

'The response to Moscow. Neither illusion nor conspiracy', from Communauté européenne

Caption: On 17 September 1962, Walter Hallstein, the President of the European Commission, gives an address to the European Parliament in which he responds to Soviet attacks on the European Common Market.

Source: Communauté européenne. Bulletin mensuel d'information. dir. de publ. FONTAINE, François ; Réd. Chef CHASTENET, Antoine. Octobre 1962, n° 10; 5e année. Paris: Service d'information des Communautés Européennes. "Ni Fantôme, ni conjuration", auteur:Hallstein, Walter , p. 3.

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The response to Moscow

Neither illusion nor conspiracy

During the joint meeting of the European Parliament and the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe held on 17 September in Strasbourg, President Hallstein recalled the recent reactions of the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc to the Common Market.

‘The Soviet leaders were apparently surprised by the success of our Community, and now they are having the greatest of difficulties in forcing the model of European integration to fit the Procrustes’ bed of their ideology. In their eyes, the Common Market appears as either an illusion or a conspiracy.

‘When they regard the Common Market as an illusion, they believe that the advances in European integration simply do not exist. According to Lenin, any unification of capitalist states is either impossible or a reactionary and short-lived undertaking.

‘Furthermore, the Soviet leaders are realistic enough to know that a movement deemed undesirable cannot be defeated by mere talk. The Common Market cannot be exorcised like an evil spirit, and that is why it is being presented as an imperialist conspiracy, with the aim of prolonging the Cold War.

‘That said, the 32 theses that were published on 26 August in Pravda present the Common Market as a political and economic fact of life, whose achievements to date, while described in Marxist terms, are assessed with remarkable objectivity.

‘However, the accusations of colonialism, which are clearly refuted by events, are based on totally false hypotheses.

‘As long as we insist on regarding people who think differently as the enemy, everyone around us will appear inverted — negative becomes positive and positive, negative. In fact, we only need put on a different pair of glasses to see the world in a different light and recognise the opportunities for cooperation.

‘There is nothing more absurd than to claim that our undertaking is directed against the Eastern bloc. We are doing what we are doing for us and for the free world as a whole. We are acting with the most peaceful means imaginable in the hope of, one day, convincing others, who today still believe it is their duty to be our enemies, of the benefits of cooperation.’