

Speech by Mr. E. Sassen, member of the Euratom Commission, on the occasion of the presentation of the European flag to the city of Breda, on 5 May, 1967.

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It is indeed a particularly memorable and festive occasion that marks the presentation of the European flag to the Orange city of Breda so soon after the felicitous birth of a hereditary prince of Orange.

I feel it a great privilege to be able to express twofold congratulations on this occasion. First of all to the happy parents, Princess Beatrix and Prince Claus, and also respectful congratulations to Her Majesty the Queen and Prince Bernhard. And not only because of the joy that prevails in the Royal Family at the arrival of a new scion but also because millions of our compatriots and fellow subjects here and overseas, hundreds of thousands of natives of Brabant and tens of thousands of citizens of Breda feel happy and deeply moved now that new life has emerged, a new generation has come into being and a new future has been opened up for our dynasty. This fact not only moves us to festive celebration, it also fills us with gratitude and inspires us to utter a prayer, namely that the Giver of all life, "the Lord above who rules all things", may be pleased to bless this tender life and allow this little prince to grow up in such a way that he too may, in the words of our national anthem, become a good instrument in God's hand, for the salvation of many people in this Fatherland and outside it.

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Congratulations, too, to this City with its proud past, its dynamic present and its no doubt important future, because today it has the distinction of being presented with the European flag. These congratulations are all the more warranted in that Breda is receiving

this token of honour from the hands of someone who is both a good friend and a good neighbour. You may be sure, Mr. Meyers, that you are welcome here not only as the bringer of a rather rare mark of honour but also because of what you represent in solidarity between all who are of one race, one language and one culture, between those who in creating Benelux gave the first impetus to the greater work that is now being accomplished in Europe, and because of what you yourself signify and are doing in your own country and for your own people. This last is by no means trivial, as I think I can testify since my job has given me the opportunity of enjoying cordial hospitality in your country for a number of years now.

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An event such as this is a welcome inducement to consider what Europe is and what its task and mission in the world must indeed be.

In this city I do not need to say much about Europe's past: Breda's place in that past is recognized everywhere. Suffice it to mention that masterpiece "Las Lanzas", a copy of which adorns the entrance of your town hall, and which has given your city world-wide renown. And only recently, in a museum in Franconia, I was able to admire the "Breda dish", a magnificent piece of craftsmanship by the Breda artist Maes, which was presented by your city to one of the Prince's commanders on the occasion of the recapture of Breda with the aid of the famous peat barge.

That past, as these two examples have already shown, was determined and influenced mainly by wars. The Europe of today wants to unite in a force for peace, prosperity and progress.

This is a first and extremely important point for consideration.

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Europe is divided - a second point that calls for reflection. This flag is the flag of the Council of Europe, and the Europe of that Council, which was enthusiastically and ceremoniously presented for baptism in the Knights' Hall at The Hague in 1948, comprises more countries than the Six who in 1952 and again in 1958 endeavoured by way of integration to give new strength and unity to this continent which has been ravaged by two world wars.

But also in the Europe which extends beyond that whose Council meets in Strasbourg our continent embraces countries and peoples to whose lot, unfortunately, liberty has not yet fallen, where human dignity and democracy, freedom of religion and speech and freedom from fear are not yet accorded the fundamental place that is their due.

The governments in power there campaign for peace in a highly propagandist manner. In so doing they undoubtedly express the deep and ineradicable sentiments of the peoples they rule. At the same time, they carry out an impressive and formidable armaments programme. It is certainly feasible that they do this out of fear, because they feel themselves threatened by the West, though perhaps not by the West alone. It is certainly equally true that this great military might of the East renders Western security precarious and compels us to be vigilant and to maintain a defence policy based on alliances.

There was a time when fear of the East was one of the principal motives for collaboration in the West, for a banding together in Western Europe and for integration in a still smaller European circle. This negative approach - or should I say repulsion - between East and West seems gradually to be developing into a more positive one, into a move towards contact, towards dialogue, towards a lessening of tension, towards attempts at a certain rapprochement and a guarded and carefully explored co-operation.

