

TOWARDS THE EUROPEAN UNION

by Mr Altiero Spinelli

FLORENCE 13 June 1983



EUROPEAN
UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE

SIXTH
JEAN MONNET
LECTURE

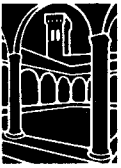


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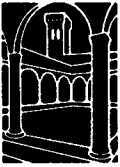
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European University Institute



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Introduction by the Principal of the European University Institute: Professor Werner Maihofer

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to introduce the sixth Jean Monnet Lecture with a most cordial welcome to the representatives of the political, academic and religious authorities who have done us the honour of being here today for our annual lecture on the situation and the future of Europe. This was inaugurated in 1978 by my predecessor as Principal, Mr Kohnstamm, Jean Monnet's former secretary, whose presence we are also delighted to note.

I wish specifically to welcome Mr Elia, President of the Constitutional Court, who has not forgotten that he was a member of the High Council of our Institute, the current President of which, Mr Thompson, has also been good enough to honour our invitation.

I cordially welcome Mr Ricci, the Prefect of Florence, our old friend and outstanding patron.

Unfortunately, the elections in Italy have prevented the President of the Italian Republic, Mr Sandro Pertini, from coming as he had intended.

We are proud and happy that this year the lecture is to be delivered by Mr Altiero Spinelli, whose subject is: 'Towards the European Union.' In inviting him, we wished to do honour to the personal initiative of a great European, who has managed to encourage the European Parliament and its institu-

tional committee into a new step towards European unification, due to reach its final stage of a parliamentary decision in the next few days.

Allow me to give a few biographical details. Altiero Spinelli was born in Rome on 31 August 1907. From 1924 to 1927 he studied law at the University of Rome, until he was arrested by the police and condemned by the Special Tribunal to 10 years' imprisonment for anti-fascist activities. After his 10 years in prison, he was condemned to a further 6 years of 'confino', first in the Island of Ponza and then in the Island of Ventotene. In the latter island, he wrote – along with Ernesto Rossi – the 'Ventotene Manifesto', a fundamental political text for the federalist struggle in favour of European unity. The text of the manifesto was brought to Italy thanks to Ursula Hirschmann, whom Mr Spinelli married in 1946.

In 1943 (in the month of August, that is 40 years ago) Ursula and Altiero Spinelli, along with other anti-fascists and federalists, founded the 'Movimento Federalista Europeo' in Milan. They organized federalist meetings at Geneva and Paris. From 1948 to 1962 Mr Spinelli was Secretary General of the MFE in Italy, and leader of the UEF in Europe.

In 1976 he was elected to Parliament in Italy, as an independent in the PCI list. The same year, he was also appointed member of the European Parliament. He retained this seat in 1979 in the direct elections.

On 9 July 1980, with eight other members, Mr Spinelli founded at Strasbourg (in the Crocodile restaurant) the Crocodile Club, with the goal of inducing the European Parliament to take on the task of drawing up a draft treaty instituting the European Union.

On 9 July 1981, the Assembly adopted the Club's proposal by a large majority, and decided to set up, as from January 1982, a committee with the task of drawing up the project for a European Union. Altiero Spinelli was the general rapporteur to this committee.



I do not wish here to go into the details of this initiative, today known as the Crocodile movement: an enormous creature, then, advancing irresistibly and with its own tail. Why could the advancement of Europe not take place in the same way, through the very institution which had truly been the tail of all the European institutions: the Parliament? But what could this Parliament do to push integration forward towards a European Union?

I wish to confine myself to two observations of principle on this central question. One cannot create the European Union from one day to the next. But one can give the evolutionary process of European construction a clear line and an intrinsic force tending towards European Union. This should be achieved on two levels.

