

Paper presented by

M. François Fontaine, Chief
European Community Information Service
Paris Bureau

at the Midwest Conference on
West European and Atlantic Studies

January 14-15, 1966

Wingspread, Racine, Wisconsin

INTRODUCTION

The interest of the European teaching profession in problems of European integration is a measure of the progress of that undertaking, and also makes it possible to judge its chances of success.

The European teaching profession, in fact, plays the rôle of a barometer, reflecting climatic changes in the European Community. Attitudes, interests, and pressures within that profession are gauged by corresponding successes or crises within the Community. It is not this measurement - which is fairly normal - that I find significant. It is rather the trend it reveals, and the psychological repercussions it has upon that same trend. There is no exact equivalent in French for your expression 'feed-back'. It is the way in which, in Europe, teaching and research in the area of European integration react upon that field: this is what we find most important and most encouraging. Thus, the intellectual climate, of which the teaching profession is a gauge, goes one stage further and becomes a driving force.

Why is this? The first explanation which comes to mind is that the very participation of noted specialists in the legal, economic, and political science aspects of European integration itself advances the intellectual process of integration. It is true that the enormous sum-total of research and discussion on the European Community makes it one of the world's best thought-out undertakings since Marxism - and to some extent an up-to-date reply to the old

Marxist challenge. A second explanation of this force is that increasing availability of education to hundreds of thousands of young people inevitably raises the level and scope of information regarding the building of Europe, limits the effect of nationalist doctrines, and fosters enthusiasm for federalism. But there is a third explanation, still more significant, which those of you who are familiar with the importance of the teaching profession in our European countries may join me in recognizing. In our countries this profession treads slowly and warily among new social phenomena. As a result, subjects adopted for teaching automatically take on a considerable degree of respectability. Inclusion in the teaching syllabus is sure proof that a subject exists, and, by being taught, it exists more surely still.

Thus, it can be said that Europe gained a psychological victory when the most conservative of its teaching professions - until recent years, that of France - made teaching and research about the European Community a basic subject in law, economics and history.

The victory is a new one, and it was hard-won. Only three years ago it was not yet assured. At that time Jean Monnet asked me to report to him on our information campaign in France. I was ready to tell him about the different mass media - films, publications, exhibitions, and so on. But no sooner had I finished telling him about our results with the teaching profession than he stopped me: "That's all I need to know. You've succeeded." I tried nevertheless to speak of our other results. "Let's not waste time with the rest," he said. "The teaching profession has conferred legitimacy. This is categoric, and the French are a categoric people. For them, the truth is what one finds in books. It was the teachers of law who killed the European Defence Community; but we shall live to see them make a success of the Common Market and of Europe."

* * *

These preliminary remarks serve to demonstrate the spirit in which education in Europe has been organized at every level to include truly European branches of instruction. The effort has been one not only of science and of culture, but also of psychological commitment. The intellectual élite of our countries must be well-informed, but it must also find its interests directly involved - the interest of the teachers in having a new field for investigation and in keeping their teaching up to date; and that of the students in their attraction to contemporary ideas and the immediacy of changing concepts.

That is why our efforts have been directed toward the inclusion of European integration problems in the teaching syllabus and, another matter again, among subjects for final examinations. This is a far harder task than arranging discussions, or distributing publications. We have come to believe that the importance of every meeting and every piece of research lies above all in the extent to which their results are disseminated into standard education. I must beg the forgiveness of researchers and eminent authors of works about European integration, but I believe that, remarkable as may be their contribution to the thinking of those who drafted the Treaties - backed up by the accumulation of fifteen years' practical experience of their application on the part of thousands of European and national technicians - even more remarkable, if perhaps less intense, is the effect that teaching about the European Community has had on its law and economics.

My point of view is that of someone who deals in education and information; they have their political aspects. In Europe we are facing an emergency. There

is a risk that the new generation may forget the doctrine which lies at the root of the Europe we are building. Few of our young high-school and college students remember the powerful motives which, fifteen years ago, led to the founding of the Community. They live in an atmosphere of détente and have never known a time when a Common Market was not in the process of development. For them the European idea is self-evident. They believe that it is certain to materialize and, for that reason, that it can be achieved in different ways. But that belief is false and threatens to deflect us from our path. Consequently we must as far as possible fix in people's minds the basic doctrine, and above all the institutional principles which are still threatened.

