

## 'European integration discussed in Brussels' from Il nuovo Corriere della Sera (12. Februar 1956)

**Caption:** On 12 February 1956, at a meeting between the Foreign Ministers of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in Brussels, the Italian daily newspaper Il nuovo Corriere della Sera reports on the discussions on the revival of European integration.

**Source:** Il nuovo Corriere della Sera. 12.02.1956, n° 87; anno 81. Milano: Corriere della Sera. "L'integrazione europea discussa a Bruxelles", auteur:Tomaselli, Cesco , p. 5.

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## European integration discussed in Brussels

**Three stages, each lasting four years, planned for the completion of the Common Market — A central authority required to coordinate the work of Euratom — Mr Martino explains the Italian position**

From our special correspondent

**Brussels**, 11 February, evening.

The conference of the six ECSC Foreign Ministers began today at 2.30 p.m. at the Senate building in Brussels and ended at 7 p.m. A press release will be issued tomorrow at 11 a.m. Shortly before the meeting began, Mr Gaetano Martino outlined the Italian government's position to me. 'At Messina, as you will remember, a number of agreements were reached on the establishment of a Common Market, i.e. a harmonisation of the continental economies, not just as an end in itself, but as a means of achieving a political result: that of European integration.

'We are, and indeed we always have been, in favour of general — or horizontal as it is being called — integration as a prerequisite for political unity. We are in complete agreement with the Germans on this point. President Antonio Segni and I have discussed this issue in detail with Chancellor Adenauer and his colleagues. We are in full agreement that a Common Market and an atomic "pool" are, especially if concluded together, a major step towards the European political community towards which we are all striving.'

The conference was attended by 50 delegates and a number of experts. The Italian delegation was officially composed of Minister Martino, Mr Lodovico Benvenuti, leader of the Italian delegation to the Intergovernmental Committee set up at Messina, Ambassador Attilio Cattani, Director-General of Economic Affairs at the Foreign Ministry, Ministers Plenipotentiary Migone, Giustiniani and Cavalletti, and Embassy counsellor Ducci.

### **The Spaak report**

The largest delegation was the French delegation with 12 members, led by Christian Pineau, who, as man of the day, attracted the most attention from the press and photographers. His face gave nothing away, however. The leaders of the other delegations were Foreign Ministers Heinrich Von Brentano (Germany), Jean-Paul Spaak (Belgium), Jacques Beyen (Netherlands) and Joseph Bech (Luxembourg). Mr Pineau was invited to chair the meeting.

The meeting began with the adoption of the minutes of the conference held on 6 September 1955 in Noordwijk (Netherlands); Mr Spaak then took the floor to present the results of the Messina Committee's work. Shortly after the meeting had come to an end, Mr Spaak came to the press room to tell us how it had gone. I will try to summarise his report and the to and fro of questions and answers that followed it under the spotlights and amidst the flashes of the photographers.

He felt that 'major' progress had been made. A final report is to be presented on 15 March and immediately after, perhaps on 20 March, a further meeting similar to today's will be held in a city which has yet to be decided. The guiding principles had been 'well received' by the Six. 'We have left the vague behind, and put forward solutions to the inevitable problems; our approach was not dogmatic, but sensible and realistic. The application of the Messina principles is bringing about a revolution in Europe; we therefore need to proceed with caution.'

It is planned to develop the Common Market in three stages, each lasting four years. The aim is to set up a genuine customs union, introduce freedom of movement for workers, harmonise transport systems and issue a common currency. Time is needed to achieve all this. Obviously, as in the case of the Coal and Steel

Community, a central power will need to be set up and will have four institutions: (1) a Council of Ministers; (2) a High Authority, which will be called something else, however, since 'that name is like a red rag to a bull for some people,' the Minister noted ironically, getting a laugh from the journalists; (3) a Parliamentary Assembly; (4) a Court of Justice. This, it should be borne in mind, applies solely to the Common Market.

The Six then looked at the plan for an atomic 'pool', or Euratom as it is being called. 'I have to confess,' Mr Spaak said in reply to a question, 'that the atmosphere of the meeting was more relaxed as regards this second problem. This is virgin territory not beset by the interests and traditions involved in the other issue.' An authority of a type similar to that planned for the Common Market is also to be set up for Euratom. Whether or not the two solutions can be approached in the same way, or need to be dealt with separately, was an issue that should, according to the Belgian Foreign Minister, be seen in terms other than those in which it was generally viewed. One problem did not take priority over the other. What was at issue was the length of the organisational period.

### **Thorny areas**

At least twelve years will be needed for the Common Market, and that may not be enough; good results could be achieved in three years for the atomic 'pool'. We cannot wait until the Common Market, i.e. European economic unification, has been implemented before starting to set up Euratom.

The Six looked at a delicate point in this respect: should the atomic energy of the 'pool' be used solely for peaceful ends? 'We cannot at the outset rule out its use for military purposes,' said Mr Spaak, adding that the six delegations had agreed that it was necessary to find a formula that moderated such an exclusion without thereby opening up a breach in the system of deterrence.

Relations between the ECSC and the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation, the OEEC, whose members, as we know, include states other than the six of 'Little Europe', one of which is the United Kingdom, was another tricky point. The OEEC plan is the least advanced of all as regards European integration and leaves many doors open; as Mr Spaak confirmed, however, the ECSC plan is not definitive either. 'We have never tried to create a Europe of six. We are willing to look at the issue of other countries. As regards the OEEC, the formula of a joint declaration has therefore been envisaged; this declaration will be issued as early as possible, perhaps on 20 February.'

While awaiting the press release, this evening's impressions are good, in the sense that a step forward has been taken. The purpose of the conference was not to take decisions, but simply to listen to the report by Mr Spaak as chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee. The six Ministers authorised him to continue with this work, giving him a deadline of 15 March. After the new meeting, at the same level as today's, the Ministers will have a few weeks to study the final report; the technical phase will then lead on to the political phase, i.e. the drafting of the treaties. We should have a clear idea by the end of this year.

Cesco Tomaselli