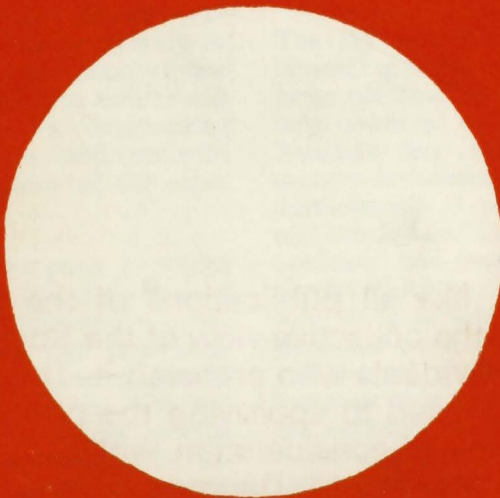
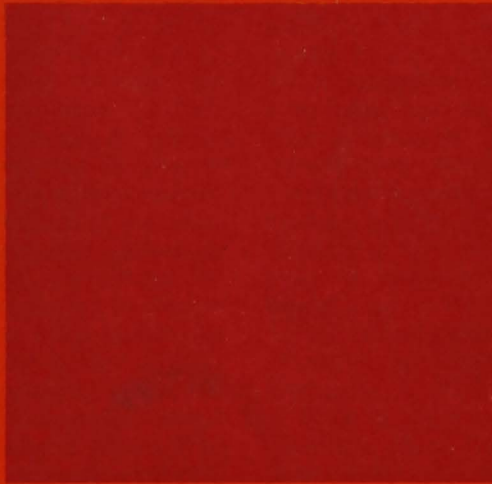


Europe: out of the impasse

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BP 161511(398)

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SBN 7163 0398 1

1. Britain's role in an impotent Europe

For the first time for centuries, Europe has ceased to be the spear-head for progress, and the continent from which innovation, culture and the benefits of civilisation have spread to the rest of the world. Since the second world war, the production of nuclear weapons and massive technological developments have enabled world leadership to pass into American and Soviet hands, whilst Europe, sapped of vitality following two imperialist conflicts, has become the periphery of the two super powers facing each other across a border crudely drawn through the middle of our continent. This rivalry and polarisation of power has tended to accentuate political and economic differences between the two blocks, and forced the majority of smaller countries to choose and align themselves with either the United States or the Soviet Union. This development has taken a particularly acute form in Europe, where deviation from allegiance is regarded as *casus belli* by the protecting power. Thus Soviet suppression of the Hungarian revolution and last year's military occupation of Czechoslovakia has been matched in form if not in content by America's military alliance with Franco in Spain and more recently by her support of the totalitarian régime in Greece. Their respective actions and policies, justified by over-riding strategic considerations have met with the passive acquiescence of the other super power.

Some individual European countries have made efforts to detach themselves from positions of subservience. For instance both France and Yugoslavia have striven in specific areas to develop independent foreign policies. The last decade has shown that neither country (even when allied to countries in the Afro-Asian group) has the power or resources to stand alone and exert any significant influence on world affairs.

Their policies on non-alignment have had little effect in separating or lessening the military confrontation of the super powers or their total domination of world events. Thus major questions of war and peace have become the exclusive concern of the two super powers, and predictably the United Nations organisation has become ineffective and impotent except when backed jointly by the Soviet Union or America. In consequence West European countries have had no influence over such critical issues as Cuba or Vietnam, nor indeed have they been able to affect substantively the whole question of nuclear rivalry and disarmament. On matters of vital European interests and concern such as the conflict in the Middle East, Soviet naval penetration in the Mediterranean, the suppression of liberty in Greece or Czechoslovakia, European countries have been forced to look on impotently, and with greater or lesser grace follow the attitudes of their protectors. At the same time the European nations are obliged to spend vast proportions of their national income on armaments to defend their respective satellite positions.

The big powers' domination extends beyond questions of foreign and defence policies. The overwhelming military power of the Americans and the Russians has been achieved by a massive investment in research and the development of advanced technology, and the fall-out from technological innovation has meant for the super powers a substantial industrial superiority in those spheres on which future economic development and prosperity will depend. Thus American industry has been able to penetrate and dominate industries of advanced technology in western Europe, whilst in eastern Europe industrial production is geared primarily to sustain the needs of the Soviet economy.

The growing technological gap between America and western Europe has not yet overtly affected living standards in our continent, and thus concern about it has failed to arouse much passion. But the increasing American control of the fastest growing advanced branches of industry, and the resulting brain-drain, not only to the USA but also to American subsidiaries in Europe, carry alarming implications for our future economic growth. When Harold Wilson said that Europe would be condemned to an industrial helotry, his language may have been colourful but in the context of the technological revolution hardly inaccurate.

European impotence is certainly no less significant within the world monetary system. Indeed international trade and development is dependent at present upon an archaic and chaotic system for the exchange of currencies which is frequently undermined by temporary fluctuations in national balances of payments, and uneasily sustained by two national reserve currencies, the dollar and sterling, which are becoming increasingly unstable. Thus in November 1968 we saw the world monetary system go to the edge of the precipice, whilst Europe, and in particular Britain, whose livelihood depends on world trade and therefore a reliable means of exchange, was incapable of any joint action to pull it back. The uneasy compromise reluctantly dictated by attitudes of national prestige and protective tendencies may yet drag us into an international economic crisis of similar proportions, though different in character, to that of the early 'thirties.

It is becoming increasingly evident that as long as Europe remains balkanised and divided with each individual country ineffectively trying to assert an illusory national sovereignty we will remain impotent, with all the important

decisions about our future economic and political development taken either in Washington or Moscow. And tomorrow a third centre may be Peking.

"Britain has lost an empire but has not yet found a role." In this perceptive phrase used in 1962 Dean Acheson summed up our own dilemma. Ever since the war crises in our balance of payments have been occurring with monotonous regularity. This chronic economic weakness has forced successive British governments to recognise that we no longer possess the means to play a world role as a first class power, and we have progressively withdrawn from wide-flung military and economic commitments in Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

The Empire imaginatively transformed by the Attlee government into a Commonwealth of independent nations has lost cohesiveness as the mother country found herself unable effectively to defend and economically to assist the emerging but severely under-developed new nations of Africa and Asia. It is in any case a reflection of insular self-deception to believe that most Commonwealth countries now look to us for leadership. Neither in political or economic terms is this true. Indeed, those in Britain who retain these attitudes are no more than latter-day imperialists. Economic self-interest has forced the new members of the Commonwealth to look increasingly elsewhere for capital needed for development, and for the diversification of their trade outside the former British Empire.