The first is the creation of a new awareness of the political substance of a united Europe. That means the common interests and the manifest necessities of a European policy. These interests and needs are more apparent than ever when one looks at the present situation, both as regards economic developments and the common struggle against unemployment, and as regards Welfare State guarantees throughout the whole of Europe, or the joint protection of the environment, or any other political field where that interest and that need are clear, and where only a common policy can succeed in solving the problems of the current world.

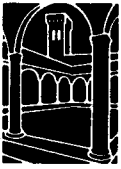
If what Jean-Jacques Rousseau said about the foundation of all human society and its political government is true, it is also true of the political organization of the European societies: 'If it is the opposition of particular interests that has made necessary the establishment of societies, it is the agreement of those same interests that has made that possible. It is what is common to these different interests that forms the social bond, and if there were no point on which all the interests agreed, no society could exist. It is, then, solely on the basis of this common interest that society should be governed.'

But even an explicit awareness of the common interest would never suffice to transform it into a common policy, without the appropriate institutions. If, then, this common interest of the European societies cannot be defined and achieved in daily policy on the basis of the present institutions, there is no other way than to reform them.

And if it is true that in a democracy the sole political organization that can guarantee this definition and realization of the common interest of the peoples is parliamentary procedure through their elected representatives, there is no other way to such a reform of institutions than to give the European Parliament powers of common legislation and of acting as a check on the common government. These must be appropriate to our democratic notion of Parliament, even in a federal Union of the European Community, so as to make the *Parliament* into the fulcrum of all new movement towards European Union. That can never be done except through the *political mobilization of the European peoples*, and the *political initiative of their representatives* in the European Parliament.

I therefore wish every success to your parliamentary initiative to define the political substance of a future Europe and the institutions appropriate to its realization. I hope that the forthcoming elections on the basis of this political conception and reform of the institutions will give the European Parliament the explicit legitimation to proceed along this path, which you are now about to sketch out for us in all its principles and consequences:

Towards the European Union



**Sixth Jean Monnet Lecture
13 June 1983
delivered by Mr Altiero Spinelli
entitled
'Towards the European Union'**

Firstly, I want to thank President Maihofer and this Institute, not only for having given me the honour to speak in this Sixth Jean Monnet Lecture, but also for their contribution to the work of the Institutional Committee.

This June the European Parliament enters the final year of its mandate during which it will have to complete the task it undertook of proposing reform of the Community, transforming it into a genuine political and economic Union endowed with the authority and institutions which would enable it to respond effectively through democratic procedures to the serious and growing problems common to all our peoples.

To understand the significance of this undertaking, we have to answer three questions:

- (1) Why has the European Parliament taken this constituent task upon itself?
- (2) What is the substance of the proposal that Parliament is getting ready to make?
- (3) What must the Parliament do to ensure that its draft will be adopted by the Member States and enter into force?

Let us begin with the first:

1. Why the reform?

When the directly elected European Parliament began its work four years ago, the Community and

its associated structures had already been in a state of profound crisis for some time. Initially Parliament had not been driven by any grand incentive for reform. It was scarcely a hot-bed of revolutionaries and dogmatists. Most of its members were proudly aware of having been entrusted with the highest conceivable form of political legitimacy in democracies, that of election by the people, and hence of their considerable political authority, but on European questions they were all moderates, with a few rare exceptions, from the extreme right to the extreme left.

While aware of the crisis within the Community, they were prepared to fulfil their mandates with caution, abiding by the responsibilities conferred upon them by the Treaties in the hope of contributing thereby to reviving the process of building Europe.

Since the European Parliament is an observatory where all the issues of European responsibility and construction are reviewed and discussed, the European MPs had the opportunity of gaining many varied and impromptu experiences.

First experience

The Parliament had certain limited budgetary powers and when it came to consider its first budget it put forward various amendments which, while not significantly altering the structure, laid emphasis on Parliament's desire to put an end to the budgetary procedure as a mere exercise in calculating the costs of decisions already taken and instead of making the budget a binding indicator of policies to be implemented or expanded.

Since the Council obstinately refused to accept this approach, Parliament rejected the budget by an overwhelming majority in December 1979, which was in its competences.

