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490 A

Mr. Edward Heath, Prime Minister,
in Brussels, on December 3, 1973:

Speaking at the ceremony inaugurating the Spaak Foundation at Brussels on December 3, the British Prime Minister, Mr. Edward Heath, praised the progress and vitality of the European Community and called for better transatlantic understanding.

"[Paul-Henri] Spaak saw unity as the only salvation for Europe... An impotent Europe would be unable to achieve the close cooperation with the United States which Spaak always thought essential for the West."

Mr. Heath went on to comment on progress within the Community in the field of political cooperation.

"The nine members ... have adopted common policies: in the negotiations on European security; in the negotiations with the United States about the transatlantic relationship; and, more recently, over the Middle East... Their work on the European identity is going well..."

"We can see that the practice of proceeding by agreement on major issues of foreign policy is beginning to take root. As Western Europe establishes its unity, the Nine will be able to reach a joint position with increasing speed and effectiveness when the situation requires it, in response to any given international crisis -- or, better still, in anticipation of one."

/At ...

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At the Community Summit in Copenhagen next week, the process of mutual consultation will continue.

"It is because we have made such remarkable progress in 1973 that the Heads of State and Government will be meeting in ten days time at Copenhagen..."

"I hope that the Copenhagen Summit will be the first in a regular series of such meetings."

The Prime Minister went on to deny the charges of disunity within the Community over oil policy.

"We are now having to deal with the consequences of the reduction in oil supplies from the Middle East. This affects us all. There have been criticisms of lack of solidarity in this or that corner of the Community.

"As far as the British Government is concerned, I do not accept them. It would be wrong for me to say a great deal on this subject... But I do want to say this:

"The effects of this problem -- economic, social, personal -- go very wide. But its origins lie within the realm of foreign policy.

"The Community was, in my judgment, entirely correct in concentrating its efforts on a statement of foreign policy, made in the Declaration of November 6. We can build on that substantial beginning, so that Europe can make the maximum possible contribution to the restoration of peace in the Middle East.

"It is only by using all the resources of foreign policy that we can hope to give Europe secure access to the oil it needs."

Western Europe must become less dependent on external sources of energy, said Mr. Heath.

"We are, all of us, thinking afresh about Europe's sources of energy in this critical situation. We have to make the best use of the supplies available at present; and to plan for our future needs..."

"We want to see a Western Europe less dependent for its prosperity and social progress on external sources of energy supplies."

/The ...

The Prime Minister then turned to the subject of Community-U.S. relations and the recent "series of tactical misunderstandings." The lesson of these is the need for earlier consultation.

"It is true that the gradual formation of a common foreign policy for Europe creates problems in our relationship with the United States. We always knew it would, and so did successive United States Administrations.

"We have recently seen an example of this in the Middle East. Foreign Ministers of the Community based their Declaration of policy on an analysis of how best in our view Israel and the Arab States could move towards a just and lasting settlement. The present British Government had set out in public its own very similar analysis as long ago as October 1970. We have in no way deviated from it since. The United States Government took its decisions during the crisis on a somewhat different analysis, and there followed a series of tactical misunderstandings between the different sides of the Atlantic...

"In the old days individual European countries might well have had a different analysis from that of the United States. But in the old days the predominance of the United States over any single one of its partners was such that in practice the voice of the United States almost automatically prevailed. Successive American Presidents and Secretaries of State saw that this situation would change as Europe became more united. They accepted as part of the price of European unity that the countries of Europe as they came together would wish to assert the voice of Europe in world affairs, and that this would not always be identical with the voice of the United States. They asked in return -- and it was a reasonable request -- that Europe should in these circumstances take a fuller share of its own responsibilities in the fields of trade, help for the developing world, and defense.

"The moral from these recent events is, I think, clear. Nothing is gained by mutual bickering or grumbling. If we are to avoid in future the tactical misunderstandings which I have mentioned, then we must make sure that we discuss together at an earlier stage our different judgments of a particular situation, and seek to reconcile them. For it is the reconciliation of genuinely differing judgments which is the real test of an alliance of free states."

(Prev. Refs. 72/73, 75/73)