This leads to an important conclusion: priority must be given to the teaching of law and political science. The economic aspects are the most obvious ones, and give rise to disagreement only with regard to methods of application. The structure of the Treaties, the importance of regulations, the federal nature of the system are, on the other hand, accorded too little importance. We daily fear a reduction in that importance by governments or national administrations, a fear unnoticed by even the best-informed Europeans. This is because for us law is an abstract concept, too much divorced from present-day reality, and because political science is as yet insufficiently developed. In this respect you Americans are still well ahead of us - and in a field where we are actively engaged - because your analytical methods are better adapted to this form of evolution of political societies, and are equipped with concepts and a vocabulary which have seen service in the history of your country.

That is, to some extent, why I am here: to see how we might develop an exchange of information on both the form and the content of European studies

in progress on both sides of the Atlantic.

* * *

As a starting-point for such an exchange of views, I have attempted to summarize in documentary form the position of the European teaching profession toward Community problems.

The first section is historical and explains the complexity of the situation, the reasons for the undeniable delay in such studies themselves, in their organization and in the coordination of the various elements of that organization.

The second section is descriptive and endeavors to give a picture of what exists today. The picture is, of course, incomplete. A directory of all European research and teaching would occupy many volumes. Such volumes, moreover, already exist, and you are certainly familiar with the excellent publication put out annually by the European Community Institute for University Studies, under the direction of Max Kohnstamm assisted by Mrs. MacLaughlin. A publication that is smaller but which appears more frequently has just started in France: "Les Nouvelles Universitaires." The present document will therefore confine itself to summarizing the organization of such studies in Europe today.

A third and concluding section deals with the prospects of, and proposals for, improved coordination. A particularly serious problem is the infrequency of exchanges between our European universities. Where nationalist traditions are not the main obstacle, differences in structure, mentality and language act as a brake. The results of one attempt to do away with these limitations is too great a hurry will be observed later on. But while, despite these difficulties,

one may be optimistic regarding a rapprochement of the Universities of the Six, an enormous amount remains to be done before the same can be said of those of Europe and the United States. The distances which must be overcome are not only structural or linguistic; they are also differences of space and - it has to be said - of our very concept of the world, its dynamism and its intellectual dimensions.

True, technical integration is to some extent being achieved through the intensive circulation of books and documents. It is even frequently true that there is a higher level of awareness of Community problems in one of your universities than in a European university. I believe, however, that this is not enough to promote the particular type of conceptual unity necessary to the harmonious development of Western civilization. Unless practical solutions are sought, the universities of our two continents, each pursuing its own intellectual rhythm and direction will increasingly diverge.

Materially, such solutions are hard to achieve, but they are becoming less so, and are, in any case, essential. They consist in multiplying cooperative work and discussion at all levels of the teaching profession - teachers, assistants, students.... The exchange of text books is not sufficient, nor is the privilege of individual visits. We have to take our places in a new age. Together we must consider how this can be done.

EUROPEAN STUDIES IN EUROPE

I - Historical

Schematically, there are two distinct series of attempts to organize the teaching of European unity problems. They correspond to two different political approaches which, while the one succeeded the other, have nonetheless continued to some extent to coexist.

The first attempts were the most ambitious. They attest to the belief of the founders of the European movements in rapid and comprehensive political progress. The 1948 Congress in the Hague, which gave birth to the Council of Europe and to the different federalist groups, is certainly at the origin of the concept of higher educational establishments to train European citizens and civil servants: Institutes of European Studies, the College of Europe in Bruges, the Centre International de Formation Européenne (International Center for European Training), or CIFE. These establishments continue to operate, but remain somewhat outside the teaching profession in the true sense of the word, having preceded that profession by several years in this course.

The most recent endeavors are those which developed within the teaching profession when Community institutions started to become a reality, after 1952 with the ECSC, and even more so after 1958, with the Common Market. Considered individually, they are much more modest and empirical, but together they add up to the already vast and continually expanding organizational effort described below.

Midway between these two categories stands the grandiose endeavor represented by the European University of Florence, in its ambitiousness approaching

the spirit of the pioneers of the 1948 Congress, but in its scientific method closer to that of the Communities. It is perhaps because the authors of this project were unable to choose between a certain idealism and a certain technocracy that it has, since 1962, been practically wrecked by the combined hostility of, in particular, the French Government and the German universities.

II - The Specialized Institutes

Conceived in a period of faith, the specialized institutes have retained their idealistic character, notably because both staff and students are volunteers and, as a group, represent the pre-conception of a culturally-integrated Europe. The teaching is essentially European, humanist and, in general, federalist.