It seemed like a major victory at the time, the dawn of a new life in the Community. However, Parliament was soon forced to recognize that the



rejection of the budget was a blunt weapon since the Treaties allowed the Commission to go on spending on a provisional monthly basis for an indefinite length of time. The Commission and the Council merely needed to let six months elapse before presenting a new budget and by the half-way mark there was not much left to forecast for the current year. It meant letting through a virtually identical budget to the previous one.

Each year, in a different guise, a new conflict broke out over the budget and each year the Council ended up having the final say, always with the same tight-fisted attitude and the Commission, unaccountably, always gave in to the Council.

Second experience

As prescribed by the Treaties, Parliament began regularly to express its opinions on the proposals for regulations and directives which the Commission presented to the Council. It noted that the Commission exercising its unquestionable authority took the occasional suggestion of Parliament into consideration and introduced it into its proposal to the Council, while the latter always totally and arrogantly ignored Parliament's proposals and took decisions only on the basis of agreements reached or not reached in the inter-governmental negotiations between the Member States.

Third experience

In an effort to encourage the Commission to initiate and the Council to legislate from an overall viewpoint and to take account of the prevailing problems and circumstances, Parliament addressed itself on its own initiative to a series of major themes of Community policy and put forward various initiatives concerning the new resources required by the Community, progress on monetary union, the

reforms of the agricultural policy, the implementation of a transport policy, a new policy on research and so on. The Committee on Institutional Affairs assembled in a single publication all the proposals for Community policies to be implemented, developed or modified which Parliament has so far adopted by large majorities and others which it will do so before the end of its mandate. Thus, Parliament has not only demonstrated its clear awareness of what needs to be done in the interest of the peoples of the Community but also that it is possible to rally broad political support for these proposals from the left to the right.

Parliament has also had to acknowledge however that the Commission is almost completely deaf to these requests and takes initiatives only insofar as the Council allows – by this I do not mean adopting them but taking them into consideration. The Council, with its hints and enigmatic pronouncements, is the real initiator of policies in the Community and takes not the slightest notice of Parliament's proposals.

Fourth experience

Aware that Europe has political, economic and moral responsibilities in the world that go well beyond the limited economic competence of the Community and the issues dealt with in political cooperation, Parliament has begun to voice opinions and challenges on questions of international policy concerning security, human rights, the maintenance or restoration of peace and so on. Parliament can of course frequently be accused of over-emotional attitudes in adopting these positions, but through these debates it has emphasized the need for a foreign policy and for joint security. It has had to acknowledge that its discussions in this field have had no effect whatsoever because it lacks the natural and necessary interlocutor, in other words an executive responsible for common foreign policy



which through concrete action could establish firm points of reference for the parliamentary debates.

Fifth experience

Finally, by recognizing that the institutions function badly, but in the hope that by means of alterations and adjustments to be made within the framework of the existing Treaties, the method of operation can be substantially improved, Parliament has put forward a series of proposals to the Council and Commission. It has been forced to note that beyond a few fine words neither the Council nor the Commission has acted on its requests because the Commission does not dare to claim powers usurped by the Council and the Council is too occupied with its inability to respond to similar proposals for institutional changes within its own structure such as the plan of the Three Wise Men and the Genscher plan, to take any notice of Parliament's proposals.

Sixth experience

Every six months the incoming President of the Council is called upon to set forth what the Council proposes to do. This should be Parliament's most important meeting because the entire construction of Europe is based on the principle that whatever is to be done jointly is delegated to the Commission, that Parliament exercises control over the workings of the Commission while the Court ensures respect for the law within the Community, but the power of deciding whether and which regulations and directives are to be introduced, how to implement them, which policies should be followed, which decisions and reforms to propose is virtually all in the hands of the Council.

