence the process of European unification do not occur, according to Spinelli, during periods of relative stability (when national governments are able to manage current affairs), but during periods of crises (when a European context is necessary to face the fundamental political choices). Such crises are inherent in the process of decline of the nation-state, which after 1945 could only maintain some of its historical attributes through inter-governmental co-operation. The European 'rescue' of the nation-state is, however, only a temporary phenomenon, lasting for the period of the transition towards a European state. The fundamental duty of the federalist movement is, according to Spinelli, to mobilise those forces for a progressive and radical change of the institutional seat of power: from the national to the international state.

The strongest drive towards a European state cannot come, however, from national governments but a constituent assembly, elected directly by European peoples, whose majority is in favour of a closer unification. Spinelli took the model of a European constituent assembly from the Philadelphia Convention of 1787, which started the process of unification of the North American sub-continent. The direct election of the European Parliament, Spinelli thought, could put that process in motion in the European continent too.

The constituent process envisaged by Spinelli sprung from the contradictions of the functional approach, which alone could not achieve political unity. Spinelli's criticism of Monnet's strategy (even though the two actually worked closely together during and after the establishment of the ECSC) was that federation cannot be the result of a gradual process because the power indispensable for the existence of a federal government cannot be transferred by degrees from the nations to Europe: either it is transferred or it is not. Spinelli acknowledged that Monnet's strategy was effective in keeping European unity on the agenda bringing the process of integration to the threshold of the single market, but also remarked upon its ineffectiveness in transferring sovereign powers from national to supranational institutions.²³

Spinelli exploited the contradictions of the functional approach in order to initiate the democratic constituent procedure in two historical occasions.

II. Spinelli's first attempt to create a European federation: the European Political Community

The first attempt by Spinelli to build the European federation matured in the early fifties, in connection with the initiatives to build a European alternative (the ECSC and the EDC) to the reconstruction of Germany. Spinelli's action made it possible to put in motion a constituent process in which the *ad hoc*

Assembly (the enlarged ECSC Assembly) was given a mandate to draw up the statute for the European Political Community, the political body in charge of the European army.

The *Rapport Intérimaire* of the 27th July 1951, gave the ECSC Assembly a consultative and censure role towards the Commissioner, without, however any legislative or budgetary powers. It was the Italian delegation, led by Ivan Matteo Lombardo, to point out through an *Aide-mémoire* the necessity of pooling sovereignty within a political community: "The Italian Government", the *Aide-mémoire* stated, "also realised that ... certain economic and financial problems which raise for the Defence Community can only be solved in the framework of an organism whose supranational ... character, would be developed enough". The *Aide-mémoire* also strongly criticised the undemocratic procedure created by the *Rapport*: "The Italian delegation considers that, in place of a partial and yearly renewed renunciation of national sovereignty and parliamentary attributes, national parliaments should be asked, once for all, to create an office with a definitive and constitutional character".²⁴

Only a "constituent assembly" could provide the necessary institutional framework to build a European army: "The Italian delegation", the *Aide-mémoire* stated, "acknowledges that renunciation of sovereignty, as it has been provided above, could not be performed by the governments, nor accepted by national parliaments, without creating, on the other side, at the federal level an organism entrusted with the powers which national assemblies renounced, and with the authority to exercise these powers alongside the national parliaments. ... The organism enjoying such powers should be, according the Italian delegation, the European Assembly".²⁵

A prominent role in persuading the six governments of the so-called 'little Europe' to accept the principle of the European constituent assembly was played by the Italian prime and foreign minister Alcide De Gasperi: "If we call upon the armed forces of different countries", De Gasperi argued, "to come together in a permanent constitutional body, if necessary to defend a greater homeland, this homeland must be clearly visible, solid and alive. Even if the building is unfinished we must be able to see the principle structure from now on". De Gasperi's stand for an European executive responsible in front a "commonly elected and decision making body", created a new basis for negotiations: "some may wish to continue this task of co-ordination in easier areas but each one of us feels that this is a chance that may pass and never return".²⁶

A constituent role to the EDC Assembly was decided at the crucial meeting of the six foreign ministers on the 11th December 1951 at Strasbourg. Adenauer and Schuman had already supported De Gasperi's position and doubts by the foreign ministers of the Benelux countries, Van Zeeland, Stikker and Bech, on the principle of a common authority, had been overcome, by

recognising the role of the Council of Ministers within which each nation would be equally represented. "Italy", De Gasperi stated, "is ready to transfer wide powers to a European Commission as long as it is organised democratically and gives guarantees of development and survival. Italy does not deny the need for a transition period but she believes that once the treaty is presented to the Parliaments the will to create common political institutions must already be established so that these may survive. If we place the whole of the army under a European authority both the Parliaments and the peoples need to know how this authority will be organised, how it will administer its powers and how it will be held accountable. For this reason Italy considers the presence of an Assembly in European organisations essential".²⁷

Provisions for the constituent process were stated in Article 38 of the draft treaty: "During the transitional period the Assembly studies: a) the constitution of an Assembly of the European Defence Community especially elected on a democratic basis; b) the powers which would be delegated to such an Assembly; c) the modifications, relative to the other Community's institutions, in particular in order to guarantee an appropriate representation of states, which would be possibly made to the dispositions of the treaty. In these studies the Assembly will draw inspiration from the following principles: the final organisation which will take the place of the actual provisional organisation should have a federal or confederal structure. It should be composed by a bicameral Assembly and an executive power. The proposals of the Assembly will be submitted to the Council. With the advice of the Council these proposals will be then transmitted by the President of the Assembly to the governments of the member-states". The Assembly had the task of "drafting within six months of its activity the federal or confederal proposal".²⁸

