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**SPEECH BY MR ROY JENKINS, PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, AT THE OPENING OF THE MAISON DE L'EUROPE,
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC,
STRASBOURG, 28 JANUARY 1977**

"This is a great occasion, and I am honoured to be one of the participants. The building which is being inaugurated today is more than the sum of its physical components. It is a symbol of the increasing participation of every citizen of the democratic nations of Europe in the parliamentary process of debate and democratic control.

Let me first say a word about the Council of Europe, our host today, and the senior European parliamentary institution. I feel a particular and personal affection for the Council, because nearly a quarter of a century ago it gave me my baptism into European parliamentary politics, and instigated in me a European faith which has not since weakened. It is a considerable achievement over twenty-seven years to have brought together parliamentarians from so many democratic states in a common enterprise, and to have achieved results and set standards which others can - and do - envy. We are proud members of a family committed to parliamentary democracy, the rule of law, and the maintenance of individual freedom in the precise juridical way set out in the Convention of Human Rights. Membership of the Council of Europe has always been a privilege and not a right. Only those states adhering to its standards can be - and remain - full members. In a world in which democracy is fragile, and Europe with its particular and glorious traditions is a vulnerable place, let us applaud the Council of Europe for the values it has upheld, and pray that in the future it will continue to flourish.

It is no accident that the roof which will cover the deliberations of the Nineteen should also cover those of the Nine. I make no comparisons between two organisations whose purposes and structure are very different, but I do remark upon the effectiveness of the co-operation which has taken place between what could be described as the inner Nine and the Nineteen as a whole. This was well shown in the work of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe which led to the Helsinki Agreement of 1975.

The European Parliament is now taking on a new dimension. In just over a year's time it will be directly elected by the citizens of the Member States of the European Community. This event, the result of new decisions but of course rooted in Article 138 of the Treaty of Rome, may well turn out to be a crucial point in the history of European institutions. If I should like the new European Commission to be remembered for one outstanding event, it would be for its part in changing

and in particular the Parliament, as something with which they can personally identify themselves and towards which they feel a personal loyalty. To give this new aspect to the European institutions would not in my view limit or deny the character, variety and aspirations of the Member States: it will rather be to create a new sense of participation - that of the region, that of the state, that of the European Community itself - which responds to the needs of our time.

The citizens of Strasbourg know better than most the price the nations of Europe paid for their successive civil wars. Such wars will never take place again. The problems which face us today are different: they relate rather to the nature of industrial society itself, now in its second century of life, and undergoing strains which produce unemployment, unequal distribution of wealth and damage to the environment in which we live. We must face these dangers and meet the challenge they represent. In so doing the institutions here established will play a special role."

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