Every six months the Parliament listens gloomily as the outgoing President of the Council relates how little the Council has been able to achieve. Then

there is the President of the European Council who regularly comes to address Parliament on the serious nature of Europe's foreign policy problems and how sketchy and disappointing, without any guarantee of continuity, have been, and are only likely to be, the results of political cooperation.

If there were only a few, minor, slowly dwindling issues of a political, internal economic and international order to be dealt with by the Community on a joint basis, the current inefficient system could be tolerated and indeed simplified. The Parliament with its laborious periodic elections and its claims to participate in decision-making could be done away with. The Commission and its administration could be pared down to a secretariat of the Council. The rare Community operations would involve only those who were interested and could be assigned to specialized agencies controlled by inter-governmental committees. It would be a return to the good old days of casual intermittent cooperation of a limited duration. There are those who actually envisage such a future for the Community and who believe that these ideas are original and quite adequate. People used to talk about Europe *à la carte*, then it was: Europe and variable geometry, now they talk of a Europe made up of agencies.

But virtually day after day, and from one year to the next, Parliament has seen and heard the Commission, Council and even statesmen from third countries talk about the many increasingly serious economic and political problems which can be tackled more effectively on a joint basis or can only be tackled jointly.

Ladies and gentlemen, I shall spare you a list of these problems because any speaker on Europe could give one. Parliament's awareness of them has been demonstrated by the relative ease with which the Committee on Institutional Affairs has been able to outline the major themes of the Union in the course of its work.

If they have not been confronted with the proper persistence, with the right sense of perspective and



solidarity, this is due essentially to the way in which decisions are taken in the Community.

In every politically organized entity, decisions are forged following two different policies, which finally coagulate: the political policy in itself and the administrative policy.

Decisions of a European dimension should be prepared politically through debates, electoral campaigns and compromises which demonstrate the degree of consensus called for among European citizens. Hence, we have elections for the European Parliament. And for years now Parliament has demonstrated its ability to work out genuinely European positions. All this has no influence however on the formation of the decisions which have been taken by six, then nine, then 10, and tomorrow 12 ministers whose political roots are in the soil of their national political life and not in that of the European political scene.

Decisions of a European dimension should be prepared from the bureaucratic point of view by planning offices in the European administration to guarantee continuity with what is already in place at Community level. It is for this reason that the Commission has the right of initiative on Community laws. But all this has no bearing on the bureaucratic drafting of Council decisions. These are taken on the basis of six, 10 and then, shortly, 12 dossiers prepared by the same number of national planning offices, each of which has cut down the proposal of the Commission to a simpler working document and in preparing the dossier for its minister has had to take account of the national viewpoint and assert the national interest.

In other words, in the Community there is a sense of the existence of common problems; there is a sense of the need to react to these problems with common responses; there is the capacity to formulate these responses. But Community procedure means that drafting a European viewpoint and getting a European consensus in a European political and administrative background to hold together is difficult and often impossible, while it

facilitates, even encourages, the formation of a consensus on individual national drafts.

Entrusting decisions to such a procedure prevents the orderly expansion of the Community since the decision can only be the final equation of prior national drafting and decision-making for which there is no pre-ordained unity and indeed a far greater likelihood of divergency on account of the differing practices, political balances and so on.

Decisions between governments are usually well nigh irreconcilable and when this is not the case there are delays, imperfections and incoherences and a lack of any assurance of continuity.

It should be added that the Council is not only structurally ill-equipped to carry out a policy for the gradual construction of a united Europe. As a body it is overbearingly arrogant and in spite of all evidence to the contrary considers itself capable of coping with and carrying forward any common policy needed by Europe.

Once the problems began to multiply it then multiplied itself into a series of specialized Councils. When it was necessary to provide some form of unity for this increasingly disjointed conglomeration of Councils it first hit on the idea of the so-called summits, and then the European Council of Heads of State and Government.