De Gasperi's action did not happen unknown to Spinelli, at the time General Secretary of the MFE. Spinelli judged the Pleven Plan "nothing more nor less than a proposal for continental federation", since "the unification of defence and economic policies and relationship between States within the Atlantic Treaty is hard to imagine without a corresponding change in foreign policies, and in the long run without the founding of legal bodies to protect the individual rights of citizens". With the support of the Union of European Federalists and federalist leaders such as Frenay, Brugmans, Voisin, Dehousse and Carandini, Spinelli therefore immediately convinced the Council of the Peoples of Europe to formulate a draft treaty for the creation of a European constituent assembly.²⁹

The draft treaty was presented in April of 1951, at the Lugano Conference of the organisation, together with a memorandum containing principles for a federal constitution. A parallel action was in the meantime conducted by Italian federalist within the Italian Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, binding the

Italian government to promote the creation of a European political authority through a European constitution.³⁰

Spinelli tried to implement this institutional approach with a direct and personal one, by sending to Paolo Emilio Taviani -- the then head of the Italian delegation -- a memorandum which supported the thesis that a common army could not be administered by a body modelled on the High Authority of the ECSC. A common foreign and military policy required a European minister, and a defence budget to be financed by a tax levied directly on citizens. The common army required, according to Spinelli, the creation of a European government responsible in front to a bi-cameral legislature with a house representing the European peoples and the other representing the states, and a Court of Justice.

After the failure of this first move Spinelli then decided to approach directly De Gasperi, and in August persuaded the prime minister to take a firm federalist stand. The *Aide-Mémoire* presented by the Italian delegation, which accepted -- as we have discussed -- the principles of interdependence over the common budget, of general economic policy and federal constitutional reform, was in fact drafted on the basis of the Spinelli memorandum.³¹

Continuing this sort of personal diplomacy, on 7th November Spinelli approached Schuman too, urging to grant the Assembly of the EDC the power to assume "aside from its normal functions [the role] of the European constituent assembly", to be elected by national parliaments with the task of drafting a Pact of Federal Union. This draft would be sent to each state for approval by the competent constitutional authorities. It would specify the powers to be transferred to a European political authority, the organisation and the functioning of federal institutions, and procedures for revision.³²

A further step to support the European constituent Assembly was the creation by Spinelli and Paul Henry Spaak (president of the European Movement, after his resignation as president of the Council of Europe's Assembly at Strasbourg) which won important public figures and organisations to the federalist cause. On behalf of the Committee Spinelli could ask in February 1952 Ivan Matteo Lombardo (who in the meantime had replaced Taviani at the head of the Italian delegation) to lead the constituent process: "De Gasperi and yourself", Spinelli declared, "have managed to have the formula for a European constituent assembly included in the Treaty albeit in a veiled form. Perhaps now it would be worthwhile emphasizing the need to immediately create a political authority in the form of a federal state by getting the Italian delegation to ask that the constituent assembly be summoned directly even without awaiting the conclusion of the Defence Treaty. I think it would be a good thing if the Italian government stepped to the forefront again and proclaimed the need to make this move. Basically what is needed is to pull the

articles concerning the Assembly out of the Conference and to send them off immediately to be ratified, perhaps after reformulating them in more general terms. Otherwise I'm afraid the Defence Conference may drag on for months and months".³³

The idea of giving the power to draft the project for the European Constitution provided for by Article 38 to a widened ECSC Assembly was supported by the international Council of the European Movement, held at Luxembourg from the 21st to the 23rd of May. Spaak's proposal became the French-Italian initiative for anticipating the application of Article 38 and on the 19th of June De Gasperi and Pleven could ask for the powers contained in Article 38 to be conferred on the ECSC Assembly through a special protocol. The first meeting of the Assembly was to be held on the 9th-10th of September and it took up Adenauer's formal request to draft the treaty which was to create a European political community within six months.³⁴

Assisted by the Action Committee (which elaborated nine drafts of resolutions to be placed at the disposal of the Assembly as consultative material) by the 10th of March the draft statute for the European Political Community was presented. To the powers already held by the ECSC and the EDC there was added the power to levy taxes directly on citizens, to progressively build a common market, for the free circulation of goods, services, people and capitals and a Chamber of Peoples elected on universal suffrage.³⁵

However, as it is well known, the Political Assembly followed the same fate as the EDC on the 30th of October 1954. Spinelli's hope for "a very strong mobilisation of interests and feelings favouring unification" which would have turned "this latent energy into live political forces" did not materialise.³⁶

III. Spinelli's second attempt to create a European federation: The European Parliament's Draft Treaty

After the failure of the EDC and the Political Community, Spinelli concentrated his efforts on the rebuilding of the MFE (seriously weakened by the loss of membership consequent to the *debâcle* of 1954) and subsequent to Mario Albertini's taking over of the movement in the early sixties, he moved towards the Community 'citadel', becoming a commissioner in 1970.³⁷

Only when direct elections to the European Parliament by universal suffrage were discussed at the Paris summit of 9-10th December 1974, and finally approved on 1-2nd December 1975, Spinelli considered returning to his original strategic design, based on the assumption that the European Parliament had to perform a constituent role by becoming the 'federator' of Europe.

The failure of the Werner plan had always been put forward by Spinelli

as evidence of the incapacity of European governments to promote a closer political union of Europe. His experience as a commissioner reinforced the belief that only a democratically legitimated Parliament could assume a constituent role. As soon as he got an offer to run in the 1976 Italian general elections for the Communist Party as an independent, Spinelli anticipated his resignation from the Commission. In his diary on 15th May he gave the reasons for that choice: "In that way I would go to Strasbourg, and if the elections take place I shall be in a good position to be elected to the European Parliament. Moreover, if the communists will make the *compromesso storico*, I shall be able to count on some influence in Italian foreign policy. ... Since I stood up and began to preach European federation thirty five years ago ... I have been approached by the *azionisti* who offered me the co-direction of the party, but the party has imploded. Then by the Christian democrats who have learned and on De Gasperi's initiative put forward my proposals for the *ad hoc* Assembly. They have never, however, recognised what they owed to me. Then the socialists came and Nenni asked and obtained my collaboration and we were sympathetic. The party has, however, been cold towards me. Finally came the communists. They have been the only ones to recognise that they owed something to me and made me this offer. It is not just a chance that they did so. In some way they have recognised in the *lone wolf* one of them".³⁸

