

EUROPEAN ATOMIC
ENERGY COMMUNITY

Brussels, 13 May 1960

E U R A T O M

The Commission

Official Spokesman

Summary of speech delivered by Euratom Commission President HIRSCH to the Strasbourg Parliament at 1500 hours on 16 May 1960 on the submission of the Commission's third General Report.

In an important speech made before the European Parliament, Euratom Commission President Etienne HIRSCH outlined the activities of the European Atomic Energy Community, emphasizing that: "the need, which became apparent ten years ago, to build a united Europe, is now clearer than ever."

President HIRSCH went on to say: "It is becoming increasingly obvious that, acting in isolation, our countries can never hope to play an effective part in guiding the destinies of the world in the presence of the two giant powers of East and West whose very size has given them a predominant voice in world affairs."

However, a truly united Europe, with institutions empowered to speak in the name of our six countries and their 170 million people, can speak as equal to equal with the Soviet Union, and will be able to work together constructively with the United States of America for the common good of mankind."

After referring to the spectacular scientific, technical and industrial achievements of the Soviet Union, Mr. HIRSCH continued:

"Europe cannot afford to lag behind, and the days which remain are numbered. We must lose no time, then in joining the race with all the power which we can summon."

Turning to the outlook for nuclear energy, the President stressed the need for coordinating the various types of energy available, taking a dynamic view of the problem within the general context of economic expansion.

Mr. HIRSCH then proceeded to make an assessment of primary energy requirements for the Six, saying that these needs would go up from 460 to 800 million tons of coal equivalent between 1960 and 1980. He demonstrated that neither coal nor oil would suffice to satisfy the ever-increasing demand for energy, especially in view of Europe's bounden duty to come to the assistance of the underdeveloped countries.

It was therefore imperative to harness atomic energy, and Mr. HIRSCH pointed out that: "By 1980, the Community will have to have at its disposal an installed nuclear electrical capacity of over 40,000 MW, corresponding to more than 250 units of 150 MW, or, in terms of large-scale conventional power plants, 80 Porchevilles or 50 Goldenberg Works."

This target could only be reached if constructors got down immediately to building full-scale power plants.

Touching on the long-term prospects offered by the harnessing of fusion energy, Mr. HIRSCH listed Euratom's activities in the various applications of nuclear energy (marine propulsion, the use of radioisotopes in medicine, industry and agriculture) and dwelt on the Community's work in the realm of health and safety.

President HIRSCH then proceeded to analyse the working of the European institutions. The entry into force of the Treaties, he said, was not in itself sufficient to counteract the inertia of habit and tradition. The Executives must therefore display patience and understanding.

The Treaties, he added, were our veritable constitution and respect for the Constitution was the first rule of any human society.

Mr. HIRSCH deplored the tendency shown by governments of the member states to concert their attitudes towards problems affecting the European institutions without reference to the Executives. The Executives were treated as a foreign power, when in fact they were the emanation of all the member states. He deplored the systematic search for unanimity in reaching those decisions which, under the Treaty, had to be taken by a majority vote of the Council. These difficulties would not be wholly resolved until political integration was achieved. Notwithstanding the possibilities opened to the three Executives for bringing about coordination through the Inter-Executive Committee for energy problems and by means of the various joint services, this was but one stage of the journey: "Just as there is a single Parliament and one Court of Justice for the three Communities, so also must there be brought into being, with the minimum of delay and using the means suited to the task, one single Executive", which would wield all the powers vested by the Treaties in the three existing Executives. He affirmed that, for its part, the Euratom Commission was ready to do everything in its power to remove any obstacles which might impede the creation of this single Executive. A development of this nature would be a vital contribution to the formation of the United States of Europe.