Europe cannot leave that development entirely to its great and good American ally. In this matter it has a task of its own, a responsibility of its own.

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But when we reflect on this it strikes us all the more plainly that at the moment Europe is more a geographical expression than a political, economic, social and psychological reality.

For even the Europe whose flag is being entrusted to you today is still divided: very broadly speaking, it is divided into the Six and the Seven, into the six nations of the European Communities and the seven nations of the European Free Trade Area.

It is in itself a gratifying fact that the urge to narrow and, if possible, to bridge this gap is growing. Great Britain wishes to join the Communities, and other countries such as Ireland and Denmark - to confine myself to these - will undoubtedly want to follow Britain.

Neither the Six nor Britain have remained the same since the breaking off in 1963 of the negotiations for British entry to the Communities.

To assert that this was due solely and entirely to General de Gaulle's veto strikes me as being too sweeping a historical simplification. The earnestness and carefulness with which Great Britain is again seeking and preparing for an entry to the Six shows indeed that there too the responsible statesmen are not letting themselves be misled by such all too facile simplifications.

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You will certainly not be expecting me to talk vaguely about Europe in general and not say something extremely concrete about the Europe of the Six, the Europe of the Communities.

The evolution of those Communities has been turbulent and uneven. The ECSC got off to a flying start in 1952. Subsequently, however, and certainly after 1958, it lost some of its momentum and dynamism, because its sphere was that of a partial integration; because the position of coal as a source of energy underwent a rapid and fundamental change; because on a number of important points the EEC Treaty embodies more modern and less rigid regulations by means of which it was possible to cope more effectively with the often rapidly changing structural conditions and fluctuations in the economic climate; and last but not least, because there was a deliberate wish to bring about some weakening of this decidedly supranational High Authority.

The EEC had greater difficulty in getting into its stride during the early years of its existence. It has gone through many crises, some of them very grave ones, and it is unlikely that it has yet survived the last of them. But it has so far survived them all and that has undoubtedly made it stronger and more resistant. In the sector of the customs union and the common agricultural policy it has achieved substantial and gratifying results and is even ahead of the schedule laid down in the Treaty for the transitional period. In the Kennedy Round it is at present in a very tight corner, but I believe that optimism is justified here and that the pessimism that some of the EEC's major trading partners are rather ostentatiously displaying at this moment and on this point can largely be attributed to shrewd negotiating tactics. Despite its spectacular successes, however, the EEC still has a great deal of very difficult work to do, particularly as regards bringing about an economic union - so much more far-reaching than a customs union - and as regards the harmonization of policy and legislation in the Six in a number of fields mentioned in the Treaty and others which are not, for example in the monetary sector.

An expansion of the EEC through the entry of new members will certainly make those tasks more absorbing, but equally certainly it will make them more difficult.

Euratom, despite its trials and tribulations, had the tide running in its favour during the first seven years of its existence. The Treaty itself already provided for an initial five-year programme in scientific research and stipulated the ceiling for the necessary funds. This programme went according to expectations. A second five-year programme also got off the ground on time, albeit after a lengthy period of preparation and laborious negotiations, and likewise went according to plan at first. It even made such good headway that the peaceful use of nuclear energy entered the industrial phase several years earlier than was initially foreseen. This made it desirable to carry out a first adaptation of the second five-year programme: the Community was able to withdraw to some extent from fields in which development was progressing rapidly, and on the other hand to concentrate more on those aims whose realization on an industrial scale was more remote and for which intensive research was all the more necessary in order to make up the leeway. But unfortunately the Treaty requires a unanimous decision of the Council for the establishment and modification of a scientific research programme. National greed proved stronger than Community solidarity, and only after fourteen months of tough negotiations was that unanimity reached. The accordingly modified second five-year programme comes to an end on 31 December of this year. The indications are that it can be virtually completed, in accordance with the provisions and without undue delays, within the budget allocated for the purpose. Only some minor adjustments, amounting financially to less than three per cent of the total, will be necessary. I think that our 3000 scientific, technical and administrative staff deserve a salute for this. However, these adjustments of only a few per cent likewise require a unanimous decision of the Council and since October 1966 a further futile tug-of-war on the subject has been in progress.

