

Address given by Mariano Rumor at the Hague Summit (1 December 1969)

Caption: On 1 December 1969, at the Hague European Summit, the Italian Prime Minister, Mariano Rumor, emphasises the political need for enhanced cooperation between the Member States of the European Communities.

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This Conference of Heads of State and Governments of Europe, which you have convened at the welcome instigation of the French President, with the agreement of the other Community member Governments, makes it incumbent on us not to disappoint the expectations and the profound hopes of our peoples. Courage and vision, the necessary qualities which mark great historical choices, are required of us today. It is urgent that we should put an end to a period of uncertainty and stagnation and ensure that the peoples of democratic Europe realize that they have once more become masters of their own destiny. The complexity of the problems confronting us and the developments of world policy require that our discussions be marked by awareness of the situation and of the needs which arise from it, and inspired by maximum frankness and spirit of conciliation.

We must therefore recover the spirit and language of those who preceded us on the road to the creation of Europe. They raised up our continent again from the ruins of war precisely because, overcoming age-old rivalries, they were able to close a tragic chapter in our history in order to open another based on mutual understanding and solidarity.

The present Summit is the fourth in the history of our Community. I think it shall be expressing the general desire when I say that it will have to be the expression of an authentic political will to proceed, with full awareness of present trends, towards more incisive and concrete forms of integration and towards more closely aligned approaches to the question of enlarging the Community.

The discussions opened, which are to go on with the participation of the Commission, will have to show us the way to solve specially urgent problems on which the existence, development and future of our Community depend.

The success of the Community system, which cannot be ignored even by its opponents, is not only the prerequisite for the achievement by Europe of an economic and social dimension adequate to meet the challenge of our times, but is also the very condition for the construction of Europe as an entity capable of making its voice heard in the dialectical confrontation between the super powers, in response to historical developments in the world.

In the preparatory multilateral and bilateral meetings of this Summit conference, we agreed to attack the problems of the economic and political development of Europe from the starting point of the outline suggested by our French friends, who instigated the meeting, in the form of a "triptych" consisting of the completion, strengthening and enlargement of the Communities.

Let us consider this logical outline as a useful tool for identifying a set of problems, the solution to which will have to ensure the relaunching and the success of the European idea, but let us remember that the three parts of the "triptych" must be considered, not separately, but, in accordance with the terms of the Treaty, in their essential political unity.

It seems to us indeed that the solutions we find to the problems of completion cannot logically be divorced from those we find to the questions of strengthening and enlargement. What we have to seek and find is a constructive harmony. It is to be sure a difficult task, but a stimulating one.

On 1 January next the Communities will enter what the Treaties call the "final" period and we mean to face up to our obligations. It would however be sufficient merely to list the most important problems of strengthening to realize at once the profound changes likely in the coming years of Community activity in a world and in a continent which feel increasingly impelled towards authentic economic integration. We are in a historic period of great changes in international relations, in the scale of production, of technology and of science, in social structures, in the aspirations of nations to prosperity, to peace, to security and to freedom.

We must therefore — and this is certainly the wish in Italy — accomplish within the time limits of the Treaties and Community laws, the tasks necessary for the internal construction of our Community in a fair

negotiation which takes into account the requirements of the parties, at the same time making the order so established impartial and thus as stable as possible. We must define the lines of the subsequent integration process to which we mean to pledge our countries and also those other European States which wish to join our Community; we must make a practical approach, with definitely determined procedures and dates, to the themes of Community enlargement. This task is rightfully set by the Treaties.

A great deal is at stake. In our view we can no longer confine ourselves to preventing a slowdown in the operation of the Community system.

Substantial economic and social integration is necessary in addition. For this purpose we are ready to make our contribution by approving a financial regulation for the common agricultural policy valid for the final period, based on a fair distribution of the burdens on the economies of the Member States, together with rules for the agricultural sectors, such as wine and tobacco, for which there is not yet a market organization, and the reform of the Social Fund. The Euratom multiannual programme will have to ensure the future of European co-operation in nuclear matters and the safeguarding of the Joint Research Centre.

