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**INTEGRATION OF EUROPE, NOW OR NEVER !?**

**Inaugural speech of Professor F. ANDRIESEN,**

**University of Utrecht, Netherlands. 18 October 1991.**

**EXTRACTS.**

"Democracy, although a recent and still tenuous achievement, is the cement which can hold Europe together. But unity cannot be taken for granted and must contend with other trends which point to fragmentation.

"The European Community was founded on the recognition that economic cooperation and supranational decision-making were the only realistic basis for integration.

"Today, our model of integration and development, based on freedom, democracy and solidarity, is being put to the test of geography and national sovereignty. Are we flexible enough to reconsider this model of integration, to free it of the geographic and political constraints of the past and to adapt it to the requirements of Europe as a whole ?

"Today a broader, more far-reaching vision of the integration of Europe is needed, one which can accommodate the wish of countries, which have recovered their freedom, to become part of a a supranational structure which goes beyond obsolescent conceptions of national sovereignty.

"External challenges call into question the state, as the appropriate level for resolving many contemporary problems. But, at the same time, the state is being called into question from within by pressures for the devolution of authority to the regional or local level.

"A large number of constituent units is not, in itself, an insurmountable obstacle for a federative association. It is possible to accommodate a high degree of heterogeneity and even different forms of membership. But what is needed, as demonstrated by the United States, is an appropriate structure. The Community, as presently constituted, does not possess such a structure and little thought has been given to the institutional requirements of a Community with twenty or twenty-five members.

"The Community must respond positively by opening its doors to all European countries which proclaim its values and which, in consequence, are eligible for membership. Three conditions are essential : tolerance, the correct application of the principle of subsidiarity and real democracy.

"Without tolerance, without the acknowledgement of Europe's inherent diversity, and the strength it represents, there would be no European Community.

"The universal model be maintained while exceptions are allowed. .... It will be necessary to go beyond the kind of temporary derogations and transitional periods hitherto granted and to provide for varied forms of participation in different aspects of Community policy, taking into account needs and capacities.

"Subsidiarity, in the European context, means that only those functions which cannot be performed more effectively by local, regional or national authorities should be transferred to the Community.

"A correct application of the principle of subsidiarity is just as likely to transfer responsibilities to the regional or local level, where the ordinary citizen finds it easier to operate.

"A healthy degree of accountability for legislative and administrative matters is essential if the public is to understand and identify with the new Europe.

"Community decision-making must be improved and common policies strengthened if the Community is to be able to extend a suitable welcome to new members. But, by the same token, a wider Community must not be allowed to hinder the process of deepening. Appropriate means must be found to permit widening and deepening to proceed together, enabling the Community to preserve its autonomy and dynamism while reaching out to those for whom there is no alternative.

"If we wish to transform an age of instability into an age of integration, we must ensure that we are building on firm foundations.

"Integration can contribute to the stable development of Europe, its neighbours and the community of nations. We must not only affirm our commitment but also deliver, despite the short-term sacrifices which this may involve.

"A wider European Community can succeed in unifying our continent, provided that it shows sufficient tolerance, that authority is exercised at the level appropriate to the issue at stake and that the Community itself achieves real democracy. "