The advantages of Commonwealth preference have been steadily eroded, whilst Britain's place as a leading trading nation, largely dependent upon her imperial possessions, has been progressively overtaken by others.

2. stalemate in the common market

Similarly the commercial advantages of being a banker in charge of one of the world's two reserve currencies have been over-shadowed by the intolerable burden the international role of sterling has become for Britain's fragile economy, backed as it is by inadequate reserves. Successive British Governments have been forced to subordinate rational growth policies to the need to prop up sterling for the sake of its overseas holders. A realistic assessment of our economic weakness, of our over-extended commitments and our resulting impotence has now led the present Labour Government to shed past illusions, and for the first time since the war to tackle the fundamental problems facing a Britain which has to stand on her own feet and which cannot expect that the world continues to owe her a living.

Each successive defence review has been marked by the reduction of overseas military commitments and the cancellation of some over-sophisticated weapon which has become a luxury for a country ceasing to play an independent world military role.

The 1969 review has underlined these factors and has in addition made explicit the shift of our commitment to Europe. Efforts are being made to shed the burden of sterling's reserve role and to insulate our economy from the effects of damaging speculative runs on our currency which have so much inhibited our own economic growth. Our whole economy is being restructured, industry modernised and made more competitive, and capital investment diverted from overseas to meet our internal needs. These policies are all designed to re-establish a powerful economic base from which to recapture the lead lost in foreign markets for our trade, and regain some of our lost influence in world affairs.

At the same time, the technological revolution has brought new problems in its train. In the most important and basic areas of modern technology, be it computers, electronics, telecommunications, defence equipment, or nuclear power, research and development costs are fast reaching a level beyond the means of even a medium sized nation such as Britain, unless the home market for our products were considerably enlarged and development costs shared with others. This is equally true of many of the more traditional industries, such as aviation, automobiles and machine tools. If these industries are to survive and remain under European control, design, production and marketing techniques must be developed on a continental scale, and this requires the development of an effective political infra-structure of similar geographical dimension. The price we will pay for failure is that American industrial giants will increasingly control or displace our own industries and this could lead to major decisions about our economic development being taken in board-rooms across the Atlantic.

The alternatives facing Britain are thus very clear. We can divest ourselves of our remaining overseas commitments, and concentrate upon economic activities within our own means to ensure our domestic prosperity without excessive dependence upon others. The logic of this policy would be to cut our military potential to a level sufficient to defend our shores from conventional threats and to pursue in foreign relations a policy of neutrality and non-alignment. This would not necessarily lead to a reduction in our defence budget as comparisons with that of neutral Sweden would clearly show, while compared with the two super powers and the emerging European community we would have little political or economic influence.

A careful assessment of the proposals for a North Atlantic Free Trade Area, which apart from the liberalisation of trade and removal of tariff barriers would still be based on the maintenance of national economic independence, is unlikely to reverse our declining influence on world affairs. Indeed, it would hasten American domination of our economy and accentuate our satellite status in political affairs. With marginal differences, largely based upon the myth of our so-called special relationship with the United States, Britain shares her economic and political impotence with her neighbours on the European continent. To a greater or lesser degree their security and economic development are subject to the same weaknesses. As separate nation states we all share the status of American satellites and are increasingly becoming subject to their expansion-hungry technologically based industries.

For the nations of western Europe, there is, however, another choice, that is to work for European integration, based upon common policies for foreign affairs, defence, science and technology, and all those aspects of economic and social affairs which would lead ultimately to an economic and political union of our continent. The ultimate objective would be to create a Europe responsible for its own security with a faster growing economic strength and prosperity. This would enable us to share, on a more equal basis with the other great powers, decisions upon matters of world peace and the progress of our civilisation.

It is this vision that clearly motivated the Labour Government to submit the second application to join the Common Market in 1967. We were no longer motivated solely by the desire to overcome the growing tariff barriers of the Economic Community or to enlarge

our home market to assist the growth of our industries. Indeed the best economic estimates seemed to show that as against the high cost of operating the common agricultural policy, short term advantages for industry and a more rapid rate of growth would show only a fine balance of economic advantage for Britain in favour of membership. Clearly, however, a great deal will depend upon the actual terms of the final negotiations—notably in relation to agriculture and the period of transition. In the longer term, however, unified technology would clearly result in substantial benefits because of the advanced position which Britain already holds in this field. The real motive behind this application was political, in contrast to Macmillan's in 1961.

The Government had become converted to the idea that Britain should play a leading part in building a Europe that would have power to act and to look after the interests of its citizens more effectively than individual nation states are now able to do. Harold Wilson expressed this thinking when announcing the decision to apply for membership in the House of Commons on 2 May 1967, in the following way: "Whatever the economic arguments, the House will realise that, as I have repeatedly made clear, the Government's purpose derives above all, from our recognition that Europe is now faced with the opportunity of a great move forward in political unity and that we can—and indeed must—play our full part in it."

By this decision, the Government, with massive support from all political parties and a clear majority of public opinion, has committed Britain unequivocally to the task of helping to construct a Europe united both economically and politically.

2. stalemate in the common market

The authors of the Treaty of Rome believed that the establishment of a customs union would provide the basis for measures which would bring about full economic and ultimately political union. Whilst the treaty laid down a clear timetable for its first objective, the adoption of further common policies and the progressive transfer of authority from national governments to the European institutions was only vaguely sketched out. As a result the EEC, having achieved a customs union, has only an expensive common agricultural policy to its credit. National economic policies still dominate the scene. Further progress towards a full economic union or even the limited programme to modernise European agriculture have up to now proved unobtainable.