This is all the more deplorable as Euratom, in addition to its very remarkable achievements and heartening progress, also has some leeways to make up, albeit far less formidable than they appeared in 1958. Not only in the nuclear field, but also in other sectors of modern technology and research, are the Six in extremely urgent need of a well-knit, vigorous and concerted programme.

The Euratom Commission drew attention to this matter as far back as 1965. In European Parliament circles, but also elsewhere, e.g., by industrialists during the last meeting of the Nederlandse Vereniging voor Staathuishoudkunde, the wish has been expressed that similar concerted action should be undertaken, making use of Euratom's experience and taking this Community as the basis and the starting and focal point. In a recent speech at London's Guildhall, the British Prime Minister, Mr. Wilson, further stressed the necessity for such joint programmes.

It would therefore be highly regrettable if politics - which after all is the art of making possible what is needed - should fail in this task through exploitation of the unanimity rule in order to secure concessions in what some quarters believe to be their national interest.

At a time when the expression "technological gaps" is threatening to become a vogue word, a campaign such as Euratom's is more necessary than ever. At the end of January this year, the Commission, wiser from experience, drafted and proposed a new programme for Community activities in 1968 and subsequent years which may be more flexible, more adaptable, and more go-ahead than the old-style five-year programme. The manpower required can be supplied by the Community without undue difficulty at a high scientific level. What these people earn is rather less and certainly not more than is offered them elsewhere, including, for instance, places outside Europe. It is therefore most unfair to call them - as was recently suggested by a certain official source in Belgium - a sort of privileged caste.

Such a slogan certainly has a demagogic effect, but in the face of criticism based on hard facts such attacks are far more difficult to sustain. Who has not heard of the "brain drain"? The suggestion from the same source that for 1968 Euratom should be left without any new programme of activity would not appear to be motivated by zeal to promote science, technology, progress and industry among and add to the strength of the nations of our Community. In view of the spectacular technological developments in the US and the Soviet Union, Europe can certainly not afford a year of marking time in this fashion.

The annual cost of a joint atoms-for-peace programme such as that which we have proposed would work out, according to a very rough estimate which I have made, at less than a  $\frac{1}{1000}$ th part of what the world spends each year on armaments. For a Community such as ours, which - even before British entry - is the largest commercial power in the world, this does not seem to represent an excessive burden or effort.

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As regards the future of the three Communities, I should like very briefly to make the following three points:

Point 1 - The strengthening of their structure by the unification of all their institutions - i.e., not only of the European Parliament and the Court of Justice, which are already common institutions, but also of the Councils of Ministers and the Executives, the Commissions and the High Authority - at last seems to be closer than ever since a protocol for this purpose, with many fine words, was signed in April 1965. What is now required is to make sure that the Members of the single Commission for the three European Communities are convinced and convincingly European political figures.



Point 2 - We have still some way to go as regards strengthening the structure of our Communities. They must develop into true democratic Communities. This means that more power must be vested in the European Parliament. For this we, as a Commission, will gladly be fully accountable, as required by the Treaty, which after all does not intend us to be technocrats. The Council, however, is too ready to treat the Assembly as a purely consultative body. In my view, there are three requirements for the democratization of our Communities, namely:

- acknowledgment by the Council of the Assembly's parliamentary character;
- the strengthening of the powers of the European Parliament;
- the strengthening of the democratic authority of the European Parliament by means of direct European elections.

Point 3 - The future of our Communities is bound up with an expansion of the number of Member States. The United Kingdom, but also other countries, has brought this aspect to the forefront once again. This may be of capital importance to all three Communities, since Britain is a large producer of coal and steel, as well as being far advanced in the technological field, in which it has a great deal to offer and, moreover, appears to be prepared to do so. Most of the major snags undoubtedly lie in the area covered by the EEC.