The independence from the party was stressed by Spinelli in more than one interview. On 26 May Spinelli declared to the *Die Zeit*: "After the occupation of Prague by the Soviets, the Italian communists too begun to discover Europe. I am ready to help them being convinced that their participation is important. However, I want to keep my independence. The condition of my candidature is that I am completely free and can speak and vote as I wish". During the electoral campaign, when Spinelli's 'return' to the Communist Party was criticised, he always replied that they were the communists who came nearer him. In fact Spinelli became a member of the Italian delegation to the Strasbourg Parliament, and he was subsequently elected in 1979 and 1984 with massive popular support.³⁹

Spinelli considered the direct election of the European Parliament "a decisive turning point in European history". Quoting Machiavelli he stated to the Italian Chamber of Deputies: "There is neither more difficult a thing to deal with, nor more uncertain to succeed, nor more dangerous to manage, than to lead the introduction of new orders". The European Parliament had to reform the Community institutions through a constituent process leading to increase the power of the Parliament "especially in the sense of transferring some legislative, fiscal and governmental powers from the nations to the Community; of limiting the abnormal powers of the Council; of strengthening those of the Commission; of giving the Parliament legislative powers within the context of the European

Community's field of jurisdiction". Spinelli did not regard the European Parliament as a point of arrival but of departure. It had to become an "arena endowed with a European democratic legitimation and within it it will be possible to conduct a real and serious European struggle. ... In this context, the European Parliament will have to assume the role of a European Constituent Assembly, even of a permanent European Constituent Assembly as Willy Brandt said. I am convinced that within the European Parliament division lines run and will continue to run through all the political groups, that nobody can say neither where majorities and minorities are, nor what the result of the struggle will be".⁴⁰

The main powers of the European Parliament (conferred by the Treaties of Rome and the Treaty of 22 July 1975) were limited to the right to censure the Commission by a two third majority vote on budgetary procedure. Spinelli began his "last battle" just using this power as a fulcrum for action, asking for a review of the 1980 budget. The capacity of the Community to control European economic development was strongly hampered by the size of its budget, which amounted to only 0.8% of European GNP. The main share of the budget being allocated to agriculture, the Community could not successfully fulfil the requirements of the Treaty of Rome on economic convergence of the member-states and implement the European Monetary System, created by Council of Europe of Bremen of 6-7th July, and approved by the Council of Brussels of 4-5th December 1978.

On becoming Vice-President of the Budget Commission Spinelli was able to influence the formulation of some conditions for the approval of the 1980 budget. Spinelli's plan was manifestly to use the budget crises to increase the powers of the Community. Spinelli therefore proposed a new criterion for allocation of money to agriculture and promoted the development of structural economic policies. His proposal to increase the Community's share of value added tax to 1% of the European GDP was finally agreed. Greater economic independence would have increased the Community's role in the investment and development sectors. "Regional and aid policies for developing countries", Spinelli pointed out in a speech to the European Parliament on 12th September 1978, "must no longer be seen as charity that the rich bestow on the poor but as a plan to save rich and poor together: otherwise the rich go bankrupt. Well, in this budget there is not the least trace of this and I wonder how it is going to be possible to think about and create monetary union well knowing that there are countries which would not be able to keep up, and knowing that suitable investment, regional development, social convergence and restructuring policies are all lacking. I believe that since the budget does not cater for all these factors, it is unacceptable".⁴¹

The rejection of the budget on 14th of December 1979 came as a surprise to European governments. The Council appointed a Commission which worked

on the budget and drafted a report with no reference to reform the common agricultural policy or to increase the Community's resources. On 9th July 1980 the Parliament approved a budget that was substantially a carbon copy of the one it rejected six months earlier. Spinelli commented in his diary: "We have proof that even in budgetary matters the Council ends up by gaining ascendancy simply by virtue of its inertia".

Spinelli was well aware of the paralysis into which the Community could fall. It was evident that in spite of the treaties, the Parliament was impotent in front of the Council. As a representative of all European citizens, it was up to the European Parliament, Spinelli alerted his colleagues, "to propose the institutional reforms able to take the Community out of this impasse. If we are not able to learn from the present crises the lesson which it is necessary to adopt in order to take an initiative in this direction, then we shall forsake our duty". The lack of "political will" and of "adequate institutional instruments" to allow "common needs, feelings and aspirations to become common will and action", was repeatedly underlined in speeches to the Parliament. On 25th June Spinelli sent a letter to his colleagues in the European Parliament, raising the problem of the responsibilities that the Parliament needed to assume. He asked the parliamentarians to appoint an *ad hoc* working group to prepare a plan for the necessary institutional reforms to be expressed in a draft treaty which modified and integrated the Treaty of Rome: "With the present institutions, procedures and competences, the Community is condemned to pass through more and more frequent and paralysing crises. All this in a moment in which not only the economic, but also the foreign policy of the Community needs to be developed with continuity, plenitude and a large popular consensus. ... If there are colleagues who, like me, are convinced that the reform of the communitarian institutions is too serious a thing to be left in the hands of statesmen and diplomats, I would be glad if they will answer to this letter and participate in meetings where we'll study the best ways to involve the Parliament in this kind of action".⁴²

This appeal was taken up by eight parliamentarians -- Richard Balfe, Paola Gaiotti De Biase, Stanley Johnson, Brian Keyn, Silvio Leonardi, Hans August Lücker, Bruno Visentini and Karl von Wogau. On the same night of the budget vote, the 9th of June, they met at the *Au Crocodile*, a restaurant of Strasbourg at few yards from Kléber Square. Referring to the precedent of the French Revolution, they formed the Crocodile Club. Members of the group were European parliamentarians belonging to different political parties, aiming at a global reform of Community's institutions. On 25th August, Spinelli sent another letter to his colleagues, asking support for an initiative of the Parliament to "face the great economic and political challenges" of the moment. As the Club's members increased -- including Susanna Agnelli, Martin Bangemann,

