

Message from President Dwight D. Eisenhower to Congress (Washington, 23 June 1958)

Caption: On 23 June 1958, US President Dwight D. Eisenhower gives an address to the US Congress in which he emphasises the importance of the nuclear cooperation programme signed that same day in Brussels by the six Member States of Euratom and the United States.

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Message from the President to the Congress recommending approval of an international agreement between the United States and EURATOM

Letter of Transmittal

To the Congress of the United States:

I am transmitting today for approval by the Congress an international agreement between the Government of the United States and the European Atomic Energy Community which will be a first step toward mutually beneficial cooperation in the peaceful applications of atomic energy between this new European Community and the United States. The specific program which I am asking the Congress to consider and approve on an urgent basis is a joint undertaking by the United States and Euratom to foster the construction in Europe by 1963 of approximately 6 major nuclear power reactors which would produce about 1 million kilowatts of electricity.

This international agreement is being submitted pursuant to the provisions of sections 11 (L) and 124 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended. The cooperation to be undertaken after approval of the international agreement will be pursuant to the terms and conditions of an agreement for cooperation entered into in accordance with section 123 of that act.

The elements which combine to make such a joint program possible are the same that led to the first great breakthrough in the development of atomic energy 15 years ago: the intimate association of European and American scientists and close association between European and American engineers and industries. While the joint nuclear power program draws heavily on the history of atomic energy development there are important new elements which reflect the changing world scene.

The first is the changing face of Europe symbolized by the European Atomic Energy Community, which now takes its place beside the Coal and Steel Community and the European Economic Community (Common Market) in a further major step toward a united Europe. The inspiration of European statesmen which has now come to fruition in Euratom is the simple but profoundly important idea that through concentration of the scientific and industrial potentialities of the six countries it will be possible to develop a single major atomic energy complex, larger than the sum of the parts, and designed to exploit the peaceful potential of atomic energy. One motivation which has therefore led to the creation of this new Community is the growing sense of urgency on the part of Europeans that their destiny requires unity and that the road toward this unity is to be found in the development of major common programs such as Euratom makes possible. Another important motivation is the present and growing requirement of Europe for a new source of energy in the face of rapidly increasing requirements and the limited possibilities of increasing the indigenous supply of conventional fuels. The Europeans see atomic energy not merely as an alternative source of energy but as something which they must develop quickly if they are to continue their economic growth and exercise their rightful influence in world affairs. The success of this undertaking, therefore, is of vital importance to the United States, for the 160 million people of the Continent of Europe are crucial to North Atlantic strength.

It is therefore gratifying that the reactor research, development, testing, and construction program in the United States has progressed to the point that United States reactors of proven types are available and will be selected for commercial exploitation in the joint program of large-scale nuclear reactors.

The abundance of conventional fuel in the United States and hence our lower cost of electricity as contrasted with higher energy costs in Europe means that it is possible for nuclear power reactors to produce economic electrical energy in Europe before it will be possible to do so in most parts of the United States.

The basic arrangements which have been worked out with Euratom are designed to take advantage of many favorable factors and circumstances. They promise to result in a program that will initially be of great benefit to Euratom and the United States, and thereafter to nations everywhere that choose to profit from Euratom's experience. American knowledge and industrial capacity will be joined with the scientific and

industrial talents of Europe in an accelerated nuclear power program to meet Europe's presently urgent need for a new source of energy.

The plants to be built will be paid for and operated by the existing public and private utilities in the six countries; components will be manufactured by American and European industry. Through this association the basis will be laid for future mutually beneficial commercial collaboration in the atomic energy business. The major portion of the fund for the construction of the plants will come from European sources of capital. The United States, through the Export-Import Bank, is prepared to supplement these funds by making available to the new Community a long-term line of credit.

A central purpose of the proposed joint program is for Euratom and the United States Government to create an institutional and economic environment which will encourage the European utilities to embark quickly upon a large-scale nuclear power program. As this program goes forward, it will make possible significant progress in the development of atomic power elsewhere in the world.

The expectation that nuclear power will be economic rests on the inherent promise of achieving substantially lowered fuel costs which will more than compensate for the higher capital costs of nuclear plants. The principal immediate problem is to limit during this developmental phase the economic uncertainties connected with the burning of nuclear fuel in these reactors. To assist in meeting this problem the United States will provide certain special and limited guaranties and incentives to permit American fuel fabricators and the European utilities and industries to enter into firm contractual arrangements with greater certainty as to the actual costs of nuclear energy from the reactors than is now possible.

Of major importance, the new European Community and the United States will establish a jointly financed research and development program, the purpose of which will be to improve the performance of these reactors and thus to further the economic feasibility of nuclear power. Information developed under the joint program will be made available to American and European industry for the general advancement of power reactor technology.

In addition to the international agreement submitted herewith, the necessary requests for congressional action required to carry out the program will be submitted shortly.

I believe that the initiation of this program of cooperation with Euratom represents a major step in the application of nuclear technology for the benefit of mankind.

The United States and Euratom have reaffirmed their dedication to the objectives of the International Atomic Energy Agency and intend that the results of this program will benefit the Agency and the nations participating in it. Consideration is now being given to ways in which the United States can work with the Agency in carrying forward its functions. A proposed agreement for cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency is now being negotiated and is under review by the Agency. This agreement provides principally for the transfer of the special nuclear material already offered to the Agency by the United States for certain services, such as chemical processing, and for the broad exchange of unclassified information in furtherance of the Agency's program.

In recognition of the importance of the joint United States-Euratom program, I must stress its urgency. It was only on the 1st of January of this year that the new Community came into being, determined to fulfill its obligation to create the conditions which will permit the earliest development of nuclear power on a major scale. The Community is determined, as are we, that the joint program should be initiated this year. I am sure that the Congress, having in mind the political and economic advantages which will accrue to us and our European friends from such a joint endeavor, will wish to consider quickly and favorably the proposed program.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

The White House, *June 23, 1958.*