When on 19 January 1963, General de Gaulle declared that Britain was not yet ready for membership of the EEC he was not only closing the door to Britain, he was also making it clear to his continental partners that if the community was to develop it would be on his terms and under French hegemony. When eight days later he signed the Franco-German Treaty of Co-operation he gave notice to his community partners that he intended to fulfil this promise. The history of the six years up to de Gaulle's resignation which included a rejection of the second British application, had shown that despite vigorous protests by her partners, France continued to divert the community from the essential course which it set itself when establishing the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951.

Undoubtedly, the six community countries are much more closely integrated than ten years ago, and certainly in a manner inconceivable 20 years ago. There are close and continuing links

between governments, politicians and civil servants. Parliamentarians from different member countries have acquired the habit of working together frequently on a cross-national party basis and industrialists and trade unions are increasingly thinking and acting within a wider European framework. Above all the age-old suspicions between the peoples themselves are being gradually replaced, especially among the younger generations, by a new sense of European identity.

There is, however, a grave danger implicit in the present stalemate. As further progress towards economic union and the enlargement of the community was blocked, the spirit of common purpose which characterised the earlier years of European construction was giving way to increasing divergence and national rivalries between the partners. Nationalist sentiment is once again on the increase and there is grave danger that unless progress in a supra-national direction can be achieved the community will become, despite the Rome Treaty, a bureaucratic structure with all the characteristics of a traditional inter-governmental organisation, whose function will remain confined to sustaining a tariff-free customs union, so ably exploited by American industry in Europe.

the French and German positions

Whilst it is fashionable to lay the whole blame for the lengthy *impasse* upon the French government, its intransigence in certain fields has frequently been matched by corresponding refusals by the other partners to co-operate in areas in which France would like to see progress. Thus an impression has been built up that divergent national interests will prevent the community from progressing beyond a tariff free com-

mon market leaving individual nations free to pursue their own national policies in areas outside the existing framework of the treaty, and that France is not alone in supporting this as the final objective in Europe. Indeed it is sometimes said that the other countries apart from France are glad that the trend towards supra-nationality has been arrested and welcome the French for doing their dirty work for them. Unfortunately, Harold Wilson and to a lesser extent Edward Heath in their speeches at the Guildhall in July 1969 lent credence to the view that Britain might also adopt a similar position.

A closer analysis of the motives and interests of the six partners does not, however, bear out this view. General de Gaulle's basic philosophy depended upon seeing national sovereignty as the ultimate source of power and influence. His attitude was to accept the community for the benefits which it could bring France, although *l'affaire Soames* would seem to indicate that he believed that EEC has now fulfilled, for French purposes, its primary function. His underlying objective, his ultimate and consistent aim, was, however, the re-establishment of France as a world power, and he viewed any diminution of French sovereignty as a retrograde step in reaching this objective. It was for these reasons that he categorically rejected any proposals for strengthening the powers of the commission or the European parliament, and in the development of common policies within the community he almost invariably subordinated European interests to those of purely national advantage. For him the European community was a useful power base as long as France could dominate its policies, but whenever French hegemony had been threatened he did not flinch from breaking both the spirit and the letter of the Rome Treaty.

The fear that de Gaulle might have withdrawn completely from the Common Market inhibited his partners from standing up to him in a solid front. This fear as past events indicated was not without foundation, particularly as the French president pursued his aims with a devastating logic which would not be expected from a regime operating under the pressures and normal checks and balances of a democratic state.

Nevertheless France cannot ignore the immense gains which she has obtained from the operation of the Common Market. The powerful French farming lobby would not let any French government deny them the benefits of the common agricultural policy and the vast sums accruing to them from the common fund. French industry, although initially fearful of the effects of competition unprotected by tariff walls, has made remarkable strides, and would suffer grievous losses if excluded from the benefits of the enlarged home market. Indeed, as the question of the re-financing of the community comes up for decision this year the risks for the French economy, already weakened by the May crisis of 1968, of being deprived of the benefits bestowed by the community will prevent the present French government from following in the general's footsteps.

Both the composition of the new government and its first public declarations indicate that France is now ready to break with the past and, as explicitly stated by President Pompidou, continue with European construction in harmony with and at the same pace as her partners. As regards British membership, the president is also on record as declaring that France has no objections "in principle" which, whilst being a cartesian declaration, would seem to indicate a major modification to the stand of his predecessor.

The German dilemma is of a different dimension. Since the war, the foreign policy of the German Federal Republic has been dictated by three main objectives. Firstly, the rehabilitation of the defeated, truncated and occupied state, and its acceptance by its neighbours as an equal, self-reliant and responsible member of the family of nations. Secondly, to secure the defence of its territory and integrity, not on the basis of an independent military capability, but as a partner in a defensive alliance. Thirdly, to achieve reunification with its Soviet occupied eastern lands.

The re-building of the devastated Germany and its emergence economically as Europe's most prosperous and most powerful state has all along carried with it the dangers of jealousy and fear on the part of her neighbours. If this had been coupled with an independent military capability Germany might well have faced hostile steps by her former enemies to redress the balance of power in Europe. Reunification of the two Germanies into one independent state is even more unthinkable as fears of German hegemony in Europe would almost certainly result in common action by her eastern and western neighbours to prevent this happening, if necessary by force.

That is why German statesmen recognised at an early date that the achievement of all three elements of this policy would be possible only in the context of a fusion of the independent nation states of Europe into a federation, firstly of western Europe alone, but ultimately with at least a part of eastern Europe including the German Democratic Republic. Thus while Germany remains the strongest protagonist of European unity her insecure position has meant that her contribution towards the building of Europe has been played in muted tones.

The German economic miracle has been achieved without arousing the hostility of her neighbours largely because of the major financial price she has paid towards the construction of the European Economic Community. Her economic contribution has been the main factor in the Common Market's success, and her industrial potential is seen not as a possible instrument of German domination of the community, but as an integral part of a total development benefiting all its members. German security remains entirely dependent on the NATO alliance. In the face of continuing Soviet hostility, the protection of America's nuclear strategic umbrella, reinforced by the physical presence of her allies' troops on German soil is the *sine qua non* of German defence policy. Thus, however desirable in German eyes may be further progress towards a European federation and ultimate reunification with eastern Germany, these objectives will only be pursued as long as existing gains are not placed in jeopardy.