Willy Brandt, Maria Luisa Cassanmagnago, Diana, Felice Ippolito, Nord, Pelikan, Radoux, Giorgio Ruffolo, Leo Tindemans and Wieczorek-Zeul -- leading figures of the Community's 'citadel' began to take it seriously. Willy Brandt himself convinced the ex-Bürgermeister of Frankfurt, Rudi Arndt, the Vice-president of the European Parliament, Bruno Friedrich and the President of the Transport Commission, Horst Seefeld to participate in the discussions and to follow the Club's initiatives closely. At the end of August there were thirty members and in November the Club could count on seventy supporters within the Parliament.⁴³

The Club's success within the Parliament depended, however, on the degree of support which it could gain among political forces in the member-states. A long and passionate letter of 3 September 1980 to the man who took over the MFE in the early sixties, Mario Albertini (who expressed some doubts on Spinelli's line of action within the Parliament), offers a clear insight of the policy Spinelli was following in that crucial moment: "The action which undertook will develop only if the European deputies' initiative will have response among the political forces in the different countries and the initial support of at least some of them. ... The problem for me is as follows: the most beautiful woman cannot give more than she has, and I too cannot give more than I have. My energies are limited and they are decreasing. I am still able to do something within the European Parliament. My action has already got some following. ... I am counting very much on your efforts towards all the political forces in all countries, to make them understand the implications of what we are beginning to do in the European Parliament. ... It is not the first time that institutional reforms are tentatively put forward. All of them, from those of the ad hoc Assembly to those of Tindemans, have failed when they have been transmitted to the Council, it is not only and not just that there was the opposition of this or that government. Any Council has never discussed any of these proposals, and even if it wanted to, it could not have been organically able to do so. Can you imagine nine or ten foreign ministers entering into the merits of a constitution? The Council has always immediately transmitted the texts to their administrative 'machine à penser', the ambassadors, and they have converted every project, more or less federal, more or less supranational, into an intergovernmental agreement, i.e. they have made the venture fail. ... As you know, it is not since yesterday, neither since the day before yesterday, that I have been thinking of the European Constituent Assembly, the only political act through which a Europe of Europeans, made by the Europeans, for the Europeans, can be born. I stood to be elected to this Parliament in order to persuade it to undertake this action, and as a lone animal in ambush I have waited for the right moment for action to come. I have not waited idly. I have engaged myself where the Parliament had some power, and therefore where if

it won, it would have created, in fact, a piece of new constitution; if it lost, it would have suffered the agony of the defeat. In this engagement I have gained that minimum of authority which would induce several people to pay attention to what I am saying. I thought that now the moment has come in which it is necessary to say: either we reform the Community, or it will be no longer possible to face successfully the mass of problems which require European solutions. ... Please, do not waste time making too many lectures to me. What sense is there in that? I know already that sometimes I make mistakes, that, therefore, I have to straighten my aim, and I do it. Lectures should be made to all our federalists, and not only to those whom are already federalist, but to those whom have to become federalist".

In response to this appeal the UEF decided on 6-7th September to support Spinelli's "last battle" and gather signatures for a petition to be sent to the European Parliament. The UEF also decided to form committees all around Europe pointing out the urgency of creating a consent for a European Constituent Assembly.⁴⁴

If the UEF played an important role in the outer ring of European politics, it was the Crocodile Club to act as a catalyst of a constituent policy in the inner ring of European institutions. The Club in fact met periodically during the plenary sessions of the Parliament, approving on 17th November a "proposed resolution" which committed the European Parliament to reform the Community's institutions. An *ad hoc* 'working group' had to present proposals to modify the Treaties of the Community. The question of procedure after the Parliament had concluded its deliberations was discussed in a letter Spinelli and Felice Ippolito wrote to their colleagues of the Popular Party: "Considering the commitments made and never kept by the governments ... to follow the intergovernmental procedure established by the Community Treaties, means giving up the idea of reform at the very moment it is asked for. Furthermore, it must be remembered that new treaties which strengthened an already existing community of States were never prepared by intergovernmental conferences, but by assemblies which represented the citizens of the community that was about to be formed and then ratified by the member-states ... We must see reality for what it is. Either the reform of the European Community shall pass under national ratification of a Treaty drafted by the European Parliament or it shall not pass!"⁴⁵

By 11th February 1981 162 deputies had signed the proposal which was presented to the President of the European Parliament, Simone Veil. A motion including the main points of the Club's proposals was approved by the Parliament on 9th July by a majority of 163 (being 24 against and 12 abstaining). It decided to "assume the whole initiative of giving new vigour to the creation of the European Union", setting up "a permanent commission for

institutional matters" in January 1982. Its aim was the formulation of "modifications to the present Treaties", and the proposals had to be sent "directly for ratification by the competent constitutional bodies in each member-state".⁴⁶

The Commission for Institutional Affairs was created on 22 January 1982, appointing Mario Ferri as president, Jonker, Nord, Marco Pannella as vice-presidents and Spinelli as spokesman-coordinator. In the space of six months the Commission prepared a motion calling for the "stand-point of the European Parliament in respect of the reform of the Treaties and the creation of European Union". A majority of 258 votes (out of the 316 who were present) stood for it, increasing the majority of 80% in respect to the previous vote. The Commission was officially granted the power to formulate guidelines for institutional reforms, and it set up six sub-commissions with the task of providing the political principles for the reform of Community institutions. De Gucht, Moreau, Pfennig, Prag, Junot and Zecchino were appointed spokesmen for the six subcommissions and presented six working papers to the Commission.⁴⁷

