

SPEECH BY M. PAUL-HENRI SPAAK

*President of the Ad Hoc Assembly**M. Paul-Henri SPAAK, President, spoke as follows :*

Mr. President, Your Excellencies, Lady and Gentlemen,

It is obviously impracticable in the federal government of these states, to secure all rights of independent sovereignty to each, and yet provide for the interest and a safety of all; individuals entering into society, must give up a share of liberty to preserve the rest. The magnitude of the sacrifice must depend as well on situation and circumstance, as on the object to be obtained. It is at all times difficult to draw with precision the line between those rights which must be surrendered, and those which may be reserved; and on the present occasion this difficulty was increased by a difference among the several states as to their situation, extent, habits and particular interests.

In all our deliberations on this subject we kept steadily in our view, that which appears to us the greatest interest of every true American, the consolidation of our Union, in which is involved our prosperity, felicity, safety, perhaps our national existence. This important consideration seriously and deeply impressed on our minds, led each state in the Convention to be less rigid on points of inferior magnitude, than might have been otherwise expected; and thus the Constitution, which we now present, is the result of a spirit of amity, and of that mutual deference and concession which the peculiarity of our political situation rendered indispensable.

That it will meet the full and entire approbation of every state is not perhaps to be expected; but each will doubtless consider, that had her interest been alone consulted, the consequences might have been particularly disagreeable or injurious to others; that it is liable to as few exceptions as could reasonably have been expected, we hope and believe; that it may promote the lasting welfare of that country so dear to us all, and secure her freedom and happiness, is our most ardent wish.

How I could wish, Gentlemen, that these simple but apposite words had issued from my pen for they are a perfect reflection of what I wish to say to you.

Unfortunately, they are not mine.

They constitute an essential passage, reproduced almost word for word from the letter dated 17th September 1787, in which George Washington, President of the Federal Convention transmitted the draft Constitution of the United States of America to the President of Congress.

It is not out of place to read this historic document at to-day's ceremony. It contains much that is worthy of thought and it is a message of comfort and hope.

You will certainly have been struck by its topical character. Other men, more than a century and a half ago, had difficulties similar to

ours; they were faced with problems hardly different from those which confront us to-day; they had the same anxieties as we, but they dared and they succeeded. Why should not our fate be the same as theirs?

If we show the same boldness and the same courage, there is no sound reason why we should not hope for the same success.

Ours and ours alone is the task; we and we alone have the responsibility of giving back to the old Europe her strength, her greatness and her glory.

Mr. President, Your Excellencies,

On 10th September last, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, meeting in Luxembourg, decided to embark on the political stage in the building of a united Europe. On their behalf, Chancellor ADENAUER, on 13th September 1952, asked us in this House to draw up a plan for a European Political Authority and gave us a period of six months in which to accomplish our task.

We accepted the responsibility, although fully aware of the difficulties which we should encounter. To-morrow the six months will come to an end. And this evening, Mr. President and Your Excellencies, I shall hand you, on behalf of the Assembly, the draft political Statute of the European Community.

We have succeeded in fulfilling our mission thanks to the goodwill, the skill and sense of discipline of those whom you see in this House to-day. But it is only just that I should pay a special tribute to a few men who for weeks past have devoted their time, night and day, to the great work which inspires them and in which they all believe.

I congratulate and I thank — might I perhaps venture to cite their names in the general orders of the army of good Europeans — M. von Brentano, Chairman of the Constitutional Committee, and the Chairman and Rapporteurs of its Sub-Committees; MM. Blaisse and Benvenuti of the Sub-Committee on Powers and Competence, MM. Teitgen, Dehousse and Azara, of the Sub-Committees on Political Institutions, MM. Persico and von Merkat, of the Sub-Committee on Judicial Institutions, MM. van der Goes, van Naters, Semler and Wigny, on the question of links to be established by the Community and its association with the other free nations. To these congratulations, which are so well deserved, I should like to add those which I address to all their colleagues in the Constitutional Committee and to their indefatigable collaborators in the Secretariat.

Gentlemen, the document which we now submit to you is the work neither of the maximalists nor of the minimalists in this Assembly; the Europe which we are proposing to create is neither federal nor confederal.

In our common work we have forgotten our personal preferences and foregone our academic differences.

We venture to believe that we have prepared for the creation of a community which, while it draws its inspiration from certain rules found

valuable by others, also embodies new and original ideas specially adapted to the particular situations which have confronted us. Between the two extremes, represented on the one hand by a purely inter-governmental system, linking States which retain their entire sovereignty and on the other by a Constitution which would immediately pool most of the activities of our States, our Assembly has chosen a middle path — that of setting up a Political Community of a supra-national character. The Statute which we have drawn up respects the powers and competence which the governments of our countries have hitherto kept under their own control in order to continue to exercise them separately. It does not entail any fresh transfers of sovereignty.

While it thus bears witness to a considered desire to achieve union in diversity and in freedom, to respect the lessons of experience, to safeguard and guarantee the conditions essential for achieving the great changes now impending, the draft Statute gives a positive answer to the demands made by European development and aims at consolidating the results already obtained.