For Italy and the three Benelux countries the achievement of a European federation, organised on a democratic basis, offers the only way to avoid dependence on one or other of the continent's larger powers: France today, almost certainly Germany tomorrow. Their desire for the enlargement of the community and particularly British accession is due to their resentment against the present domination of the community by France with German acquiescence. The present composition of the EEC is unstable because each smaller country is faced with a choice of supporting one or other of the "big two." Britain's presence inside the Community would put an end to the possibility of its domination by any single country, and it would assist the evolution of a more democratic base for decision-making.

3. way out of the impasse

The future development of the present EEC into an effective European union with supra-national institutions subject to genuine democratic control is a firm objective for at least five members of the Common Market, and quite clearly in line with their national self-interest. The past frustration of their aims within the framework of the Rome Treaty has made them impatient for a way out of the *impasse*, if necessary by a new initiative which would not be subject to the veto by any one member.

After the second French veto in December 1967 little time was lost by France's partners to try to break the stalemate. The British intention to keep her application on the table was strongly supported and it became the first item on the agenda for discussion at each meeting of the Council of Ministers. In January 1968 the smaller members of the community launched the Benelux Plan, the object of which was to maintain formal contacts between the community members and candidate countries, and to develop co-operation with them in fields not covered by the Treaty of Rome, to set up consultative machinery to reduce divergencies between differing economic systems, and to work towards common policies in foreign affairs and defence. This was followed by a joint declaration issued in Paris by the French and German governments to which the two governments gave varying interpretations, envisaging commercial arrangements between the six and the candidate countries, and by an Italian compromise proposal embodied in the Fanfani memorandum.

In the end none of these modest proposals was supported by France who refused to invest them with the substantive means which would permit them to be used as steps to ultimate membership of the community. Finally, the

German government proposed a progressive reduction of tariffs between the community and the candidates as a first step towards the enlargement of the EEC. France expressed a willingness to consider these tariff reductions but refused categorically to link them to ultimate membership. The proposal was in clear contravention of GATT rules, and in February 1969 the commission ruled against it on these grounds.

Parallel with these efforts, Britain sought through the Western European Union, of which she and the six are members, to obtain co-operation in areas outside the competence of the EEC. Proposals for co-operation in foreign policy, defence, technology and monetary matters tabled by M. Harmel, the Belgian Foreign Minister, in Rome in November 1968 were promptly vetoed by the French representative. The Italian proposal for compulsory consultations on issues of foreign policy submitted in Luxembourg in February 1969 suffered a similar fate. Nevertheless in the spirit of the proposal Michael Stewart promptly convened a meeting within the framework of the WEU for consultations on the question of the Middle East. The French boycott of this and subsequent meetings underlined the General's determination to frustrate all effective measures for consultations inside the Western European Union.

What has become increasingly evident is that effective progress is unlikely to be made as long as the right of national veto is retained within the existing institutions of the European community.

The international crisis of 1968, particularly the occupation of Czechoslovakia and the chaos in the world monetary system, has underlined the need for urgent action for European unity in the fields of foreign affairs,

defence and monetary matters. The slow advance by essentially functional means towards an enlarged customs union and common market as envisaged by Jean Monnet and his friends two decades ago no longer meets the requirements of this more highly volatile age. Of course a political union is unthinkable without an economic union. But it may well be that the path towards full union through economic integration chosen by the architects of the Rome Treaty is no longer the most practicable route. It is for this reason that unofficial consultations have been undertaken at government levels about a more effective way out of the present *impasse*; proposals which parallel those for co-operation launched within the forums of the EEC and WEU.

The proposals for what are loosely described as "the fourth community approach" gradually emerged as a result of non-governmental discussions in 1968. They had their first public unveiling at the Hague Congress in November of that year, and were explicitly spelt out in March 1969 when George Brown called for a second Messina conference in order to start negotiations to establish a European political community. The essence of the proposal is to establish alongside the existing economic community a political community of which Britain and other EEC applicants would be full members. The new community would not compete with or replace the EEC, nor indeed would it exclude any of its members. Membership would be open to all democratic European countries prepared to accept its rules and obligations, but unlike the EEC and WEU no individual member state would have the right of veto. The proposals were welcomed privately by the Italian and Benelux Governments and the British Government has done nothing to discourage these essentially private efforts.

It is too early to judge whether the new French government is yet ready to make such a fundamental break with the past as to join a new community in which the power of veto has no place.

It is difficult to know how the countries of the six and the other applicant states are now likely to respond to this proposed initiative. Clearly the French situation will modify the timing if not the substance of these proposals. As long as there was a total block to the geographical expansion of the community there was at least a possibility that the five with Britain might have tried to break the deadlock by using either WEU or a new Messina conference as the means for a new political initiative. It now seems more likely that for the moment the main effort will be directed towards activating the British application and that discussions about the wider political and defence considerations will only arise if these negotiations reach deadlock.

There are of course friends within the EEC countries who believe that our application on the present basis is doomed to failure. Dr. Luns, the Netherlands Foreign Minister, said virtually as much when he was recently in London. There are many in this country who see this point even if they do not accept it. Certainly there will be wide agreement with Sir Geoffrey de Freitas who stated recently "we spend too much time thinking how we are going to get into Europe, and too little time about the kind of Europe we intend to build." The best avenue of approach would seem to be through the development of the existing institutional framework. No nation, including France, would be able to exclude herself from such a development. No nation, including Britain, could now conceive of even a transient European institution without France.

4. the political community

The most desirable solution to the present dilemma would lie in building the new political community on the basis and as an extension of the existing economic community. For this reason the new body should be patterned on the well-tried methods of the EEC, although by learning from past mistakes and the weaknesses of the EEC some of its pitfalls could be avoided. It would have a commission and council of ministers as well as a parliament and a court of justice. These last two bodies could be an extension of those presently a part of the EEC.