Working from September to December 1983, the Commission outlined a reform which proposed the transformation of the Council into a collective presidency of the Union; the Commission into the government of the Union; and the conferral of legislative powers to two chambers, the first being the House of Peoples and the second the House of the States. The competences of the Union were economic policy (leading to a single market and monetary union); foreign and defence policies. Bearing in mind the experience of the débacle of 1954, Article 82 specified that once the "Treaty-constitution" was approved by the Parliament, it had to be sent directly to the member-states for ratification without submitting it to diplomatic conferences. A majority of member-states, "whose population made up two third of the whole population of the Community", would have been sufficient to implement the treaty.⁴⁸

A majority of 238 (32 against and 35 abstentions), on the 14th February 1984, approved what became well-known as Draft Treaty. Aware that the real battle had just started, Spinelli -- as he did in 1953 -- turned to the European statesman who could better interpret the reasons of a political union and on 16th April was received (with Mauro Ferri and Pieter Dankert, President of the European Parliament) by François Mitterrand, President of the Council, who had to visit the Parliament in May. In a note delivered personally to Mitterrand "Some reflections concerning the possibility of a European initiative by the President of the Republic", Spinelli suggested: "the project of the European Parliament could offer the President of the Republic the fulcrum for a French initiative which would force all member-states to take their responsibilities. The President of the Republic could take this opportunity ... to declare: a) that

everybody has to realise that the beginning of European construction cannot restart by returning to intergovernmental works, but hence it has to rely upon a democratic European asset; b) that the European Parliament, directly elected by the citizens of the Community, has been able to make all the mediations and compromises necessary to establish a realistic draft Union Treaty, capable of putting into motion again the process of economic and political unification of democratic Europe; c) that time has come to propose to our peoples to accept and implement this project according to their respective constitutional procedures; d) that if as many governments of the member-states as the ones provided by the project of the implementation of the Treaty, declare their readiness to reply to the French appeal, and to initiate the procedures of ratification, France will offer an example by submitting the project to a referendum for approval. ... If President M. Mitterrand decided to issue such a declaration, this would become the ideal centre around which the European elections of the whole Community will turn. The chapter of the constitution of political Europe would begin with them".⁴⁹

On 24th May Mitterrand, in fact, declared to the European Parliament that France would back the Treaty and that would have proposed a intergovernment conference to institute political union. "Your Assembly", Mitterrand stated, "encouraged us to go further on this road, suggesting a Treaty which institutes European Union. Those of us who are willing, will follow the same method, as in the past. To a new situation must correspond a new Treaty, which would not, of course, substitute the existing Treaties, but would extent their application to areas they do not cover. This is the case for a political Europe. France is willing to engage herself in this enterprise. Speaking on behalf of France, I declare that she is ready to examine, to defend your project, as France supports its inspiration. ... I suggest that to this end preliminary talks begin, leading to a conference of the member-states involved".⁵⁰

In a letter to Mitterrand of 8 June Spinelli was full of gratitude for the stand of the President: "The appeal which you launched at the European Parliament, on 24th May, to the member-states of the Community to realise the political union, represents a turning point of the history of the European construction, a turning point which will be unrivalled if it is pursued with the same tenacity of the appeal pronounced by Schuman in 1950. If a real European union will be born, it will bring your name and have the seal of France".⁵¹

The Fontainebleau summit on 25th June 1984 left unsatisfied, however, many hopes. The opposition of Greece, Denmark and Great Britain, to a closer union was apparently overcome by the establishment of two committees, dealing the first with the Europe of citizens, and the second with the task of formulating a reform of the European institutions "respecting the spirit and the method of the European Parliament's plan". This second body was called the 'Spaak

Committee 2' (after the 'Spaak Committee 1', which had prepared the Conference of Messina in 1956), and become better known as the 'Dooge Committee', for the name of its president. Being composed of the personal representatives of the heads of state and government, on 3-4th December 1984 it presented an interim report, drafted by Maurice Faure, asking for an intergovernmental conference to be called to examine the Parliament's proposal.

A demonstration of 70,000 people from all over Europe provided the popular support for what had to become the Europe of citizens and also the framework of the Milan summit of 28-29th June. As it is well-known the irreducible opposition of Great Britain on the crucial issue of conferring the European Parliament a constituent mandate, favoured the Commission's plan for the creation of a internal market. By making use of articles 236 and 148 of the Treaty of Rome the Italian delegation -- strong of the popular demands -- played the important role to call a majority vote on the summoning of an intergovernmental conference with the mandate to "formulate, in view of the progress of the European Union", a new treaty on foreign policy and defence and to formulate the necessary modifications of the Treaties of Rome "as far as regards the role of the European Parliament in the decision-making process". These negotiations led, as it is well-known, to the Single European Act.⁵²

On 16th January 1986 Spinelli explained this defeat of the European Parliament's reasons referring to Hemingway's allegory of the old fisherman who, after having captured the biggest fish of his life, reached the harbour carrying only the fish bone after the sharks had eaten it all on the way: "We also have reached the harbour and we too of the big fish only have a fish bone left. The Parliament must not for this reason give up nor must we resign ourselves. We must again make ready to go out into the open sea, readying all the best equipment to catch the fish and to preserve it from the sharks".⁵³

Spinelli's last suggestion was to pursue a constitutional mandate for the third European Parliament's elections in 1989. It appeared by then clear that the European Parliament could win its battle only by mobilising public opinion in its favour, and it meant, according to Spinelli, a popular referendum to be held in each member-state, in which citizens would express themselves on this fundamental political choice.

