

Statement by Georges Spénale (December 1975)

Caption: Statement by Georges Spénale, following the Rome European Council of 1 and 2 December 1975, concerning direct elections to the European Parliament.

Source: Bulletin of the European Communities. Dir. of publ. Commission of the European Communities. 1975, n° 11. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. "Statement by Georges Spénale following the Rome European Council (1 and 2 December 1975)", p. 10.

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‘The commitments by seven Heads of State or Government of the European Community to direct elections to the European Parliament in May-June 1978 is unquestionably one of the most positive results of the European Council in Rome.

The two countries not yet committed to that date do not oppose the principle of European elections. It is quite probable therefore, that they will come round to the same position by 1978. This seems all the more likely in that these two countries have a great parliamentary tradition and have consistently pressed for greater democracy in the Communities.

The European Parliament continues to attach great importance to the organization of European elections on the same date in all Community countries, for political and psychological reasons.

At all events, the European Council’s commitment to direct elections must be the signal for a general mobilization of political forces and public opinion in all the countries concerned. There is a considerable amount of preparatory work to be done if these elections are to be held in time. The “count-down” starts today!

The Council of Ministers of the European Community must now adopt the draft convention submitted to it by the European Parliament.

The decision on single representation for the European Community at the North-South dialogue is, of course, the other encouraging feature of this European Council.

This decision averts a grave threat to Community solidarity in a field which is vital to Europe’s future.

Finally the creation of a European Passport in 1978, year of the elections by universal suffrage, should be welcomed. These two measures on different but complementary fronts, will create a stronger sense of European identity.’