Attached to, or otherwise affiliated with, the official education system in the different countries, these Institutes have, above all, affinities with one another. In 1951 they founded an Association which today numbers twenty members (A.I.E.E.). Two bodies bordering upon this Association, the College of Europe in Bruges and the International Centre in Nice are stamped by the personalities of their Rectors, Henri Brugmans and Alexandre Marc, both of whom are known as outstanding exponents of European federalist doctrine. (Annex I)

The high degree of specialization of these establishments is a measure of both their usefulness and their limitations. Their students, few in number, are drawn from the already initiated and, by reason of the difficulty of integrating this European study scheme within the normal university program, their recruitment is somewhat haphazard.

III - The Faculties

The trend within the Community's university faculties is of a totally different character. Its origins are completely empirical.

While certain professors of law and economics figured prominently in the very conception of the European Treaties, the teaching profession as a whole was at the outset extremely reserved in the face of the political idea implied by integration. Some professors may have been deterred by the passionate atmosphere of the federalist campaigns, others by the geographical limitations of the internationalist design. The Left's hostility to the building of Europe long barred the way to the teaching body. Finally, it was natural for the teaching profession to wait until the experiment attained the dignity of an exact science.

In view of this traditional wariness and of the structural rigidity which is standard in Europe, what might appear as astonishing slowness to American universities (which promptly took account of the new phenomenon) was in fact a fairly normal rate of evolution.

The early years witnessed chiefly individual approaches which became increasingly numerous as legal and economic cases were submitted to the experts for advice. The scope of the ECSC was too narrow to justify systematic educational ventures and it was not until 1960, and the growth of the Common Market, that a true movement of collective interest got under way. The first organizational effort was made in France by a group of economists of the Paris Law Faculty, who set up a Branch, which was transformed into a Faculty Center in 1963, at the same time as doctorates in European subjects were instituted by decree. (Annex II)

When this official consecration was assured, much of the ground lost by the failure of the European University of Florence (Annex III) was recovered through the progressive "Europeanization" of the university faculties. Most important, a prototype of Community teaching provided a model for further attempts.

IV - Current Developments

The services of the European Communities have been effective catalysts, by encouraging visits to the institutions by teachers and students, and by providing discussion seminars, which were generally at the root of more permanent creations. Notably, in France, we have promoted the formation of associations of universities and institutes to supply material and intellectual assistance to the creation of new study courses and documentation centers. Similar efforts are being made in Germany (where they are slowed by the highly decentralized university structure) and in Italy (Annexes IV, V, and VI).

But at the present stage, results are obtained fundamentally within the national university framework. Communications between the universities of the six countries are still limited. This may appear paradoxical since the subject being studied is precisely the pooling of resources between institutions. But account must be taken of the traditional compartmentalization of cultures (themselves the hotbeds of nationalism), the stumbling block of language, the disparity of systems which discourages teacher and student exchanges and the high cost of international seminars. An investigation undertaken in 1962 concluded, "No system of continuous collaboration exists between the Italian universities and other European universities."

It is here that the failure of the European University project is most severely felt, for the most promising, if not the most spectacular, aspect of this project lay in its intergovernmental committees for the harmonization of programs, and the equivalence of diplomas and student records.

To remedy this situation, the European Community Institute for University Studies, under the direction of Max Kohnstamm (Annex VII), has undertaken as a matter of urgency to keep all activities within this field under constant review. This review, which also covers research and study in the United Kingdom and the United States, is published annually. Experience has convinced us that this is the right way to channel our efforts to prevent the intellectual currents which are developing in each of our countries with respect to European unification from being swamped by individual national dogmas - which would be contrary to the very idea of Federation - and from leading to an overlapping of research projects. The first requirement is, therefore, to organize a system of mutual information, and to establish a European university "clearing house."

Practically speaking, working instruments, such as the one published by the Kohnstamm Institute, should be in the hands of all interested universities and professors.

In return, each recipient would have to contribute any information he has, and complete widely distributed questionnaires. Other publications, appearing at shorter intervals, are under consideration, such as the monthly university bulletin, "European Community."

Another means of mutual acquaintanceship is that of the methodological discussion as practised by Racine, which we in Europe advocate in preference to, or at least with priority over, purely scientific or doctrinal meetings. Before

discussing together the substance of Community problems and integration, universities would profit greatly from examining among themselves the ways to achieve a community of information and to integrate their research and teaching methods.

Racine's meeting furnishes a lesson which will enable us to organize similar working meetings in Europe. But it is highly desirable that participants from both sides of the Atlantic act as liaison officers and report back to their colleagues. No doubt Leonard Tennyson's European Community Information Bureau will have suggestions to make regarding the best method for establishing such liaison.