Although it has continued to be just as ineffective, when Ministers Genscher and Colombo felt the rising unease that was seeping through the European construction and realized that Europe would jointly have to face other issues such as security, all they could come up with were proposals to extend the method of inter-governmental cooperation, already proved to be so ineffective, to new domains, to further restrict the Commission's autonomy and to continue to deprive Parliament of any genuine powers.

The obvious impossibility of overcoming the glaring contradiction between the needs of Europe and the ability of Europe run by the Council to respond to these needs was the bitter experience which led the European Parliament, composed as it



was of moderates, to take up the proposal put forward by the nine members of different political parties and different nationalities who met in July 1980 as the now famous Crocodile Club and to assume on behalf of the citizens which had elected it, the task of preparing and proposing a wide-ranging reform of the Communities and the other Community-related structures.

We will now pass to the second question:

2. What is the substance of the reform?

In July 1982, having forwarded a number of general guidelines to the Committee on Institutional Affairs as to the direction it should adopt, Parliament began to discuss in particular a long resolution drawn up by the Committee on Institutional Affairs which set out in some detail the substance of the future Treaty.

Once Parliament has adopted this resolution next September it is to be transformed by the committee into an actual draft treaty establishing the European Union. Parliament will then have to consider and vote on this draft at a final reading during the first few months of 1984, rounding off its mandate which expires in June 1984 with this proposal for institutional reform.

Let us take a brief look at the substance of the draft already drawn up by the Committee on Institutional Affairs, although it has yet to reach its final version.

The first problem it had to resolve was the safeguarding of Community achievements, known as *Community patrimony*, while re-defining the competence of the institutions and the decision-making procedures.

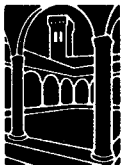
The drafting required scrapping a section which contained a list of amendments to the existing

Treaties to avoid producing a document which by making continual references to other texts would have been incomprehensible to most people. A procedure for amending the existing Treaties is provided for by the Treaties themselves under which an initiative is required of the Commission (which has invariably refused to make such proposals), which assigns to Parliament only its habitually subordinate consultative role, confers the authority to make draft amendments on the Council (which has repeatedly demonstrated its inability to carry out this task as it is doing even now in its treatment of the Genscher-Colombo plan), and then leaves the Member States to organize a diplomatic conference between themselves and to have a text of any possible amendments prepared by the diplomatic services.

The impracticability of the method of amendments has led the committee to draft a treaty formally instituting the Union *ex novo*, in order to establish in a coherent manner its structure and competences, and the phases and procedures for its achievement.

This has enabled a comprehensible text to be put forward while by-passing the absurd decision-making procedure established for amendments to the Community Treaties.

The new political body will be called the Union, since this is the term which has been used since 1952 as a landmark for the construction of Europe. In order to preserve the Community patrimony the treaty will establish that the institutions, the aims and the competences of the Union will completely replace the institutions, aims and competences of the Community, of political cooperation and the EMS, while any element of a legislative nature contained in the Treaties establishing the Communities such as all the regulations, directives and decisions of the Community, or involving political cooperation and the EMS will remain in force until they are amended by the Union under its own procedures.



Having thus ensured legal and political continuity between the original Communities and the Union, our resolution puts an end to the plurality of Community, cooperation, system, placing the entire construction of Europe under the mantle of the Union and establishing that henceforth any step towards unification will be made within its scope under the forms and procedures laid down by the treaty establishing the Union.

One of the major features of the draft is that while it describes in detail the institutions of the Union and their competences, it also lays down the gradual stages of integration.

Intergovernmental cooperation is seen as the basic and hazardous area of integration.

Beyond that there is a sphere which will ultimately become one of common actions which will be decided and put into effect by the institutions of the Union but will continue to be carried out by the Member States until they are superseded by the decisions of the Union. Lastly, there is a sphere in which the Union will have sole power to act by its own decisions.

The transition from one sphere to the other is subject to the principle of subsidiarity in cases where an objective can be achieved more effectively in common than separately, when achievement can only be reached jointly. I shall not dwell here on the special procedures and guarantees provided for to ensure the transition to a higher level of unity.