IV. Conclusion

Spinelli has been compared, in the language of Hegel, to the "world-historical individual". "World-historical Individuals", Levi observes, "express the deepest tendencies in an age and identify themselves so much with them that the individual goal coincides with the universal goal. The end that they pursue is not

thus something arbitrary, but corresponds to the needs of a phase in history and belongs to the real possibilities of their times". "Historical and universal individuals", Hegel wrote, "are those who first expressed what men want. It is difficult to know what we want. We may certainly want this or that, but we still remain in the field of the negative and discontent: knowledge of the affirmative may well be lacking. But those individuals also know what they want in the affirmative".⁵⁴

Historical and universal individuals have an intuitive, not conceptual knowledge of the problems of their age. "The concept", Hegel remarks, "is proper to philosophy. But historical and universal individuals are not required to know this, because they are men of action. On the contrary, they know and want their work, because it corresponds to the age". Spinelli seems to correspond to this Hegelian tipification, if one assumes that the trend towards European integration is a deep historical force of our time. "The European federation", Spinelli confessed in an autobiographical work, "did not present itself as an ideology ... it was the reply that my spirit yearning for political action was seeking". The 'heroic' aspect of Spinelli's work is indeed that he was able to concentrate for all his life most of his energies on a single strategic object -- the European federation -- and that this object in fact corresponded to the "real movement of things".⁵⁵

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- 1 Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi, *The Ventotene Manifesto*, Pavia, 1989, pp.32-3. Altiero Spinelli (1907-1986) began his political activities in the ranks of the Partito Comunista Italiano and was sentenced in 1927 to ten years imprisonment and internment on the islands of Ponza and Ventotene. He left the Communist Party in 1937 after considering the degeneration of the October Revolution into the Soviet experience. He subsequently wholly devoted himself to the struggle for European unity. In 1941, with Ernesto Rossi, he drafted the *Manifesto di Ventotene*, for a federalist Europe. In 1943, he was the principal architect of the European Federalist Movement of which he was to be secretary for many years. In the post-war period he became actively involved in political life organising many European initiatives. In 1970 he was appointed member of the Executive Commission of the EEC. He was elected to the European Parliament in 1976, and again in 1979. In 1984, his work for European unity reached its crowning achievement when he became the president of the Institutional Commission charged to draft a treaty establishing a European union. On Spinelli internment and 'conversion' see Dino Cofrancesco, "Il contributo della Resistenza italiana al dibattito teorico sull'unificazione europea", *L'idea dell'unificazione europea dalla prima alla seconda guerra mondiale*, Sergio Pistone ed., Torino, 1975; C.F. Delzell, *I nemici di Mussolini*, Torino, 1966. See also Altiero Spinelli, *The European Adventure*, London, 1972; idem, *The Eurocrats*, Baltimore, 1966; idem, *Il progetto europeo*, Bologna, 1989; idem, *Rapporto sull'Europa*, Milan, 1965; idem, *La mia battaglia per un'Europa diversa*, Manduria, 1979; idem, *Come ho tentato di diventare saggio*, Bologna, Vols. II, 1984-87; idem, *Diario Europeo*, Bologna, 1990; Lucio Levi ed., *Altiero Spinelli and Federalism in Europe and in the World*, Milan, 1990; E.B. Haas, *Beyond the Nation-State: Functionalism and International Relations*, Standford, Ca., 1964; Charles Pentland, *International Theory and European Integration*, New York, 1973. Rossi met Spinelli on the island of Ventotene, where he was interned from 1939 to July 1943. On the friendship between Rossi and Spinelli see G. Armani ed., *Ernesto Rossi. Un democratico ribelle*, Parma, 1975; G.P. Nitti, "Ricordo di Ernesto Rossi. Appunti bibliografici", *Il Movimento di Liberazione in Italia*, 1967, No. 87, pp.1-55; G. Spadaccia, "Ernesto Rossi: la battaglia federalista (a colloquio con Altiero Spinelli)" *Astrolabio*, 25 February 1967, pp.27-9. On the genesis and dissemination of the *Manifesto* see Delzell, *I nemici di Mussolini* op. cit., pp.185-6; Lucio Levi, "Considerazioni di una recente lettura del 'Manifesto'", *I quaderni della crisi*, August 1963, pp.73-6; idem, *L'unificazione europea. Trent'anni di storia*, Torino, 1979, pp.23-5, 27-30; Lipgens, *Europa-Föderationspläne* op. cit., pp.36-44; Andrea Chiti-Batelli, "Il federalismo europeo dalla Resistenza ai Trattati di Roma", *Storia del federalismo europeo*, Edmondo Paolini ed., Torino, 1973; Ernesto Rossi, *Miserie e splendori del confino di polizia. Lettere da Ventotene, 1939-1943*, M. Magini ed., Milano, 1981.
- 2 Rossi and Spinelli, *The Ventotene* op. cit., pp.21-2. M. Albertini, *Il federalismo. Antologia e definizione*, Bologna, 1979, p.305.
- 3 Rossi and Spinelli, *The Ventotene* op. cit., pp.29-30, p.31.
- 4 *Ibidem*.
- 5 *Ibidem*, pp.34-5.
- 6 *Ibidem*, pp.38-40. The ambiguity to speak in the *Manifesto* both of "party" and "movement" reflects some uncertainties which were resolved by Rossi and Spinelli before leaving Ventotene. See G. Usellini, "Movimento o partito?", *L'Unità Europea*, No. 2, 1943.
- 7 Rossi and Spinelli, *The Ventotene* op. cit., pp.40-1.

8 *Ibidem*, pp.45-9.

9 Max Weber, "Politics as a Profession", quoted in *Ibidem*, p.3.

10 Paolini, *Storia del federalismo* op. cit., p 112. On the foundation of MFE see Altiero Spinelli, *Come ho tentato di diventare saggio. La goccia e la roccia*, Edmondo Paolini ed., Bologna, 1987, pp.21-45, 343. Beside the *Manifesto* the most important works of the Italian federalist Resistance are: Altiero Spinelli, "Gli Stati Uniti d'Europa e le varie tendenze politiche" and "Politica marxista e politica federalista", *Dagli stati sovrani agli Stati Uniti d'Europa* op. cit.; Ernesto Rossi, "Le tendenze federaliste", *L'Unità Europea*, 2 August 1943; idem, *Gli Stati Uniti d'Europa*, Lugano, 1944; idem, "La nazione nel mondo", *Uomo e cittadino*, Bern, 1945; Ernesto Colorni, "Carattere della federazione europea", *L'Unità Europea*, 1943; Luigi Einaudi, "Per una federazione economica europea", *La guerra e l'unità europea*, Milano, 1948; idem, *I problemi economici della federazione europea*, Lugano, 1944; idem, "Il mito dello stato sovrano", *Risorgimento Liberale*, 3 January 1945.

