

‘Unanimous reception in Bonn of Tindemans’ Report on European Union’ from the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (23 October 1976)

Caption: On 23 October 1976, the German daily newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung leads with the reactions of the German authorities to the Tindemans Report on European Union.

Source: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. Zeitung für Deutschland. Hrsg. Eick, Jürgen; Welter, Erich; Fack, Fritz Ullrich; Deschamps, Bruno; Fest, Joachim; Reißmüller, Johann Georg. 23.10.1976, Nr. 239. Frankfurt/Main: FAZ Verlag GmbH. "Tindemans' Europa-Bericht in Bonn einhellig begrüßt", p. 2.

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Last updated: 20/02/2017

Unanimous reception in Bonn of Tindemans' Report on European Union

Bundesrat also supports proposals for strengthening the institutions

haw. BONN, 22 October. In clear accordance with the views of the Federal Government and the parties in the Bundestag, the Bundesrat, the federal upper house, this Friday unanimously approved the Report on European Union by the Belgian Prime Minister, Leo Tindemans, calling it a constructive contribution to the further development of European integration. The Bundesrat was also unanimous in supporting proposals for strengthening the European institutions, including direct elections to the European Parliament, endeavours to establish a common foreign and security policy, a European dialogue between management and unions on the one hand and the Governments and the Commission on the other and — for the defence of human rights — the right of direct appeal to the European Court of Justice for individual citizens.

Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski, Minister of State, who welcomed the Bundesrat's statements and confirmed that the content of the draft resolution was very much in line with the views of the Federal Government, announced that the European Council of Heads of State or Government would take a final position on the Tindemans Report at its meeting in The Hague on 29 and 30 November. The nine Foreign Ministers would adopt their final report on 15 November. Wischniewski also pointed out that the Belgian Prime Minister's draft had been received with mixed views by the partner States depending on their particular interests. For its part, the Federal Government, the only one to have taken a formal position on the report by the Belgian Head of Government, was in full agreement with the six policy lines developed in the document.

Wilfried Hasselmann, the Lower Saxon Bundesrat Minister, having, in his capacity as committee rapporteur, stressed the need for a revival of the European idea and recommended support for the Tindemans Plan, Ernst Albrecht, Minister-President of Lower Saxony, raised the question whether the right time for European unification had maybe already passed by. But although internal political developments in some countries were not making the full unification process any easier, there was nevertheless no alternative to Europe. All efforts in Germany should therefore be directed at ensuring that the Tindemans Report was not simply shelved. The Federal Government could be assured that its efforts for Europe were in accordance with the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the population. Mr Albrecht went on to call for a European North-South Policy, the return to stable currencies, without which the common agricultural market could not survive, and the elimination of unemployment, something which could not be done by monetary means, when the jobless ran into millions, but only through a targeted structural policy. In order to achieve this, the Federal Government must be prepared to make a considerable financial contribution.

The North Rhine-Westphalian Science Minister, Johannes Rau, regretted that the vast majority of citizens, though in favour of Europe, were unwilling to commit themselves politically, and only displayed an uninterested contentment. Many people evidently no longer understood what was happening in the Community, and the democratic deficit in Europe meant that more direct involvement by the population was becoming necessary. The direct elections to the European Parliament would be a product of impatience. Rau reminded his audience that there were no plans to modify the European Parliament's areas of competence. Its powers could therefore only be extended if it developed a dynamism of its own. The citizens of the Member States, however, would face the new challenge of political communication beyond their borders, a crucial factor for the work of the European parties.