In this way we have avoided the error of trying to pre-ordain in a rigid and definitive manner what should fall to joint competence and what to national competences. In the present circumstances, it would probably have meant an excessive diffidence against every decision and the easy predominance of restrictive interpretation and wrong allocation. Faster procedures than those for the revision of the Treaties have also been introduced to promote the working out of common policies and legislation.

The resolution by the Committee on Institutional Affairs proposes that the institutions of the Union should as far as possible be the same as those of the

present Community although with some important changes.

The European Council becomes an institution of the Union, but is quite distinct from the Council of the Union. The European Council is to consist of the Heads of State and Government and is the body responsible for cooperation.

It can decide to transform certain forms of cooperation into common actions by delegating their administration to the legislative and executive organs of the Union. It has been calculated that by force of circumstance the Heads of Government will frequently recognize the need for common actions in which case, instead of instructing their own ministers or national officials to carry out their ideas, which would result in a rapid return to the traditional national frameworks, they will assign them to the Union's own organs.

The European Council thus takes on a similar role to that of the Heads of State when they appoint the President of the Commission and instruct him to form the Commission.

The Council of the Union as distinct from the European Council is made up of representatives of the governments who will vote by a more or less qualified weighted majority although never by unanimity. The Council of the Union will share legislative power, adoption of the budget and the investiture of the Commission with Parliament. Parliament will finally cease to be a merely consultative body and will become a branch of the legislative authority and the budgetary authority. The Commission becomes a genuine centre of government with a political function and responsibilities. The European Council appoints the President who then appoints the Commission. The Commission takes up its functions only once it has presented its programme to Parliament and the Council, and obtained approval for taking office. Its term of office is the same as that of Parliament which has the power however to adopt a motion of censure by a qualified majority requiring the Commission to resign. By preserving the current formula the



Committee on Institutional Affairs aimed to reconcile the practice of a vote of no-confidence which exists in all our countries with the idea of a collegiate government like the one in Switzerland. There cannot be a vote of no-confidence at every hand's turn, only in cases of marked opposition between Parliament and Commission.

The Commission becomes the only executive body of the Union. In particular it has the power to issue implementing regulations, putting an end to its current obligation to submit virtually all its implementing regulations to parliamentary opinions and Council decisions, and to the Council's habit of withdrawing regulations from the executive through its consultative committees and commandeering them.

The Court of Justice has its powers strengthened on the basis of priority of Union law over national law.

The fields in which the Union expands its competences whether potential, concurrent or exclusive and acts through its institutions are economic policy, social policy, foreign policy and security. In addition to these areas there is the commitment, lacking in the present Communities, to respect and ensure respect by all the Member States for civil and political rights as well as social and economic rights.

The financial autonomy of the Union is guaranteed but by means of regular consultations and the drafting of multi-annual financial programmes, there is a permanent link between the European and national fiscal requirements.

These are the broad outlines of the committee's draft. It undoubtedly proposes a qualitative leap in the structure of the institutions because while it recognizes the importance of the representation of the governments of the Member States and leaves them complete independence in the field of cooperation, it removes the current monopoly of the legislative power in the field of joint actions and withdraws the vote by unanimity.

The concept of the competences in the draft also constitutes a qualitative advance by setting out broad limits since it is impossible to establish in advance and in abstract to what extent it is advisable to act but it demands strong proof of consensus both within Parliament and in the Council any time a forward leap is envisaged.

The project is realistically based on the idea that the practical construction of a European economy and a European society, of a foreign policy and a European security apparatus must necessarily be gradual. Thus it provides for phases of transition, stages and demonstrations of consensus. But at the same time it will prevent the present distortions in building political will which sacrifice the European sense of purpose to the national will. They will now at least be on an equal footing and the proof of this will be in letting one or the other come to the fore as the occasion demands rather than automatically assuming, as is now the case, that the national political will is far stronger.

