

## Interview with Hans-August Lücker: the relationship between Paul-Henri Spaak and Walter Hallstein (Bonn, 15 May 2006)

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[François Klein] How well did Paul-Henri Spaak and Walter Hallstein work together?

[Hans-August Lücker] Very well indeed! Couldn't have been better. And that has more to do with the subject they were dealing with than their personal qualities. Paul-Henri Spaak was a man of broad horizons, a man who strove to do good things, but he was also aware that things could be less than good. He was also driven by the realisation that Europe could not be the creation of just one country, or of one party. All of us working at European level were firm believers in that. It was also true for Hallstein and me. We never succumbed to the temptation of thinking that we could decide matters on our own. Paul-Henri Spaak shared that approach, as did Mansholt. We needed each other, needed to work together if we were going to build Europe.

I remember Paul-Henri Spaak saying once 'Time enough to worry about our party-political concerns and various differences once Europe is up and running. Until it is, we have to work together. We can talk about those things later. Some people want more of a social dimension, whilst others want more of an economic one. We shall just have to see how it goes. But that's not what matters at the moment.' That was Henri Spaak for you.

And he was a fair interlocutor. He was a good listener and he was good at arguing a case — he was never at a loss. I thought very highly of him. He was from a different party, but that didn't bother me. We often dined together, and these cosy chats over a nice glass of wine and a decent meal ... you get to know each other better. You develop more of a personal relationship. And it doesn't have to be in a big group. Never more than four, and ideally just two, that's how you get close and interact.

And Hallstein ... Hallstein was more of an introvert, confident of his own expertise and abilities but also — to my mind — rather regretful that that he lacked the qualities which we parliamentarians naturally bring to the table. He couldn't ... well, he could ... he was a speaker who commanded your attention, even though it was hard work, because you knew he had something worth saying. That's the bottom line. His was a different kind of personality from Paul-Henri Spaak's, but that didn't stop them from working well together. Each had enormous respect for the other, enormous respect. Paul-Henri Spaak said: 'If Walter Hallstein didn't exist, we'd have to invent him.' Henri Spaak couldn't have done what Hallstein did. Spaak knew that, but it wasn't a problem. [Spaak] was the man who always had to be politically vigilant to ensure that things went according to plan, and Hallstein was the man who had to ensure that what they put together — because drafting a treaty of that kind is no easy undertaking — that what they put together was politically practicable. That united them.

[François Klein] What did Paul-Henri Spaak do at Val Duchesse during the talks?

[Hans-August Lücker] He more or less left it all to Hallstein. That was how much he respected him. He knew that Hallstein was a safe pair of hands, and Paul-Henri Spaak really only took part in the talks when he had time. Which was not all that often. He left it to Hallstein, knowing that with Hallstein in charge it would be all right.