



European Communities
Commission
Press Release

20 Kensington Palace Gardens
London W8 4QQ
Telephone: 01-727 8090

ISEC/21/79

July 4, 1979

EMBARGO: Not to be used on agency or club tapes before
20.00 HOURS, THURSDAY, JULY 5, 1979.

Speaking at a Welsh Development Agency Dinner in Cardiff
on July 5, 1979, Mr Christopher Tugendhat, Member of the
European Commission, analysed the nature of the European
Identity. The following are extracts from his speech.

The Community of the Nine is a powerful economic force in the modern world. It has a gross national product not far short of that of the United States of America, and considerably above that of the Soviet Union, China or Japan. Its population is larger than that of either of the two super-powers, and it leads the world in many of the most important technologies. Member States transact some 40% of the free world's trade, and hold some 30% of the world's currency reserves. They provide almost half of the official development assistance to the Third World, and much of investment and new technology which developing countries seek.

These impressive facts illustrate the considerable economic strength of the Community in the world today, yet they tell only half of the story. The remarkable post-war recovery of Europe has been accompanied by a relative decline in the world power, political, military, and economic, of the European nations. While our trade has expanded, our share of world trade has diminished. Whereas once Europe met some 90% of its own energy needs, it now depends on imports for around 50% of its supplies. Our technological and industrial dominance of the world has been considerably reduced while new developments in Japan, the USA and the Soviet Union have proceeded by leaps and bounds.

Europe therefore presents a picture both of great strength and of great vulnerability. Great prosperity has also brought with it greater dependence. In the world of the super-powers there are in Europe new imperatives leading to co-operation, because only thus can our nations play the effective world role which by tradition and civilisation they expect, or protect the vital markets and sources of supply on which their prosperity depends.

Technocracy is not enough

Vision and self-interest therefore flow side by side as the motivating forces of the European Community. That is as it should be.

But in our anxiety to show to a sometimes sceptical public the practical benefits of the Community it seems to me that we have often over-emphasised its material and technical aspects. A Community based only on mutual self-interest must be a sterile and unfulfilling objective, nor could it in the long-run survive. Our experience in recent years has shown that if the ability to reach technical solutions to problems is not allied to a strong political will the over-riding commitment to self-interest can block all progress towards our goals.

The European Community has no Bill of Rights, no proclamation of the Rights of Man to which its Members are required to give allegiance, nor is it necessarily vital that it should have one. It does, however, have a fundamental commitment to the traditions and values of liberal democracy. In the years immediately ahead it will be up to all of us in the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers and the European Commission to assert, and defend, and strengthen those values and thereby establish among our peoples a new awareness of our common heritage, common purpose and common European identity.