The draft probably contains many flaws but it has to be admitted that the balance it strikes between boldness and caution is better than any of the previous attempts. If, as I hope, the European Parliament adopts this draft it will be satisfied with the work that has been done.

Now let us pass to the third and last question:

3. What to do about the draft treaty?

Parliament's greatest mistake would be to think that its political battle was over with the vote on the draft. The text would then be included in a resolution ending in the ritual phrase of all resolutions: 'The Parliament charges its President to transmit this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the Member States . . .

You can be quite sure that the Commission would shrug its shoulders; the Council would probably assert that the text was unacceptable



because it was not in accordance with Rule 236 and at best would assign it to one of its committees where it would meet the same fate as the draft of the *ad hoc* Assembly, the Tindemans plan, the Genscher-Colombo plan; the text would never reach the individual governments supposed to receive it according to the resolution because in a sense, it would already be considered as addressed to them from the moment it was given to the individual members of the Council, and it would go no further.

Parliament will have to realize after its final vote on the draft treaty that its battle for European Union will have not ended but is just beginning and it must form its own political strategy perhaps along the following lines.

From the point of view of substance the text that the European Parliament will have voted is a genuine constitution because it defines institutions, competences and aims of a political body as distinct from its Member States although it is linked to them in the ways indicated in the actual wording.

From the formal point of view the text is in fact a treaty because it can only enter into force and bring about the effects it envisages if it is ratified by the States destined to become members.

This dual legal nature of the Parliament's draft requires that as a constitution it should be drawn up and voted by the Assembly which legitimately represents all the citizens who are to become part of the Union. As a rule, constitutions are voted by parliamentary assemblies because it is there that the various political groupings to which the citizens belong can freely confront each other and freely establish the points of convergence around which the greatest possible consensus can be welded. There is no reason why the constitution of the European Union should not be born in the same way through a similar pattern of confrontation and search for points of convergence and consensus. Especially since the Union is the natural fulfilment and metamorphosis of the Community, in other words a political body, already separate from the Member States, which has been in existence for more than

30 years and already has a directly elected Parliament.

This unwritten although exclusive political right of the European Parliament based on a sound democratic custom must be forcefully invoked by Parliament against any attempt to transfer the drafting to wise men, diplomats, ministers or others. If the European Parliament gives way on this point, if it admits that its work has been merely preparatory and is destined to be overhauled by others, it reduces itself to little more than a planning office and spontaneously admits that it lacks the virtue to represent the citizens of the Community thereby denying the very aim for holding the elections. We can be sure that many voices will be raised in opposition to this attitude of the European Parliament but let it be aware that if we abandon this trench the entire battlefield for the Union will collapse.

As a treaty, the European Parliament's draft can only enter into force if it is ratified by the States who are to be a party to it according to the proper constitutional procedures.

None of our countries' constitutions, whether written or unwritten, lays down the procedures for drafting treaties. Thus there is no legal obstacle to the draft treaty's being drawn up, not as usually happens by an inter-governmental diplomatic conference, but by a parliamentary assembly in which the citizens of the State which will be called upon to ratify it are adequately represented.

Indeed, in one way or another, all the constitutions of our States lay down that only governments are authorized to ask the parliaments (or, in the case of France, with the option of a referendum) to approve treaties. Once it has voted on the draft treaty-constitution, the European Parliament should then send its delegations to each of the governments of the Member States of the Community and ask them to present it for ratification by their parliaments (or by a referendum).

It is unlikely that the various governments will rush to ask for ratification. Some will be more willing,



others less so, but all will hesitate since quite naturally they will want to assess the political importance of the European Parliament's request before deciding what to do about it. It is important that the final provisions of the draft include one that provides for the entry into force of the treaty-constitution and the birth of the Union once a decisive block of support has been reached — let us say, a group of States whose combined population is equal to two-thirds of the entire population of the Community. This would prevent any one government holding up the creation of the Union by its decision not to act on Parliament's request.