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19 *Ibidem*, pp.136-7.

20 Altiero Spinelli, *Come ho tentato di diventare saggio*, Vol. I, *Io Ulisse*, Bologna, 1984, p.307; idem, *Il Lungo monologo*, Roma, 1968, p.135. On the British federalist school see Henry Philip Kerr, *Pacifism is not Enough. Collected Lectures and Speeches of Lord Lothian/Philip Kerr*, John Pinder and Andrea Bosco eds., London, 1990; idem, "The Ending of Armageddon", *Studies in Federal Planning*, Patrick Ransome ed., London, 1943, pp.1-15; idem, *The American Speeches of Lord Lothian*, London, 1941. Essential bibliography: J.R.M. Butler, *Lord Lothian (Philip Kerr) 1882-1940*, London, 1960; Andrea Bosco, *Lord Lothian*.

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- 21 V.I. Lenin, *What is to be done?*, Moscow, 1964, p.25.
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- 23 See "Thesis for the XVI Congress", *The Federalist*. On Spinelli's and Monnet's strategies see: Altiero Spinelli, *Il progetto europeo*, Bologna, 1989; Cornelia Navari, "The Dialectics of Federalism and Functionalism", *Annals of the Lothian Foundation*, Vol. II, 1993; Mariagrazia Melchionni, "The Monnet-Spinelli Correspondence", *Ibidem*; Jean Monnet, *Cittadino d'Europa*, Milan, 1978; idem, *Les Etats-Unis d'Europe ont Commencé*, Paris, 1955; Merry and Serge Bromberger, *Jean Monnet and the United States of Europe*, New York, 1969; P. Fontaine, *Le Comité d'Action pour les Etats-Unis d'Europe de Jean Monnet*, Lausanne, 1974; E.B. Haas, *Beyond the Nation-State: Functionalism and International Relations*, Stanford, Ca., 1964; Charles Pentland, *International Theory and European Integration*, New York, 1973.
- 24 "Rapport Intérimaire des Délégations aux gouvernements participant la Conférence", 24 July 1951, *Ivan Matteo Lombardo archives* (from now on: *IML. a.*), held in Turin at the Centro Europeo di Studi e Informazione, "CED. Negoziati Conferenza". "Aide-mémoire de la délégation italienne", 9 October 1951, in *IML. a.*, "CED. Negoziati Conferenza" and "Riunioni capi delegazione. Proposte varie delegazioni".
- 25 *Ibidem*. "L'Assemblée", 7 December 1951, in *IML. a.*, "CED. Negoziati Conferenza".
- 26 Born in the province of Trent in 1881, De Gasperi first studied there and later at the University of Vienna. In 1911 he was elected to the Multinational Parliament of Vienna of which he remained a member until the Trentino was annexed by Italy. See *De Gasperi e l'Europa: scritti e discorsi*, Maria Romana de Gasperi ed., Brescia, 1979, p.19; Umberto Corsini and Konrad Repgen: *Konrad Adenauer e Alcide De Gasperi: due esperienze di rifondazione della democrazia*, Bologna, 1984. Most of De Gasperi's speeches and writings on European unity were collected by his daughter Maria Romana and published in *La nostra patria Europa*, Milan, 1969; idem, *De Gasperi e l'Europa*, Brescia, 1979; idem, *Per l'Europa*, Roma, 1952. *De Gasperi e l'Europa* op.cit., pp.119-20. See also Paolo Emilio Taviani, "Breve storia del tentativo della CED", *Civitas*, August 1957.
- 27 "Verbale della riunione dei Sei ministri degli Esteri della Conferenza dell'esercito europeo avvenuta a Strasburgo l'11 December 1951", in the *IML. a.* and published for the first time

by Mario Albertini, "La fondazione dello Stato europeo", *Il federalista*, March 1977 and reprinted in Luigi Vittorio Majocchi and Francesco Rossolillo, *Il Parlamento europeo*, Naples, 1979.

28 EDC Draft Treaty, 14 February 1952, in *IML. a.*, cassa "CED". Articles 33--34--35--36--37 specified the deadlines and the procedures concerning the Assembly. *De Gasperi e l'Europa* op.cit., p.127.

29 Altiero Spinelli, "Tardi ma in tempo", *Europa federata*, Vol. III, No. 34, 31 October 1950. This was a body at first promoted by the French Federalists, the UEF and by other similar organisations to encourage the Council of Europe (then called the Conseil Européen de Vigilance) to take action. Under pressure from the Italian federalists, especially Spinelli, the Conseil des Peuples d'Europe dropped its original standpoint and took on an active role at the end of 1950 when it made an appeal for the summoning of a European Constituent Assembly.

30 The Lugano conference, attended by many jurists and federalist leaders, lent substance to the idea of a European Constituent Assembly launched at Strasbourg by the Conseil des Peuples d'Europe, and saw the drafting of a full treaty for the summoning of that Assembly. "The Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Republic", declared a motion, "seconding the vote of the greater part of the Italian people of which the 'petition for a federal pact' being presented to the Italian Parliament is eloquent testimony, considers its urgent duty to promote the constitution of an initial federal gathering of the continental and democratic countries of Western Europe; and considers the achievement of this the basis and the beginning of a wider European unity; hence it urges — seconding the recent vote of the Assembly at Strasbourg — the formation of a European Army and it invites the government to support and promote each and every initiative that will speedily bring to a convention amongst the above — mentioned countries for the constitution of a Parliament and a Federal Council of Government", "La mozione federalista al Parlamento italiano", *Europa federata*, Vol. III, No. 34, 31 October, 1950, p.6.

