

INTERNATIONAL COURSE ON EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Address by Prof. Dr. Walter Hallstein,  
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All European work is based on the realization that we shall not be able to reach our goal, namely to preserve the sources of strength of the European nations and to give them still greater impact, as long as we maintain the present forms of political organization. These forms of political organisation were surely justified during a certain historical period of the past, when they had their merits, and their dignity. But we cannot hold up time. If we tried we simply would get swept over. Because time involves tremendous risks: technical progress with its egalitarian elements, the development of nuclear power, automation, technology - these are all forces which afford us unprecedented freedom - but which at the same time are able to turn us into slaves. The conquest of the universe, the enormous increase of population figures, and new forces coming forth in developing countries. These are problems from which we will not be able to escape. We are living in an era of stupendous change, divined by our artists and helping science to a new outlook. Such time cannot be mastered with the political methods and instruments of the past. "Let us face time as it is looking out for us". This phrase coined by Shakespeare applies also to politics and in particular to politics in Europe.

I said: politics. There are some who will ask whether in fact, our efforts towards European unification have already reached the sphere of politics, whether we are no longer confined to the purely economical sphere? It is true, the existing European Communities are termed the "economic" communities. But the European Communities are not merely concerned with economics. It is not their mission to integrate the decisions of manufacturers, employers and workers, farmers, bankers and traders, but rather to integrate, unite and amalgamate the economic policies, and the social policies of their member countries - that is to say policies which - if the communities did not exist - would be the alone responsibility of the political bodies of each member state: customs and trade policy, transport policy, agricultural policy and business cycle policy, - to mention

just the most outstanding ones. Thus our Communities themselves are already a part of the full "political union". I said deliberately "part" and not "preparation for". These communities do not exist in dimensions completely different from what is still to develop, that is the political union. On the contrary, they are the very core and the partial accomplishment of what will eventually become the European Political Federation.

There is another aspect that needs to be considered: the communities, pillars of this development process, are a creation of the law. If I may quote the lapidary wording used by the European Court: the setting up of the communities has initiated a new legal system. It is a compact system of legal principles enabling the communities to exercise independent and final jurisdiction within their spheres of responsibility. This jurisdiction not only extends to the various authorities of the member states but as far as to the citizens of the individual member countries, creating for these citizens concrete rights and obligations.

And there is also a third aspect: European integration is a dynamic process. We maintain that the so called economic integration is the very core of the full political federation, because each community effort generates reasons and a need for further community efforts, not only within the community but also beyond it. "In for a penny, in for a pound". If we wish to pursue a common customs policy we must also be prepared to pool our economic and trade policies. But we cannot draw a line and limit the field of responsibility to our community treaties? Common foreign trade policy projects far into the realm of foreign policy. And foreign policy has always been defense policy too. This brings us now to the first chapter of what we generally mean when we call for "political union": namely that the process of political unification should go beyond the areas of economic and social policy, to other fields of politics. At the same rate as the economic and social union is growing day by day, step by step, the need for a common foreign and defense policy makes itself felt more and more intensively. Surely, this does not develop automatically. There is no such thing as automatism in history action. It has its origin in human will. And yet: the more closely the European Communities grow together in the fields of customs policy, economic and social policy, the stronger becomes the psychological pressure. And the stronger becomes also the need to include also those areas in this process of integration which are

not yet handled commonly on a European level. We are only following the laws of political logic if we develop the existing partial political union into a full political union.

Yet the call for "political union" implies also another aspect: we must create a better political balance between the bodies, the institutions of the European Communities. I am, in particular, thinking of the role and the powers of the European Parliament. We must give more weight to our Parliament. This is what we have in mind when we talk about "democratization". This does not mean that our present system is completely lacking parliamentary control. However, parliamentary control today is very ingeniously divided between the national parliaments of the member countries and the European Parliament.

On the other hand we witness that community legislation is interfering to an increasing degree with the legal systems of the member countries. And that the budgetary means and special funds allocated to the Community are augmenting year by year. After all, the Rome Treaty itself provides that the members of the European Parliament, at present delegated by the national parliaments will eventually be elected by direct vote.

It is quite understandable that the parliamentary forces, but not only they, regard the present situation as unsatisfactory. At the same rate as European integration progresses and more and greater responsibilities, formerly held by national agencies, devolve upon the Communities, the voices calling for an adaptation of the status of the European Parliament to that of national parliaments gain more and more momentum. To this effect the European Parliament has taken a host of initiatives, the most important ones aiming at the introduction of the system of direct vote. But nothing happened, they have been locked up in the Council's drawers for years on end. At all times the Commission has supported these initiatives in the most energetic manner.

So, if we look at the general situation we are facing a wealth of concrete and immediate problems waiting for solution. And it is precisely these objectives on which we have to base our call for political union.

They were specified and determined beyond doubt at the Summit Conference at The Hague, in December 1969, as well as by the decisions taken by the governments and the European authorities following this conference. This conference was an important landmark in the history of European unification.