There will however be a period of uncertainty and indecision during which the European Parliament and its Members and political groups who have voted on the draft will have to work to overcome the hesitation, uncertainty and opposition in each individual country.

The first and major opportunity for such action will be provided by the second European elections in June next year. During a couple of months throughout all the countries of the Community simultaneously, the citizens will be urged by candidates and parties to take stock of the fundamental problems of the Community and to elect MPs who will go to Strasbourg for the fight to solve them.

Members and parliamentary groups who will have voted on the draft treaty should thus feel committed initially to convincing their parties who will conduct the electoral campaign that the issue of the reform of the Community will be the central question on which the voters will be asked to express their opinion and which will give a political significance to the Europe-wide vote. They will then have to call for the support of the popular vote so that on the one hand in the new European Parliament there is a solid majority determined to ensure that the proposal made by the previous Parliament is accepted, and on the other, that the parties represented in the European campaign and afterwards in the European Parliament — but also in the national parliaments and governments — put pressure on their

governments through parliamentary motions to present the draft treaty-constitution of the Union for ratification by the parliaments (or through referenda), which has been submitted to them by the European Parliament.

It is so important that the current European Parliament should vote the draft treaty and deliver it to the individual governments before the European elections because this is the only way to make uniformly clear to one and all within the next year, both at the European and the national level, the issue on which citizens, parties, parliaments and governments must decide in favour or otherwise.

Were the current European Parliament to conclude its mandate without having fulfilled this task, the next election campaign would be a cacophony of disjointed and feeble slogans, varying from country to country, from party to party and from candidate to candidate.

The opportunity for a major uniform mobilization of the people, with a clearly-stated purpose would be wasted.

It is more than likely that the election campaign will not be sufficient to sway the resistance and that the battle for ratification will continue after the elections. But while it is highly probable that much of the resistance will have started to waver and that the favourable mood will have increased the Parliament which will emerge from the 1984 elections will be a strong political centre which will feel committed to pursuing the task.

Today no one can know how long the battle for ratification will last or what will be the outcome.

But if the Parliament and its new pro-European members and groups are capable of acting within the time limits for the objectives I have just mentioned the battle will certainly be on, and the chances of wearing down the resistance, winning over the faint-hearted and carrying the day are considerable.

Let it not be said that not a single government would accept our draft today. My reply would be that all our governments are convinced of the need for progress on Europe but they are incapable of putting



together a few ideas as a start on real progress because they draw all their ideas from the intellectual arsenal of their diplomacies, in other words from a source that produces only futile proposals for inter-governmental action.

We must work on their deep-seated feelings of guilt at their own impotence in European affairs by demonstrating that Parliament's proposal is the response to the need for greater European unity which they too recognize.

Let it not be said that the parties are not aware of European problems and do nothing about them. Why should they when they are never confronted with them? But they will be confronted with them at the next elections and we can then seriously set about opening their eyes and ears.

And finally let it not be said that all this is too risky, that we must keep our feet on the ground and take small steps forward.

You can all see to what a disastrous state this so-called policy of feet on the ground and small steps has led us — a policy called 'pragmatism', while it really is a policy based on a lack of ideas and vision or to put it bluntly, based on intellectual subservience or worn-out and hopelessly inadequate ideas.

We must make everyone aware in the next election campaign that Europe ought to carry great weight in the world and carries no weight at all; that it should be doing much for its citizens and is capable of doing so little; and that for these reasons it is vital to establish a real European Union and to establish it soon.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have come to an end, but allow me to conclude with a brief personal reflection.

It is highly probable that my advanced age will not permit me to be part of this action for much longer. But when I reflect that today the first elected European Parliament would be very different from what it is had it not assumed the constituent role I have talked about, and when I think that all my long years as an advocate of Europe have culminated in this operation I cannot help repeating to myself with

some pride the words of St. Paul: *bonum certamen certavi, cursum consummavi* (I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course [AV!]).



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