The new community would be provided with a commission or executive secretariat having the right of initiative and whose job would be to identify the common interests of all its members. Within the EEC this has been the function of the commission which for all its weaknesses has performed the task remarkably well. It has been the main source from which proposals for the implementation of the treaty have originated, and by representing the all-European view, the commission has acted as a spur on national governments to agree on common policies. It is thus the catalyst for forging a consensus between member states. It has ensured a progressive transfer of authority from national governments to institutions working on behalf of the community as a whole. Its weakness stems from its excessive dependence upon national governments, in particular the pressures imposed by its more powerful states. This has led to a whole series of decisions being based upon the lowest common denominator and placed in jeopardy many of its earlier and progressive stages of development. Its authority rests almost entirely upon powers written into the treaty, and has little else to sustain it. The commission has no instrument to reinforce its position in the face of

member governments which fail to abide by the rules, nor does it have any effective ability to enforce sanctions against non-complying member states. Furthermore, lack of guaranteed sources of income, and dependence upon annual budgets being approved by national governments, inhibits its freedom of action, and makes long-term planning much more difficult.

The defects which arise from the existing narrow base of the community derive primarily, not from deficiencies within the community itself, but from within the political systems of the nation states. The institutions have often been criticised for lacking an adequate democratic base and therefore of being too remote from the public. Certainly a part of the fault lies in the present weakness of the European parliament whose powers exclude legislative functions and are merely that of a consultative body whose only sanction against the commission lies in the highly improbable right of being able to dismiss the whole body. The parliament has therefore little prestige and influence and by consisting exclusively of nominees of national parliaments lacks any direct links with the electorate.

More fundamental, however, is the fact that despite two decades of propaganda and education, there is still only a limited understanding of the European idea by the peoples of the six. Many, particularly of the younger generation, feel themselves to be Europeans in a general sense, and at a certain level there is articulate support for the proposition of a supra-national Europe. In general, however, the mass organisations including the political parties have failed to generate a popular understanding of the European issues. One reason for this is that members of the European parliament are only part-time Europeans, engrossed for most of

each year in questions of national legislation. But a stronger factor is that save in the very successful programme of social re-adaptation carried out by the European Coal and Steel Community during its earlier years, few of the community's activities have reached down to the grass-roots level and when they have it has usually reached the people via national legislation or regulations.

The Common Market has not been a significant issue in the domestic politics of the six save during the 1965 French presidential elections when Lecanuet, the Catholic centrist candidate and to a lesser extent Mitterand, raised the supra-nationalist issue, and again in 1969 when both Pompidou and Poher found it a positive political advantage to take up the European issue. Undoubtedly, one reason for this was that until 1958 there was a consensus view between all parties, save the Communists, about the overall objectives. Even after 1958 there were many on the political right in France who believed that de Gaulle and his followers would ultimately become convinced Europeans.

It is certainly due to this wide consensus that national political parties and their parliamentarians failed to stimulate at a national level any vigorous debate about community policies except perhaps over the questions of agriculture and British entry. They have certainly been unable to create an appreciation of the need for integrated European attitudes except through the many types of pressure groups with European centres in Brussels. In fact, the weakness of the European parliament has given these pressure groups an enhanced standing and importance since they represent the one direct channel of communication between the people and the community. Indeed, the influence of certain of these groups has been more

significant than that of the European parliament itself. For whilst the members of the European parliament sit as party rather than national groups and establish common viewpoints on many questions—and in this the socialists have been rather more successful than the other groups—the fact that the parliament possesses no decision making powers which can be followed through at either a community or national level means that individual parliamentarians and the party groups have little effective authority. Consequently, the voice of the community has remained at a functional bureaucratic level with the commission, and at the political level with the council of ministers.

If, therefore, the proposed political community is to develop an effective political voice and to establish a line of communication with the European peoples, the national political parties will have to adopt a more positive attitude towards the techniques of supra-nationalism. Indeed, unless these steps are taken Gaullism or another form of European nationalism could well emerge as the dominant political force. What is urgently required is a political structure which will synthesise within a series of checks and balances both national and community interests. Difficult as this may be to achieve this is certainly an objective which should commend itself to British socialists concerned with building an effective economic and political Europe on a supra-national basis.

Within this context the key to development lies undoubtedly with the European parliament, which if it forms part of a political community will become still more of a talking shop unless given both new powers and democratic accountability through

direct elections. Within the framework of such a community the role of the parliament should be conceived as that of an ally of the executive secretariat or commission in the overall community interest when counterposed against the narrower attitudes of the national governments. It will act at the same time as a democratic check on the bureaucratic characteristics of the commission.

Finally, the important lesson to be learnt from the evolution of the EEC is the need to lay down a precise timetable for the achievement of the objectives agreed in principle by the member states. In the EEC this was provided for in the achievement of the full customs union, and the strict timetable enabled pressure to be maintained on governments to reach agreement at the different stages of progress. No time limit was, however, laid down within the treaty for the introduction of direct elections to the European parliament or the substitution of direct financial resources in place of the annual grants provided from national treasuries.

A political community has as its objective a united Europe which will speak with a single voice for its members in those fields of foreign affairs, defence and other matters specifically delegated to the community. At present the nation state is still the main source of political power and authority. The aim must therefore be to devise institutions enabling this power and authority to be exercised in common on behalf of a united Europe as a whole. Whilst this cannot be achieved in one swift step and the progressive transfer of power will have to be laid down in stages, a clear timetable should be written into the new treaty. At the same time the institutions which will take over these powers must be set up at the outset, and at an early stage they need

to be endowed with sufficient authority to deal with member governments on a basis of equality. The timetable should also specify the stages at which the European parliament would become directly elected and responsible for fiscal and budgetary control over the new community.

Clearly, the efficacy of the link between national parliaments and the European parliament depends in part on the vitality and multi-national party groups in each country. Already the pressures on individual MPs of dual membership of both national parliaments and the European parliament are too great and the tendency is to select the less effective members to attend the European parliament.

It could well be, therefore, on purely practical grounds, that a partial breakthrough could be made in the field of direct elections by allowing for two types of membership in the European parliament, half nominated by national parliaments, half elected by popular vote. Certainly such a transitional stage towards a directly elected parliament would create a new psychological climate for the European idea. It would stimulate multi-national participation, activate the politically conscious section of each nation in a European direction, and provide an effective balance between established national traditions and the longer-term institutional changes which are necessary if a political community is to develop.

Of course to balance these positive European orientated features, such an approach should not undermine the standing of national parliaments or governments, instead it should constitute a form enabling a gradual acceptance of the concept of a democratic political union. Whilst within this framework the first members of

the commission would be nominated by national governments, their confirmation in office and the subsequent renewal of their mandate or the replacement of individual commissioners should become the responsibility of the parliamentary assembly.