Let us first have a look at its merits:

The Conference succeeded in ending a long and serious crisis of our European Community. A process of renationalization and "re-diplomatization" had slowed down the pace of European progress to an alarming degree. At the Congress of Members of Parliaments which took place at The Hague in November 1968, and was attended by half a thousand European members of parliament and almost all the Ministers of foreign affairs of the member countries of the European Movement, this organization had appealed very emphatically to those responsible and had urged them to convene a Summit Conference. This Summit Conference of The Hague restored as a first step the discredited binding force of the European volition, it united the responsible leaders of the member countries for the old aims and thus renewed their faith in our European mission and their confidence in each other. It was above all the great merit of the French Government to have taken a courageous step, thus deblocking the further development. A fresh wind filled our sails.

But what is more important still: the restoration in principle of the old concept resulted in concrete conclusions to be drawn in the various dimensions of European policy.

In respect of the dimensions "time" a decision was reached to conclude the transition period of the European Economic Community.

In the material dimension it was possible to set up a programme for an extension of the existing customs union to an economic and monetary union, a step which for a long time already has been considered as necessary and which represents a decisive break-through into a domain which until now was considered a national tabu. There is no doubt that this will have far-reaching consequences for the advancement of the unification of major sectors of domestic and foreign policies, as well as the budget and fiscal policies, in pursuance of the declared aim of a European currency.

Also in respect of the dimension "space" an achievement was made by bursting the ring that had formerly confined the European Community

to a number of six. On two occasions Great Britain had chosen to keep a loof when she was invited to join the European Coal and Steel Community and later to accede to the Rome Treaties, and on two further occasions the enlargement of the community was blocked by a veto from among the continental founder members. In the meantime negotiations have got underway. We are happy about this and trust that they will make easy headway and soon overcome the main problems, inspite of their great number and the existing difficulties.

Finally there is the institutional dimension. Here again, considerable progress was made. The Community has now a financial constitution. This has ended a five-year old controversy. The financial constitution enables the Community to raise, progressively, its own revenue and will, therefore, be no longer a charge on the member states. This matter is related to the budgetary control to be exercised by the European Parliament. The present system is not yet fully satisfactory but the provision of a progressive revision clause gives us every reason to hope for good progress.

On the other hand there are institutional and political issues on which no dicisive progress was made. I do not mean to diminish the achievements of the Hague Conference in saying this. But it is conspicuous that the adievements reached by the conference in matters of the political union do not keep pace with those reached in the field of economic integration.

As I said earlier on, the political union has a twofold aspect: for one thing the extension of the spheres for common policy to other sectors, in particular to foreign and defence policy and secondly, consolidation and development of the underdeveloped institutional structure of the existing community from which the political union is to develop organically. These two objectives shall enable Europe to speak with one single voice both internally and externally. The political union is the last step before the accomplishment of the Federation which itself is to develop from the amalgamation of the economic and political integration.

The Communiqué of the Hague Summit Conference subscribes in appealing formulations to the approved political objectives, in particular in those passages where it is referring to the conditions for entry by other states. Besides a number of special problems, the Conference had charged the foreign ministers of the Six to

examine, in the perspective of an enlargement of the community, the possibilities for rapid progress in the field of the political union.

What has become known as the outcome of these considerations by the foreign ministers - in the press, because the governments were not very communicative - is a great disappointment. They propose to meet once every six months for one day. It is inconceivable how people experienced in the day-to-day routine of foreign policy can come to the conclusion that this would suffice to reach common understanding on even one or two of the many complex problems waiting for solution within the framework of a European foreign policy. This semi-annual consultation is not even an obligation - it is not intended to conclude an agreement on such consultations. The relationship with the institutions of the Community is extremely loose. To all appearances, there are no plans for discussing these problems at the parliamentary level. Foreign political problems, only, shall be discussed; the inclusion of other issues is subject to unanimous decision. Any kind of institutionalization is anxiously avoided. And what is more: rumour has it that this situation is going to last for some time. New proposals shall not be discussed in all likelihood before the end of 1971.

No less disenchanting is the information that transpired in respect of the second chapter of political union; the consolidation of the existing institutions. Regarding the questing of the long overdue election by direct vote of the European Parliament no more <sup>was</sup> said than that the Council of Ministers will continue to examine the matter.

To this day, however, the treatment administered to the proposals which the European Parliament had tabled years ago consisted mainly in safekeeping. In these circumstances it is only fair that a number of member countries are now preparing national legislative initiatives.

Very little was said about the consolidation of the institutions of the Community - leaving out the budgetary powers of the European Parliament. Here the fundamental issues are that of greater legislative powers for the Parliament, greater say of the Parliament in the appointment of the members of the Commission, return to the majority principle in the Council of Ministers, as required by the Treaty, and, finally, guaranteed functions of the European Commission.

I cannot think of any excuse for the sluggishness of the governments. They expect those consultations to produce by themselves an "attitude of solidarity". But this is naïve faith in automatism, long ago refuted by experience. We have learnt from experience that only a binding agreement will enable us to get there. Such an agreement must create institutions, consolidated institutions which are similar to those of the existing community and are organically connected with them. Their mission must be to warrant a common policy in fields of responsibility other than those of the existing community, in particular in foreign and defence policy, and to advance the development towards the Federation. Those who claim that there should be first consensus and institutions after, are putting the car before the horse. When we built this strong organisation under the Rome Treaty we did not do so because we had already agreed on all matters of a European economic policy but in order to be able to agree and to safeguard this agreement.