The signing of the Rome and Paris Treaties by the United Kingdom, and other countries, implies acknowledgment of their Community character. This means that the Communities are instruments designed not to further national interests

but to weld these national interests into a single common interest, which must be fostered and maintained democratically, and consequently with parliamentary control, by Community Institutions with real, even though circumscribed, powers.

Reinforcement of the democratic character of the Communities should and must be expected to result from the adhesion of new, genuinely democratic Member States.

For a country wishing to join the Community, the slogan "my country, right or wrong" will no longer hold good. But a responsible government which, after carefully preparing the ground, formally ratifies its adhesion by its signature will be able to say justifiably: "Honi soit, qui mal y pense".

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A final question which may appropriately be asked as we stand under this imposing flag is: what is the position as regards the United States of Europe?

It is certainly incorrect to consider the existing Communities "only" as a European economic entity. The activities which they have carried out and the results which they have achieved are without a shadow of doubt fraught with lasting political significance, even though this significance finds its main expression in the field of social and economic policy. In an interview on French TV to mark the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Rome Treaties, which brought the EEC and Euratom into being, Minister Couve de Murville highlighted, in an apposite manner which is all his own, the political character of these Communities. Participation by the Community in the framing of a world grain policy, and thus in an organized world-scale campaign to eliminate hunger, which is to be launched if the Kennedy Round negotiations are successful, is a matter which far transcends the frontiers of the six Member States. It will go some way towards determining their task and their place in the world.

A major issue such as international rules for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, certain aspects of which are of concern to Euratom, raises questions which will have a marked influence on our future, e.g., the question whether Europe, even to the extent that it has and will have no nuclear arms, will or will not become a technological and industrial satellite.

It is obvious that here too questions of bedrock significance arise as regards our safety and our defence.

Although even within the Community of the Six this is not universally recognized, it is in my view becoming increasingly clear that individual national states are no longer able on their own to deal adequately with these questions which will have such a decisive effect on the future of us all. If, against expectations, national sentiment, not to mention nationalism, remains undiminished or becomes so strong again that the various governments persist in endeavouring to solve these problems individually, then the inadequacy of both the method and the solutions will very soon become manifest. In an age of nuclear energy and space travel, of moon landings and communication satellites, the nation-state, however honourable its history and traditions, no longer represents the level at which such questions can be dealt with.

Whoever, therefore, attempts the gigantic leap from here to world government will, in my view, be neglecting to fulfil a necessary and essential phase in historical development.

Both the Council of Europe and the UN are institutions which have demonstrated their usefulness and indispensability and which we therefore can and must maintain with every confidence. But the United States of Europe will not evolve out of the Council of Europe any more than world government will evolve out of the UN. The nature, multiplicity and inequality of the constituent elements, i.e. the nation-states, would appear to form an obstacle to such a process.

When Europe becomes more than a geographical concept and more even than a group of useful, necessary and successful Communities,

when it is one genuine Community, and one capable of resolving the fundamental and vital questions to which I have just referred, and when the same thing happens in other parts of the world, e.g. in Latin America, or South-East Asia, then the world will become accustomed to new structures. These were outlined by the great Robert Schumann as far back as 1951 in simple but masterly phrasing:

- the merging of national interests  
into one major Community interest  
which is nurtured by Community institutions  
with real, albeit limited, power.

It also seems to me that, certainly for those intending purposefully to pursue the path to an effective world order, the shortest and most reliable route is the one which affords us a structure which for convenience, but also with the utmost spontaneity, I call:

the United States of Europe.

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Municipal Councillors, Citizens of Breda:

May this European Flag ever inspire you with unremitting tenacity in constantly working for the achievement of European unity and with supreme faith, difficult though this may be:

- in the existing Communities
  - in the democratically and structurally strengthened Communities
  - in the extension of the existing Communities
  - and in their crystallization into the United States of Europe,
- in a manner worthy of your City, an Orange City.