The community should also be given certain powers of taxation which in due course could totally replace grants from member governments. These might take the form of an agreed percentage of internal fiscal revenues of member states.

Throughout the transitional period the council of ministers representing member governments will continue to play a major role. Their function is to decide the general lines of common policies on the basis of recommendations submitted by the commission. Once decisions have been taken the detailed work of implementing them would devolve upon the commission. In general, regulations made by the commission within the broad framework of agreed policies should be subject to parliamentary ratification, following debate and any amendment by the European parliament. The crucial problem is, however, the way in which common decisions are arrived at within the council of ministers. As long as these are subject to the rule of unanimity, the real power will remain in the hands of national governments.

Thus progress towards a system of qualified majority voting must be written into the treaty, and a clear timetable laid down for this change to take effect. The political community will fail in achieving its final objectives, as the EEC appears to be failing, unless the right of veto by any single member is removed without qualification, and this at an early stage in the evolution of the community.

Considerable thought will have to be given to the actual areas of competence for the new community. Clearly its main aim is to evolve a common foreign policy for Europe in its relations with the United States, the Soviet block, and the developing countries of Asia, Africa and South America.

It should try to establish a common defence capability as the instrument for this foreign policy within the Atlantic alliance and a more credible organisation of its conventional forces to meet any conventional threats from the East. It could also deal with subjects not altogether excluded from the scope of the Treaty of Rome, but for which the EEC has not accepted responsibility. Indeed it is difficult to conceive a political community which would not be concerned with defence policy, arms production, and its concomitant advanced technology.

A European arms procurement board could assist with investment into research and development, and also perform the functions of a European industrial re-organisation corporation to promote cross-frontier mergers and the formation of industrial consortia. The economies of scale thus achieved would reduce Europe's undue dependence on American industry. The board could exercise a particularly strong influence on aircraft, electronics, and other advanced technology industries and thus make a real contribution in meeting the "American challenge" in these fields.

Another field of competence is in international monetary policy. We need a common European policy leading possibly to the establishment of a European reserve unit to take over sterling's reserve role, and bring some additional liquidity and stability into the world monetary system.

5. the role for Europe

A European political community representing the collective strength of its members and having a personality and a competence of its own, would influence developments not only inside Europe but also within other continents, to an extent that no single nation, be it Britain, France, or Germany operating individually or jointly in the framework of traditional and necessarily temporary alliances, is capable of doing. It is therefore important to define the type of role and areas of engagement in which a Europe, united for the purposes of a common foreign policy, would conduct its relations with the rest of the world.

relations with the USA

The central element in any European foreign policy must be concerned with relations with the United States. Europe's involvement with the United States even at the blackest period of the cold war has never been solely a matter of crude mutual dependence in the name of anti-communism, nor conversely has Europeanism any connection with a similarly crude anti-Americanism as frequently expressed in Gaullist circles. Indeed, there has been a constant paradox in post-war American policy in that successive administrations have supported the development of a united Europe, even though the result might be to provide the United States with a potential economic or even political rival. Two factors have motivated this attitude; a recognition that an unequal balance of power within an Atlantic alliance between one super power and a dozen or more smaller and weaker partners inevitably leads to envy, resentment and fear of domination by the most powerful ally. The United States has been prepared to take risks in order to strengthen western democracy and

simultaneously to provide herself with a reliable partner and ally capable and willing to share her burdens and play a more influential role in both defence and development problems. Whilst clearly self-interest has dictated these over-riding attitudes there have been many occasions when the United States has been prepared to bend her policies to meet European viewpoints even when the European nations have been in weak economic or political negotiating positions.

For this reason Europeans should be even more aware of the advantages of a united Europe speaking with the Americans on a greater basis of parity. The successful conclusion of the Kennedy round is a sensible object lesson. Both sides gained from the existence of a single negotiator speaking for the EEC in trade matters.

If the common market had not existed it is doubtful if such an ambitious negotiation would have been authorised by the United States Congress in the first place, and if both sides had not been able to negotiate from strength the exercise might have failed totally or resulted in more limited tariff cuts.

In defence policy western Europe will of course remain dependent upon the USA as long as a nuclear guarantee is required. In conventional terms Europe should become more self-reliant, particularly as pressures within the United States are likely to grow under the Nixon administration for Europe to shoulder more of its defence burden and permit further withdrawals of American troops from our continent. In such an event Europe would at present be left extremely exposed, and only an integrated European defence capability is likely to be able to remedy such a situation.

In the long term a phased withdrawal of US forces in circumstances in which Europe was equipped to man its own conventional defences could be a positive factor in developing policies of détente. It could assist in achieving an area of conventional disengagement between the super powers in Europe and thus contribute to improved relations between the eastern and western parts of our continent. It would furthermore simplify the problems of developing joint arms procurement by releasing Germany from the obligation to buy massive quantities of American military equipment to meet offset costs, and thus stimulate the development of a European advanced technology.

In the nuclear field Europe will be unable to free itself of dependence on the American deterrent until general nuclear disarmament under effective international control takes place. It is sometimes argued that in the absence of such disarmament Europe should seek to develop its own strategic nuclear potential to achieve full independence from American tutelage. Indeed this is a line of argument attractive to the Gaullists and many British Conservatives. It is a line which with equal force must be rejected by the left. Quite apart from the astronomic and wasteful cost of developing a credible means of delivery, a closer examination of the likely development of Atlantic relations shows such a course to be totally unnecessary.

In an increasingly inter-dependent world a united Europe and the United States are likely to become more inter-linked. Whilst there are bound to be divergencies of views, a Europe capable of standing on its own feet in terms of conventional defence is likely to have greater influence on the total pattern of American defence policy and its overall strategies. The existence

of a united Europe would act as an incentive for the United States to maintain its nuclear guarantee because it would be providing cover to a prosperous and powerful region whose support could be quite crucial in the world balance of power. The United States would certainly be less likely to use the threat of the withdrawal of nuclear cover as an ultimate diplomatic step against a strong and united Europe, than to use it to exploit the inevitable rivalries implicit in the loose association of independent states which co-exist in western Europe today. Whilst a united Europe with an integrated advanced technology industry will possess the potential to develop a nuclear defence capability, it is conceivable that the possible threat to do so might well persuade both the Soviet Union and the United States to concede some measure of nuclear arms control and disarmament.

relations with the East

The dominant issue in relations between western and eastern Europe lies in the division of Germany, which is unlikely to be ended without an entirely new approach. Successive independent initiatives to grapple with this issue from the Eden plan to the recent policies of the French President in eastern Europe have failed to lessen tension between the contending parties. The Federal Republic is now having to pay the price of these Gaullist illusions.