Neither is it true that this would mean a new start.

This is not the year zero but the year 20 of European Unification policy. The political union is continuation, competition and accomplishment of the work started with the creation of the community. The community is not only an approved model but also a suitable institutional framework for all further developments. The same is true of that carefully and insistently cultivated yet unproven claim that it is more difficult to integrate foreign and defence policy than economic policy. Surely, it will be difficult to clear the hurdle which is the last one before we attain full political union. But we also know that, in practical terms, the margin of these policies is desperately narrow, not only in defence policy but also

in foreign policy. In fact, it will be difficult to find any political issue where the individual interests of a member state could not be made compatible with the general European interest.

Finally we must realize that progress in this field is a gradual process, in a number of successive steps. But let the first step not be too small. On the contrary, we must cover this first part with long and vigorous strides; after all, the terrain is by no means cleared of old mines. And that the first step will be followed by a second, and the second by a third must not only be a wish or a hope, it must be a certainty. Let me say it again: to this end we need an organisation, a very strong one even, one that will not shrink back from selfimposed obligation to marathon races.

It is certainly not correct to say that we are not pressed for time. It could turn out to be a painful mistake if we decided to leave the accomplishment of the political union to future generations; for if we fail to unite our continent now, it may well happen that the generations that come after us will have to deal with completely different problems.

The truth is that we are hard pressed. The more the economic integration progresses the more problematic will it be to limit other political sectors to the exclusive jurisdiction of the member countries - if we think for instance at the close relationship between trade policy and general foreign policy - and the more urgent becomes the institutional consolidation of the community: in for the economic and monetary union, in for the political union.

Those who are accomplices to the retardation of the political union annoy the Americans and encourage the Soviets. An exclusively "economic" union of Europe only upsets the world-economic concept of the United States and runs counter to some of her own economic interests. This is at the very bottom of the difficulties which exist between the European Economic Community and the United States within GATT. The Soviets, on the other hand, will be encouraged in their hegemonial ambitions if this political decision-making centre in Western Europe - a thorn in their sides - fails to materialize.

But also the candidates for entry into the European Community are bound to be confused, at least those harbouring hopes that they



could be spared the political union. We must, therefore, preclude any possibility for any new member to veto in good faith at any later stage the achievement of our ultimate aim.

Hence, there is no time for twiddling our thumbs.

The conditions which had prompted the first generation of creative European politicians after the last war to take the lead have changed in no respect; the world is still becoming smaller and smaller: it is still true that the traditional forms of political organization of our continent are no longer fit to meet the requirements of our times; and the European world is still threatened: by internal decay and pressure or coercion from outside.

Unchanged is also our aim: the political union of Europe. We claim it, first of all, for the sake of peace. This argument gives our efforts profound justification and sublime dignity. We claim it in the name of all the values Europe can boast and whose currency must not suffer - for the sake of Europe and for the sake of the world. In the sector of political organization and human life these values are: recognition of freedom, the inalienable dignity of the individual, personal responsibility, the right of self-determination of nations, and the ruling principles of democracy. For these values we are prepared to play an active part in world affairs.

Unchanged, too, are the resources, the ways and means by which we propose to reach our goal: trust in the European cause, in the force of common sense, in the power of law, in the pragmatic wisdom of proceeding step by step, in the dynamism of our venture.

But let there be no doubt: this dynamism is not automatic. If we are to succeed in our great task we need the skill of the governments and institutions concerned, the political passion of our parliaments, the sagacity and conciliatory matter-of-factness of our diplomats, the expert knowledge and devotion of our civil servants - also the European civil servants! - the criticisms and encouragement of the media of public opinion. But over and above all this we need as indispensable basis for all European action the approval of the European peoples. We need it for what we are doing in the future and for what we did in the past. It is the

ultimate and decisive reason for our success. In a free society this approval of the peoples - this *volonté générale* - which gives our action final legitimacy - is the approval of the citizens.

There are in Europe but few factors having such profound impact on the formation of a "*volonté générale*" as the research and teaching of our universities.

Therefore, we can congratulate ourselves on an academic initiative of the kind we are inaugurating today. The men and women who contribute to its success may rest assured of the deep appreciation of all Europeans.

At the end of my lecture, allow me please, to repeat the words that concluded my speech before the Seventh Conference of the European Council of Municipalities in Rome, in October 1964:

Nearly two thousand years ago, in a largely uniform social order extending almost over the entire territory of the then known Ancient World, which was based on domination and obedience, membership of the ruling class was expressed by the proud, self-righteous and imperious phrase: *Civis Romanus sum* - I am a Roman citizen. Let the time be not too far when, in a nobler sense, in a sense of co-responsibility for the social order, based on general approval, we Europeans say, no less proud, but conscious of our share in a great responsibility: *Civis Europaeus sum* - I am a European citizen.