

SUMMARY OF THE SPEECH MADE BY DR. S. L. MANSHOLT,
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Exactly fifteen years ago the first Hague Congress of the European Movement was held in this Ridderzaal but it is quite clear from the choice of speakers and subjects for today's European rally that we have not met for a jubilee celebration.

Nevertheless, I would like to hark back to the 1948 Congress, for it was then that ideas were formulated and demands were made which we have for the last fifteen years been trying to fulfil step by step. Only in such a context is it clear that today we are confronted with a declaration of war on those ideas and demands, with a barrier thrown across the road we have been trying to follow. It is as if the promising young tree of Europe's future integration had been threatened with the axe; threatened, I say - but I hope we can stay the hand that would wield the axe.

The company that was then gathered here shone with illustrious names: Churchill and Ramadier, Macmillan and Paul Reynaud, de Gasperi and André Philip, van Zeeland and de Madariaga, Duncan Sandys and Koos Vorrink. There was also a delegation from Germany.

When we read the report of that Congress, with its 800 participants, there are two things that strike us: firstly, photographs of the delegates show faces still haunted by the horrors of war; secondly their words bear witness to a firm resolve to strike out steadfastly for a European future, to call a halt to internecine war in Europe and to help build a peaceful and prosperous world for the future.

The means chosen to achieve these aims speak for themselves:

the Congress recognized that the nations of Europe must create an economic and political union in order to assure security and social progress; declared that the hour had come for the nations of Europe to merge certain of their sovereign rights and to exercise them jointly; and considered that such a union or federation must be open to all democratic European nations which undertake to respect fundamental human rights.

It is against the background of these principles that we must view the work done for European integration in the past fifteen years: the Council of Europe; the Coal and Steel Community; the abortive European Defence Community; the European Economic Community and Euratom.

I need not give you a historical survey. I wish to consider only two characteristic attitudes of our Governments, because these are of crucial importance to the turn of events and because they are woven like a red thread into the history of European integration. Thus we have:

- (a) The internal conflict to which the continuous clash of national and Community interests gives rise in member countries; and
- (b) The internal struggle in non-member countries between those who are willing to accept the supranational principle and those who are not.

At first glance it may look as though the difference between the two can be put much more simply, namely, that in the first group of countries the supporters of integration are in a majority while in the second group they are in the minority. I feel this is an undue simplification.

Of course there are also opponents of integration in the member countries and they are not all necessarily outsiders so far as politics are concerned. But even those - and perhaps I should say precisely those - who are really doing something to bring this integration about, constantly find themselves in a situation where, although they are in favour of integration, they have again and again to make the difficult compromise between national and Community interests. The situation I am trying to describe seems to me to be a normal and permanent state of affairs. It need by no means be a cause for concern. In such a body as the Council of Ministers it cannot be avoided - besides being a Community institution, this Council is also a conference of national ministers. So long as its members are determined to find the Community solution with due consideration for justified national interests, this is simply a problem that we must be prepared to live with. By way of illustration of this I would remind you of the marathon session of the Council of Ministers when a decision was reached on 14 January 1962 because the will to find Community solutions was there and because the extent of the difficulties depended on how far those concerned were willing to sacrifice national interests.

The countries that shrank from embarking on the experiment that began in 1950 with the ECSC are quite a different proposition. To take just the example of Great Britain, it would be only too easy to use what the British said to show how they refused to take the road to integration and did not exactly disapprove of steps that would obstruct this road for others. I need only remind you of Anthony Nutting's book "Europe will not wait" to bring back to mind the whole story of qualms suffered by the British. We cannot escape sounding a note of bitterness when we remember how we pleaded in vain for British and Scandinavian co-operation. They seemed only to want a dummy, a European façade - not European integration.

Recent years have seen a real turning of the tide. Faced with the choice of either being excluded from all chance of influencing and participating in European integration or of committing themselves to it, the British Government elected, by a political decision, to take the second alternative.

Thus European integration embarked on a new phase. The countries of the existing Communities had to show whether they could assimilate the new members, who lacked the experience of several years of hard-won co-operation, without damage to the letter and the spirit of the existing Treaties. The Europeans in the Community would also have to cope with the false friends in their own camp who were only pressing for the extension of the Community because they thought this meant the watering-down of its basic principles.

Thus it was no mean task that awaited us. Our past success suggested that we were strong enough to face up to the new demands. I know that many - and there were important figures among them - had their doubts, wavered, felt the apparent security of the exclusive club preferable to rushing ahead, to boldly tackling expansion in unswerving devotion to the principle of integration.

But then one man, speaking for one member country, in effect denounced the principle of integration. At any rate that is what the press conference of 14 January 1963 amounted to. The rupture of negotiations with England, the Franco-German Treaty - these are actions which stem logically from the declaration rejecting integration and which show that it was made in deadly earnest.

I think it necessary to make quite clear the fundamental difference between the concepts of Europe's future.

Europe has known coalitions and alliances which mostly proved of little value when put to the test. These coalitions, which came into being for reasons of power politics and were consequently never imbued with the power of an ideal but always with the ideal of power, were based on the indisputable conviction that unrestricted national sovereignty was the sole, the one and only criterion governing the co-existence of peoples and nations. The aim of European integration is to reduce unlimited national power and to subject it to a Community order. For a Dutchman it is not just a principle to be accepted because it gives a small country, which would otherwise simply be apawn in power politics, the inalienable

right to have a say in its own fate; this principle of integration is a more human, more reasonable and more just basis for the co-existence of nations. It applies to relations between States the rule of law which governs relations within a State.