The prospect has always had to be faced that effective western European integration is liable to incite the Soviet Union to tighten its grip on her satellites. On the other hand, a policy of détente pursued from a position of weakness, made no impact on Soviet attitudes as illustrated by the occupation of Czechoslovakia, and conse-

quently encouraged the Russians to increase their threats against West Germany. Given these circumstances a strong united Europe pursuing an active policy would be more likely to contain Soviet aggression and exploit the internal differences within the Soviet power structure, while at the present moment it is the Soviet Union that is in a stronger position to exploit European divergencies, as shown by the tactical "sympathy" expressed in the past for aspects of Gaullist foreign policy. Taking the longer view the increasing complexity and wealth of Soviet industrial society will force continuing decentralisation and stimulate the inevitable process of liberalisation, for the monolithic concepts of Soviet society are in a state of crisis. The position could arise where Russia might welcome a non-nuclear united western Europe, with greater independence from the United States, as a safer guarantee of order and stability on her borders, than the present fragile equilibrium, precariously held by a number of independent nation states grouped together in a NATO dominated by the US. A Federal Republic whose sovereignty was subsumed within an effective European political community, which controlled the integrated defence forces of its member states, might remove Soviet fears of German revanchism.

In pursuit of a policy of détente a united Europe would be able to offer a concerted policy towards the East for trade, credit and technological co-operation in place of the competing efforts of individual countries. Growing economic links in the development of joint technological projects would be the most effective way of forging closer relations and improving the political climate. For in the long run the aim must be to make both halves of Europe increasingly inter-dependent leading

ultimately to the unification of the whole of our continent.

The significant fact about the capitalist and communist systems is that their respective economic organisations are undergoing changes which are bringing them closer together. The rigid central planning of economic activities in communist countries is giving way to greater freedom of individual enterprises to compete with each other, and their achievements are increasingly measured by profitability based on the criteria of a market economy. In the West economic planning has not only come to stay, but its sophisticated developments are rapidly encroaching upon the free play of market forces. Given a measure of political liberalisation in the East and the increasing similarity between the respective economic systems the divisions are bound to lessen and bring the possibility of some kind of union of both halves of Europe within at least the bounds of theoretical possibility.

the developing world

Europe's greatest contribution is likely, however, to be made in its relations with the developing world. With the widening prosperity gap and the desperate need for really massive capital investment, the developing nations have been very much a prey to competition between the two super powers, which through development aid and the supply of arms are extending their influence and domination over increasing areas of the world. Despite the hostility of the recipient nations, US domination of South America remains unchallenged, while Soviet penetration in the Middle East is growing year by year. American aid sustains many reactionary regimes in South East Asia, whilst large parts of

Africa are once again the stamping ground for a new style of economic colonisation. That is why the developing world has come to share the American view that Europe is only effective and of interest if united. Indeed, it is for this reason that Nigeria and the states of East Africa have sought association with EEC. To the countries of Asia, Africa and South America, Europe means the common market which is the world's largest trading unit with higher imports than the USA and far more dependent on international trade for its living.

For Europe rising living standards in developing regions mean larger markets and openings for their industries. For the developing countries a united and prosperous Europe raises the prospects of increased aid and investment, and above all the reduction of their dependence upon one or the other super power. By developing a political system which is neither wholly capitalist, nor wholly communist, Europe would not impel the polarisation of allegiance amongst the recipient countries, which have tried unsuccessfully to remain uncommitted to either super power by seeking aid from both. The entry of Europe as a third massive source of development aid would ensure greater independence and stability in the developing world.

The example of Europe uniting economically by choice already provides a pattern for others to follow. Common markets in the Carribean and Africa are already drawing on European experience. Political integration by agreement in Europe would have a profound impact elsewhere, for it is not only in Europe that the problems of balkanisation and nationalism depress living standards, impede social and cultural development, and threaten the security of individual states. The

lessons learnt in the long process of European integration and proof that it can succeed, would encourage parallel developments elsewhere and in the long run provide a blueprint for the establishment of an effective world authority.

Our vision of a united Europe, and of the contribution which Britain can make to it, can not be restricted to its present institutional structure. Britain, in taking the European option has accepted institutional commitments which will ultimately embrace the spheres of politics, economics, defence as well as social action. The Rome Treaty and the present form of the community can only be regarded as a base point for what will evolve into an effective government of Europe. For socialists the process of community integration should be viewed at one level as the first stage in the process of a fully unified geographical Europe, at another level the community technique of integration should be conceived as a pilot project for the type of continental evolution which may ultimately create a universal pattern for the establishment of world government.

6. the socialist contribution

It is sometimes forgotten that the concept of a United States of Europe, built upon a socialist basis, has deep historic roots in the international labour movement. Trotsky and Rosa Luxemburg in their period argued for it, and these concepts were advocated by many socialist idealists in the 'thirties and 'forties and through the chain of events which ultimately led to the European Coal and Steel Community and later the European Economic Community. To them the European idea expressed in contemporary terms the values and historic ideas of socialist internationalism. That this view was more articulate in continental countries than in Britain was understandable. By 1945 none of the continental countries had the economic means, even where the political will existed, to play an effective world role. The problems of national and European reconstruction, and the need to find a permanent form of reconciliation between France and Germany and to institutionalise this relationship, was given precedence over all other external questions. Indeed, the psychology of defeat or of moral exhaustion hung heavily over each continental nation both allied and axis.

In the immediate aftermath of the war the lines of political division between the democratic parties were blurred. The political right in the pre-war sense had ceased to exist. Parties which subsequently moved to the right paid lip service to socialist ideas and indeed, until 1946, it seemed possible that the communist parties would be prepared to play a constitutional role in national policies of reconstruction. By 1947, however, the post-war Stalinist period had been entered. The socialist parties, save in Italy where a divided party appeared, were in the position whereby if responsible government was to be

maintained an alliance was necessary with the generally democratic but religious and bourgeois parties.

