

'Europe and America', from Corriere della Sera (16 July 1962)

Caption: On 16 July 1962, the Italian daily newspaper Corriere della Sera leads with the determination of the US President, John F. Kennedy, to establish a partnership between the United States and the Six, with particular regard to the issue of nuclear deterrence.

Source: Corriere della Sera. 16.07.1962, n° 20; anno 1. Milano: Corriere della Sera. "Europa e America", auteur:Guerriero, Augusto , p. 1.

Copyright: (c) Translation CVCE.EU by UNI.LU

All rights of reproduction, of public communication, of adaptation, of distribution or of dissemination via Internet, internal network or any other means are strictly reserved in all countries.

Consult the legal notice and the terms and conditions of use regarding this site.

URL:

http://www.cvce.eu/obj/europe_and_america_from_corriere_della_sera_16_july_1962-en-caa40234-a7c3-49fc-a3b7-3830e2d4824f.html



Last updated: 05/07/2016

Europe and America

Two weeks ago, President Kennedy introduced the idea of a 'Declaration of Interdependence' (between Europe and America, of course) as well as that of a 'concrete Atlantic partnership'.

The 'Declaration of Interdependence' would serve no purpose, and this for two reasons. Firstly because, in international as much as in private relations, declarations of sentiment (of friendship, for example) or of general and abstract principles are not binding and therefore no purpose is served. The second reason is that 'interdependence' between Europe and America is already a fact; it has been created by geography as well as history, and a declaration would add nothing to this situation.

It seems, however, that the real import behind the President's message is something else: the concept of an equal partnership; an association of equal partners; a partnership that would also, or above all, involve nuclear matters.

And how can one create an association of equality between Europe and America in the nuclear field? President Kennedy claimed that the United States was 'willing to discuss an alternative to the present situation in which the West is entirely dependent on American nuclear power'. He also referred to 'strong pressures for the creation of a European nuclear force'. The *New York Times* pointed out that Washington had acknowledged Europe's aspiration to equality in the nuclear field.

It seems as if the President is trying to avoid the obstacle that has appeared on his course: an obstacle by the name of Charles de Gaulle. If General de Gaulle, according to *The Spectator*, was merely speaking about *grandeur* or advocating a tougher policy towards the Soviet Union, he would not constitute such a great problem for American diplomacy. What makes his attitude of resistance towards America so significant is that it makes him the representative of an incipient European nationalism.

There is a vague desire in Europe for a change in the structure of the Atlantic Alliance. It is a claim for political and military parity, a claim arising from Europe's consciousness of its new economic power. Possession of the nuclear deterrent would be an essential part of this parity. For the moment, General de Gaulle is the voice of these European claims and aspirations. He is playing the European card against the United States. But his position, the *The Spectator* continues, is seriously weakened by the attitude that he adopts at the same time towards European 'integration'. Though it may be logical for an 'integrated' Europe to have its own deterrent, it is not logical that this should be held by France as a means of increasing its influence in Europe.

If one considers the speech given by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara (against national deterrents) together with President Kennedy's speech and his subsequent declarations at the press conference, the position of the United States clearly remains as follows: America is offering a partnership of equals (including a partnership in the nuclear field) to an integrated Europe. It would not, however, be prepared to extend this offer to a non-integrated Europe (as General de Gaulle would like) or, still less, to France alone. Hence, while until yesterday it had been President de Gaulle who, championing neo-nationalism in Europe, had played the European card against America, it is now President Kennedy's turn to play it against General de Gaulle.

It is against this background that we have to consider the change that has taken place over the past few days in the position of the French Government. On Friday, Foreign Minister Couve de Murville had declared to the Commission on Foreign Affairs, 'The idea of a European nuclear armament is worth considering as long as it is understood that possession of these arms and the decision to use them is up to the European Countries.'

The change at issue is as follows: while, until yesterday, President de Gaulle had always spoken of a national deterrent, that is to say an exclusively French nuclear armament, his Government has today accepted the idea of a European nuclear armament. The reason for this change has, in part, been pointed out by our newspaper's correspondent in Paris: the motion by the four Parliamentary Parties at the National

Assembly against 'an exclusively national offensive force' and in favour of a 'Community solution'. But there is furthermore the need to react to President Kennedy's manoeuvre. For that reason General de Gaulle is now trying not to let the European card be snatched from him by joining forces with the other Community Governments and by no longer exclusively championing French claims (or rather his own personal claims) but the aspirations of the whole of Western Europe.

Augusto Guerriero