But one need seems fundamental and cannot wait: a definite expression of our will to put in hand without delay and without vagueness all the necessary steps for the enlargement of the Community to include the countries which have applied to join it. The procedures, conditions and criteria, in the spirit and letter of the Treaty, must naturally be harmonized among the Six. But it is essential to end the vagueness concerning dates and procedures which surrounds this need on which there is also wide agreement among our public, which is bringing lively pressure to bear. It is moreover a matter of achieving geographical enlargement of our Community and making it more representative at ; the historical and cultural level, no less than on the political and economic plane.

In our view the end of March allows reasonable time to make the necessary preparations among the Six to set going constructive negotiations in earnest without delay.

But it is a political aim that has to be achieved. The delay in the process of political integration caused by the course of events and the failure of efforts in the meantime to get it moving again are the source of the situation of weakness and, let us admit it, inferiority to which Europe has fallen.

Europe as such is absent from the world dialogue.

On the political level, the necessary progress without which Community unity runs the risk of being confined to the sphere of economic relations with the rest of the world is not yet on a par with the economic and social consolidation of western Europe resulting among other factors from the security offered by the Atlantic Alliance.

It is obvious that the status of a politically united Europe would certainly not be inferior to the status the Community already has in the economic field. To reach such a target, it is however necessary to find a link between the requirements of those who call for the prior achievement of certain internal objectives and of those who look for the development of institutions capable of determining a common policy and ensuring democratic control. We cannot indeed remain unaware that in each of our countries increasingly authoritative and numerous voices call for the control of the Community, with all the resources which are or will be at its disposal, by a Parliament elected by the people.

Not to give the Community political institutions would be to fall short of the demands of our peoples and all those outside our frontiers whose eyes are on Europe.

We should not forget that our work has served as a model for those in other continents who hope to find in unity a solution to their problems and a democratic answer to the wish to travel speedily along the road to economic and social progress.

As I have said, the dialogue between the great powers has for some time been continuing without Europe.

Let us now be on the watch for developments which may affect the future of our own continent.

There is no doubt that of the vast assembly of world problems those concerning East-West relations, disarmament and the hope for a genuine relaxation of tension are of such pre-eminence as to determine the course of European policy in the years to come.

Our countries are today confronted with the beginning of the dialogue between the two great world powers, even if this is seriously hampered by the occurrences in Czechoslovakia. But relaxation of tension is an objective which cannot be given up. In the interests of the Czech people themselves, the dialogue had to be resumed and has been resumed. The discussions between the USSR and the USA, which precisely in the last few days have made a promising beginning in Helsinki, today induce us to express the most sincere hope of success

But if this is our hope and if, at the same time, we recognize that America does not omit to consult its allies, we cannot fail to see the full extent of the difference there would be in the situation of Western Europe if it could express itself with its own voice, developing its own political unity, and coherently pursuing its own plans for enlargement.

This is the more true if we consider the East-West conference to which we have also devoted our attention within the Atlantic Alliance. Therefore, to achieve a genuine relaxation of tension and a stable and durable peace, it is necessary for a united Western Europe to be able to make its views felt on a problem which is essential to it.

The current situation in the Mediterranean should accordingly receive serious thought and should impel Western Europe to united and intensive action to bring stability to this area.

We cannot, however, hope for the achievement of this union without preparation, without overcoming difficulties, without creating the conditions for it by means of realistic solutions acceptable to all. It will therefore be an objective to be achieved in stages, but, we hope, at a progressive and steady pace.

These thoughts have prompted our earnest support of today's meeting.

We believe that it can and should lead to a pledge to find solutions to fundamental Community problems. We believe that the Community needs a fresh start capable of infusing faith and creating a turning point in the European situation. Let us safeguard the existence of our Community and consolidate our institutions; let us enlarge our boundaries geographically; let us at the same time reinvigorate the process of integration by means of structural action on all the necessary fronts, even if not covered by the Treaties of Rome, using all the energies of our countries and responding to the rightful and vigilant impatience of youth, which today thinks and acts with a European mind.

At this point we confront the particularly important problems in the development of a Community which is intent on becoming a new event in history: problems of culture, science and technology:

If we do not make the decisions, events will take over and leave us standing.

I know how complex the problems which I have been discussing are. The target is not easy to reach. We think nevertheless that it is not beyond the powers of our countries, provided that the Governments have the sincere determination to reach it and not to fail to rise to this historic occasion. From this city, whose name is inseparably linked with initiatives for peace and the creation of institutions destined to govern relations between States on a basis of law, we would like to see a new impetus start, which after Messina and Rome, will mark an important stage in European unity.