In Germany, it could be described as a constitutional alliance, particularly after the death of Kurt Schumacher, which ultimately found expression in the grand coalition. In the other countries the form was generally expressed through varied types of coalitions. In no country in the West were socialist parties in a position to establish majority governments, as Attlee did in Britain, and even if they had been similarly placed it is doubtful if in the circumstances of that period they would have formed single party administrations. Indeed, the relative positions, and policies of the British and continental parties, in the immediate post-war period, which by and large have been maintained over the past two decades, would seem to illustrate fundamental differences between the two systems.

In fact, on examination, the differences are more apparent than real. Ideologically, continental social-democratic parties and the Labour Party have moved in parallel. Continental parties, historically revisionist marxist in character, have largely accepted the general reformist policies, programmes and priorities advocated by the Labour Party. The best example of this is the Bad Godesberg programme of the German SPD. Internally the programmes have emphasised economic planning, social welfare and public investment with control and ownership of particular industries. Externally there has been support for the twin pillar concept of the Atlantic Alliance and a general commitment to the United Nations. The success which social democratic parties have had in implementing their policies has varied according to the balance of political

forces at any given time. The religious parties in each country contain trade union and left wing elements which, as allies of the social democrats, have enabled reformist legislation of both a structural and general character to be introduced. Indeed, in many areas the countries within the six have developed more advanced social policies than the British. This is true in relation to investment in housing, family allowances, holidays with pay, pensions, and equal pay for equal work. Britain's health service alone stands as a distinctive and advanced landmark in the social area. In questions of real wage levels, and the growth of real wages, Britain is now near the bottom of the European league tables; and with our present growth rate, only half of that of the EEC countries, we will continue to decline.

Equally in matters of economic planning, public investment and social ownership the patterns of post-war continental development have paralleled our own. For example, successive Dutch and French governments have pursued policies of public intervention in the private sector. Similarly the Industrial Reconstruction Institute in Italy has acted as an industrial pace-maker and bears in some respects an interesting relevance to our own Industrial Reorganisation Corporation, whilst in the publicly owned sector the number of industries under state ownership compare favourably with our own. Undoubtedly for the political purist the concept of a unified Europe still conjures up a spectre of a "Europe of the cartels." It is a convenient slogan which contains, as do most slogans, an element of truth. But to accept it is to ignore the positive characteristics of the community and the support given to it by the social democratic forces in continental Europe.

Continental social-democratic parties may not satisfy socialist fundamentalists, but neither does the British Labour Party, and as reformist parties they never will. They are, however, the best instruments for social advance which exist and to an increasing extent they are shaped in the image of our time. If, therefore, there is to be hope of building a democratic socialist community beyond national frontiers in the foreseeable future, it will be with those—with all their ideological imperfections—who share with us a common political standpoint and pattern of historical development. Indeed, it is not an overstatement to suggest that if social-democracy is to survive as a political idea, if it is not to be crushed between the forces of contemporary capitalism and what passes for communism, then it can only survive within the context of a political Europe.

Any dispassionate analysis of the facts will show that the overall policies of the Labour Government are consistent with those of the governments of the European community, and that an effective basis exists for the harmonisation of these policies, and in key sectors for the integration of interests. It is, therefore, right that the Government should maintain its application on the table at Brussels. But this is not enough. The distinctive contribution which the Government and in particular socialists can make to the European idea is by insisting on the need for a European political community with democratically exercised political control.

Membership would lead us to accept a new and exclusive institutional relationship with the continent which will require the development of new patterns of relationship between national political parties — possibly

leading in the future to European scale parties—as well as between nations. It will mean rejecting for all time the post-imperialist global view derived from our own national inheritance. It will certainly mean that on key foreign policy issues we will no longer be able to take unilateral actions. However, it is only necessary to review the major events of the past decade in Cuba, Berlin and Vietnam to observe the strategic limitations of British power.

Membership would formalise within an institutional framework what is already a political fact, namely that Britain no longer exercises world power. This is something different from saying that she does not and cannot influence world events to a degree greater than that of any other nation of fifty million people. In the future, however, her power to influence events will be determined by the contribution she can make and the strength she will gather from membership of a European scale group with a common foreign policy. It would be through this grouping that she would influence many of the great issues which today are decided in Moscow and Washington and possibly tomorrow in Peking. In fact, far from Britain opting out of her world role, a precondition for her being able to influence the strategy of world events in the future depends upon membership of a European political community.

Having taken the European option, Britain, upon the basis of her own essential political interests, must now try to take the lead by proposing the creation of a European political community. There are many complex problems inherent in proposals for a political and defence union, but clearly at this stage of the political argument it is only possible to set out the objectives and the essential elements of the

general strategy. What is to be deplored is the destructive tone and level of arguments of many of the European detractors. No sensible European would deny the difficulties, the problems, even the dangers, of constructing Europe, but there are many, not solely among the ranks of the inveterate anti-Europeans, who seem to be so overwhelmed by the difficulties and the problems, that they are unable to see the positive political and economic advantages.

Nevertheless, it is now quite clear that there is little danger that Britain will reject Europe or that she will be seduced by a series of illusory and diversionary policies based upon short-term politically opportunist expedients such as NAFTA. The danger is that because of existing difficulties, Britain will adopt a policy of inward retreat, based upon her rejection by Europe and her impotence in the rest of the world. The warning signs already exist. This would not only be a tragedy for Britain, it would be a tragedy for all those who believe in the unique contribution of the European peoples to world civilisation and development. That is why this proposal for a European political community is urgent . . . to break the *impasse* in European construction.

fabian society the authors

The Fabian Society exists to further socialist education and research. It is affiliated to the Labour Party, both nationally and locally, and embraces all shades of Socialist opinion within its ranks—left, right and centre.

Since 1884 the Fabian Society has enrolled thoughtful socialists who are prepared to discuss the essential questions of democratic socialism and relate them to practical plans for building socialism in a changing world.

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Cover design and typography by Geoffrey Cannon. Printed by Civic Press Limited (TU), Civic Street, Glasgow, C4.

ISBN 7163 0398 1

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