Anyone who rides rough-shod over this emergent principle and bases alliances not on a legal principle but on power relationships, who for the same reasons seeks to transform an open Community into an exclusive club in which by means of a coalition he can assure his own hegemony - such a person is trying to shape the history of Europe with his eyes on the past, he is aiming at a Europe where he alone calls the tune.

I am viewing the problem of Europe's present dilemma as a matter of principle because this is the only way that I can find an answer which takes into account the different aspects of the crisis we have to resolve. I want to say at the outset that so far as I am concerned the danger I have outlined of a retreat into the nineteenth century is by no means an accomplished fact to which I must yield. It has been suggested to me at the international level that I should fall in with the new line, capitulate or else do the other thing. I shall have to disappoint anyone who secretly nurtures such a hope. So long as there is still a living democracy in this Community and democrats are not committing suicide for fear of assassination, I shall keep on fighting by their side for the spirit and the letter of Treaties which are the expression of a principle whereby citizens and nations can live together with dignity.

What then must we do? Firstly, let me say how delighted I am that the attempt to put back the clock has met with such vociferous, such unmistakable resistance. Those who thought that this process of liquidation could get by more or less unnoticed are greatly mistaken. Awareness of the opportunities offered by this new road to a European future is greater than the authoritarian grave-diggers had hoped.

The consternation and indignation aroused by the attempt to liquidate the principle of European integration will probably mean that for a time our Community will falter in its progress. Those who are not content to let themselves be dictated to will start thinking how they can fight back. Whether we like it or not, this is a natural reaction that will have to take its course. All this may, incidentally, have its good side. It can prevent plans from being hastily and feverishly thrown together which in the long run only restore the façade of Europe and thus unwittingly gloss over and camouflage the efforts to demolish the building. Mere excitement is not enough.

If it is true - and it is true - that negotiations with the United Kingdom were broken off for political reasons unconnected with the substance of what was being negotiated, there can be little hope of finding the solution in a makeshift remedy in this field. In fact great care must be taken to prevent a compromise, which is exactly what is wanted by those who wish to placate European public opinion with an "association" which blocks the way to a genuine enlargement of the Community. Such a sham solution is not only a danger to the existing Community because in the long run it still rules out integration - it is just as much a danger to Europe as a whole because it provides an opportunity for those who should become active members to settle down on the fringes of the Community.

Although it is not possible to show how every move of the Community would be affected, there is one principle which provides an indisputable guide:

No step should be taken within the Community till consideration has been given to the effect it will have on future extension. This will involve permanent consultation, either with a Community institution or with the Governments for whom the demand that the Community should be extended is not just an empty phrase.

It is only in this way that we can help to prevent potential members drifting further from us as a result of recent events. That would be as contrary to our interests as would Schadenfreude over the weakening of any of our European neighbours. Frankly, we are all in the same boat.

Although I am confining myself to this one principle for our attitude to non-members - and I repeat that it will have to be applied to every further step taken within the Community - I would still like to say something on internal developments. The Franco-German Treaty is something that I consider no less significant than the breaking off of the negotiations and no less illustrative of the switch-over from integration to old-fashioned coalitions.

It may seem superfluous for me to say how glad I am to see France and Germany bury the hatchet. After all, one of the best arguments for integration was that Germans and French together with their neighbours could meet round one table to draw a line under the past. No one can have rejoiced more than the victims of Franco-German enmity when Robert Schuman - a latter-day Briand in search of a new Stresemann - found Konrad Adenauer.

A few days ago the ECSC commemorated its foundation. Anyone reading through the speeches and letters exchanged between German and French statesmen when the ECSC was established or taking another look at the addresses delivered when the Treaties of Rome were concluded, must wonder what political significance this new coalition can have. If words have any meaning then nothing needed to be added to the existing Treaties. It should come as no surprise to our German friends that we are not satisfied with the explanation that it was necessary to repeat what had already been said so often. This being so, this Treaty can only be viewed as an instrument for the move, which was announced at the same time, to seal off the Community, and as a symptom of a Europe that thinks it can take up a position between East and West purely for reasons of power politics - and, in my opinion, hollow and unrealistic power politics at that.

Needless to say I have closely followed the statements by the German Government and the Bundestag debates on NATO and European integration. All I have been able to conclude is that a lot of breath is being expended on saying "yes" to European integration and to Atlantic partnership while at the same time this Treaty says "yes" to the coalition concept and the alliance theory of the French Head of State. I am not the only one who is wondering which of the two conflicting affirmatives must be accepted at face value. It is not we who are facing Bonn with a choice. Bonn has placed itself in this dilemma and will have to find its own way out, preferably by taking action.

This should be the kind of action that is incumbent on all of us:

to strengthen democratic principles in the Community,
to safeguard the principle of integration,
to go ahead with extension of the Community on the lines
indicated in the Treaties, and
not to dream of a Europe that can treat with Washington
or Moscow as it chooses but of a Europe that feels
and acts as part of the free world, as an equal
partner in an Atlantic partnership.