31 "Il Promemoria sul Rapporto provvisorio presentato nel luglio 1951 dalla Conferenza per l'organizzazione di una Comunità europea della difesa" was published for the first time in Mario Albertini, "La fondazione dello Stato europeo," *Il federalista*, Vol. XIX (1977), No. 1. It was subsequently published in the appendix to the volume: Luigi Vittorio Majocchi and Francesco Rossolillo, *Il Parlamento europeo*, Naples, 1979, pp.193-216.

32 "Come arrivare subito alla Federazione europea", *Europa Federata*, Vol. IV, No. 53, 25 November 1951. Altiero Spinelli, "E se alle parole seguono i fatti," *Europa Federata*, Vol. IV, No. 54, 25 December 1951, pp.1 and 3. On America's role in the EDC affair see: Dean Acheson, *Present at the creation*, New York, 1969; Jean Monnet, *Mémoires*, op.cit.; Clesse, *Le projet de C.E.D.* op.cit., pp.263-309; Laurence W. Martin, *The American Decision to Rearm Germany*, Harold Stein ed., Birmingham, Alabama, 1963; Robert M. Mc Geehan, *The German Rearmament Question. American Diplomacy and European Defence after World War II*, Urbana, 1971.

33 One year before as president of the Assembly of Strasbourg, Spaak had "coldly and ironically" received the request for a European Constituent Assembly presented by the federalists. See Altiero Spinelli, "Storia e prospettive del MFE", *Sei lezioni federaliste*, Rome, 1954, p.169. Altiero Spinelli's letter to Ivan Matteo Lombardo, 21 February 1952, in *IML. a.*, "CED. 3.7.0.1".

34 The EDC Assembly already practically coincided with that of the ECSC. Article 33 of the draft EDC Treaty stated: "The Assembly of the European Defence Community is the

Assembly specified in articles 20 and 21 of the Treaty of the 18 April 1951 which constituted the European Community Coal and Steel Agreement made up, as far as the Federal Republic of Germany, France and Italy are concerned, respectively of three delegates each, elected in the same manner and for the same term as the other delegates with the end of each one's term coinciding with that of the others. The Assembly thus constituted is empowered with the functions that have been conferred on it by the present Treaty". Conseil de l'Europe, Assemblée Consultative, Compte rendu des débats, Strasbourg, 26-30 May 1952. Telegram from De Gasperi No. 669, 19 June 1952, in *IML. a.*, "3.7.0.3. Telegrammi e telespressi da ministero Esteri".

35 Lucio Levi, "Il Comitato di studi per la Costituzione europea e l'Assemblea ad hoc (1952-1953)", *I movimenti per l'unità europea 1945-1954*, Milan, 1993. See G. Lucatello ed., *Risoluzioni del Comitato di studi per la Costituzione europea*, with an introduction and notes by Altiero Spinelli, Padova, 1954. A collection of studies edited by Robert Bowie and Karl Friedrich was also added to this material. This Committee influenced the work of the *ad-hoc* Assembly especially through the activity of two of its members, Ferdinand Dehousse and Ludovico Benvenuti. See Robert Bowie and Karl Friedrich ed., *Etudes sur la Fédéralisme*, Vol I, No.7, Bruxelles, 1952-1953.

36 Altiero Spinelli, "Lo Statuto della Comunità europea", *L'Europa non cade dal cielo* op.cit., p.151.

37 Spinelli, *Come ho tentato di diventare saggio* op. cit., Vol. I, p.348; idem, "Il modello costituzionale americano e i tentativi di unità europea", *La nascita degli Stati Uniti d'America*, L. Bolis ed., Milan, 1957.

38 The initiative for direct election to the European Parliament originated with the Italian federalists: Majocchi and Rossolillo, *Il Parlamento europeo* op. cit.; Paolini, *Altiero Spinelli* op. cit., p.230.

39 *Ibidem*, p.231. On the relationship between Spinelli and the Italian Communist Party see Altiero Spinelli, *PCI, che fare?*, Turin, 1978; idem, *La mia battaglia* op. cit.

40 *Ibidem*, p.234. Altiero Spinelli, "Di fronte alle elezioni europee", *Il Mulino*, November-December 1978, pp.831-9.

41 Altiero Spinelli, *Discorsi al Parlamento europeo 1976-1986*, Pier Virgilio Dastoli ed., Bologna, 1987, pp.134-8.

42 *Ibidem*, pp.210-3, pp. 214-5.

43 *L'Unità Europea*, VII, No. 79-80, September-October 1980.

44 *Ibidem*. The text of the petition was published in *L'Unità Europea*, VII, No. 82, December 1980.

45 Pier Virgilio Dastoli and Andrea Pierucci, *Verso una costituzione democratica per l'Europa*, Casale Monferrato, 1984. The "resolution proposal" was published in *L'Unità Europea*, VII, No.82, December 1980. *Crocodile*, No. 5, June 1981.

46 *L'Unità Europea*, VIII, No. 89-90, July-August 1981. Altiero Spinelli, *Discorsi al Parlamento europeo* op. cit., pp.257-60.

47 The Institutional Committee was composed by 11 socialists, 11 Christian democrats, 4 conservatives, 4 communists, 3 liberals, 2 Gaullists, and a representative of the independents. The text of the resolution was published by *L'Unità Europea*, IX, No. 102, August 1982, and in Rocco Antonio Cangelosi, "Dal Progetto di Trattato Spinelli all'Atto Unico europeo", *Quaderni di affari sociali internazionali*, Milan, 1987, pp.158-62.

48 Luigi V. Majocchi, "Il processo di unificazione europea: le istituzioni", *Europa 1992. Dall'Atto Unico al governo europeo*, Luigi V. Majocchi and Marco Vitale eds., Milan, 1990,

pp.37-57.

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53 Altiero Spinelli, *Discorsi al Parlamento europeo* op. cit., p.368-373.

54 G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte* Leipzig, 1917, Vol. I, p.77.

55 *Ibidem*, p.76. A. Spinelli, "Pourquoi je suis européen" op. cit., pp.37-38.



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