Up till now the building of Europe has been a piecemeal affair. We have the Schuman Plan, which has now been in operation for seven months. We have the European Army, the creation of which has now been submitted for approval to the Parliaments of our countries. These were stages towards a united Europe the political structure of which was still undefined.

The Statute worked out by our Assembly fills the gap. It proposes to set up European political institutions which will have the task of coping with those problems which our Governments and Parliaments have decided to settle in common and those which they may later successively decide to include in the common task. The Statute applies to the limited sphere of the European Community the accepted constitutional principles of our countries. It is the first attempt to associate the peoples themselves in the building of that Europe on which their whole future depends by introducing universal direct suffrage for elections to the Peoples' Chamber of a European Parliament.

All Member States of the Council of Europe will be free to join this political organization. The draft Statute allows for and encourages the forging of the closest possible links with these countries and in particular with the United Kingdom.

The draft Statute places the European Army under the political authority of a European civil authority which is the direct expression of the wishes of the peoples' representatives. It also places this Army under the democratic control of a Parliament elected by universal direct suffrage.

With a view to establishing the requisite conditions under which our countries can increase their production and raise their standard of living to a level in keeping with modern technical progress, the draft Statute institutes a procedure for the progressive establishment of a vast internal market as large as that of the United States — a market

the successive stages of whose realization will be subject to the agreement of all the countries. Finally, it gives general application to one of the cardinal innovations in the Schuman Plan: I refer to the creation of a European Readaptation Fund which will assist enterprises and workers to prepare themselves for the expansion of the common market.

The work of our Assembly thus combines moderation with progress. It also provides confirmation that the new method chosen by the Governments of our countries for the framing of this political statute was a wise one.

The Parliaments of our countries have frequently had cause, on the occasion of other initiatives taken by our Governments, to regret that they were given cognizance of them only when they were in their final form, so that they could then do no more than approve them *en bloc* or reject them. Through our Assembly, however, our respective Parliaments have for the first time been able to take part in the actual drafting of the plan. The experiment has been successful, certainly as regards the time-limit, and also, we believe, as regards the substance. We therefore think that, when the Governments proceed to give final form to the texts before us, they will not go back to the traditional methods but will remain faithful to the initiative they have taken and will take advantage of the infinitely valuable collaboration of some of the men who in these last few weeks have shown the full extent of their devotion, their skill and their knowledge.

Mr. President, Your Excellencies.

I will not dissemble the emotion which I feel at this time as I place in your hands the work accomplished by this Assembly.

Six months ago, when the Assembly began its labours, there were many, I feel sure, who were sceptical, and many who thought that the test it was called upon to undergo was too severe.

Many, I am sure, foresaw that there would be setbacks, so numerous were the obstacles of a sentimental, political, legal and technical nature.

Not ten years ago, the countries represented here were making war on one another. Our peoples were locked in a ghastly struggle. We had but one thought, and but a single aim — to destroy one another as completely as possible.

In the immensity of our misfortunes, in the ruins which we have piled up around us, in our weakness and our poverty, in the threats which constantly haunt us and in the midst of our everpresent anxieties, we suddenly gained an understanding of the mortal peril in which our quarrels and our contentions placed our common way of life, our thousand-year-old heritage which each of us has helped to enlarge and adorn.

We have come to our senses, we have pulled ourselves together; and while forgetting nothing — for that would be sinful — we have

resolved to set forth on the great adventure which must, if it succeeds — as succeed it will — enable us to save all that is dearest and finest in our common inheritance

Therefore this draft Treaty is not only a moving message of reconciliation; it testifies to our confidence in the future.

It is more than a mere document drawn up by politicians and lawyers; it is the positive effort of men who are resolved to preserve inestimable treasures and a heritage of ideas which we cherish all the more because of the aggression to which they are exposed.

Your Excellencies,

In this work of creating Europe it was you who, in Luxembourg on 10th September last, bravely took the first decision. We for our part accepted the difficult task entrusted to us and we have brought it to a successful conclusion. To-day a new stage is passed. Let us not arrest our forward march, let us not relax our efforts. We must, without losing time, pursue our common task.

This I ask of you in deep sincerity and confidence.

(Loud applause.)

SPEECH BY M. GEORGES BIDAULT

*Minister for Foreign Affairs of the French Republic,
President of the Council of Ministers of the E. C. S. C.*

M. BIDAULT spoke as follows:

Mr. President, Your Excellencies, Lady and Gentlemen.

As a result of the normal rotation of functions in the Council of Ministers of the European Coal and Steel Community, I have to-day the privilege and the very great honour of speaking at this Meeting.

On 10th September 1952, in Luxembourg, as you, Mr. President, have just recalled, the six Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, of Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands invited the Members of the Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community to join with the representatives of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe and engage in a common endeavour to work out, by 10th March 1953, a draft treaty setting up a European Political Community.

Beating the clock by twenty-four hours, in response to a request by my Government, you are to-day duly keeping your appointment.

Because of the novelty of the subject, a vast amount of work had to be done in order to complete the task successfully in time for this meeting. The men who worked out the conclusions which you are now