

**JOURNAL OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION HISTORY**  
**REVUE D'HISTOIRE DE L'INTÉGRATION EUROPÉENNE**  
**ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR GESCHICHTE DER EUROPÄISCHEN INTEGRATION**

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**The Liaison Committee of Historians** came into being in 1982 as a result of an important international symposium, that the Commission had organized in Luxembourg in order to launch historical research on European integration. It consists of historians of the European Union member countries, who have specialized in contemporary history.

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- gathers and conveys information about works on European history after the Second World War;
- advises the European Union in the matter of scientific projects to be carried through. Thus, the Liaison Committee was commissioned to make publicly available the archives of the Community institutions;
- enables researchers to make better use of the archival sources;
- promotes scientific meetings in order to get an update of the acquired knowledge and to stimulate new research: six research conferences have been organized and their proceedings published, a seventh conference will take place in Essen (Germany).

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- d'aider à une meilleure utilisation par les chercheurs des moyens de recherche mis à leur disposition (archives, sources orales...);
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L'édition du *Journal of European Integration History – Revue d'histoire de l'intégration européenne – Zeitschrift für Geschichte der europäischen Integration* se situe dans le droit fil des préoccupations du Groupe de liaison. Première revue d'histoire à se consacrer exclusivement à l'histoire de la construction européenne, le *Journal* se propose de fournir un forum permanent au nombre croissant de jeunes historiens vouant leurs recherches à l'Europe contemporaine.

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Le Groupe de liaison bénéficie du soutien de la Commission européenne. Ses colloques et publications se font en toute indépendance et conformément à la méthode critique qui est celle des historiens.

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Fernando GUIRAO, coordinator

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## **Supranationalität als Novum in der Geschichte der internationalen Politik der fünfziger Jahre**

*Guido Thiemeyer*

In der Geschichte der internationalen Beziehungen gelten die fünfziger Jahre des 20. Jahrhunderts längst als Epochenwende, durch die eine seit 1914 andauernde Periode der Unsicherheit in nahezu allen Bereichen des politischen Lebens durch eine neue Phase der Stabilität abgelöst wurde, die wiederum zumindest bis 1989/90 dauerte.<sup>1</sup> In den Jahren zwischen 1950 und 1955 erlangten die zum Teil neugegründeten westeuropäischen Nationalstaaten jene Stabilität, die ihre Existenz bis in die Gegenwart sicherte. In jenen Jahren begann der in diesem Ausmaß ungeahnte und in kaum zu überschätzendem Maße zur gesellschaftlichen Stabilität beitragende westeuropäische Wirtschaftsaufschwung. Auch auf dem hier interessierenden Gebiet der internationalen Politik formierte sich in den Jahren 1954/55 jenes für die Epoche des Kalten Krieges charakteristische globale Allianssystem, das ebenfalls bis zur Auflösung des Warschauer Paktes existieren sollte. In diesem Zusammenhang fällt vor allem die Vielzahl von neuen internationalen Organisationen sehr unterschiedlichen Zuschnitts in Westeuropa auf: Die OEEC und die Europäische Zahlungsunion, der Europarat und – auf militärischem Gebiet – die NATO sowie die Westeuropäische Union stammen alle aus jenen wenigen Jahren. Herausragende Bedeutung bis in die Gegenwart erlangte vor allem die Europäische Gemeinschaft für Kohle und Stahl (EGKS), deren sechs Mitglieder 1958 die Europäische Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft (EWG) gründeten. Die Bedeutung dieser beiden Organisationen liegt in der völkerrechtlich völlig neuen Konstruktion der Supranationalität, die hier zum ersten Mal in die Geschichte der internationalen Politik eingeführt wurde. Was bedeutet in diesem Zusammenhang Supranationalität, und warum entstanden diese neuen internationalen Organisationen erst nach 1945 und nicht schon vorher? Diesen Fragen soll im Folgenden nachgegangen werden. Zunächst wird kurz definiert, was Supranationalität bedeutet, dann auf die Interpretationsversuche der Politik- und Geschichtswissenschaft zu diesem Phänomen eingegangen und schließlich ein eigener Ansatz gesucht, um die Bedeutung der Supranationalität in den internationalen Beziehungen nach 1945 zu erklären.

Eine supranationale Organisation – das läßt sich aus dem Namen schon ableiten – ist eine über den Nationalstaaten stehende Institution. Im Gegensatz zu anderen internationalen Organisationen übertragen die Nationalstaaten einer supranationalen Organisation einen Teil ihrer nationalen Souveränitätsrechte, das heißt die supranationale Organisation kann unabhängig von den Nationalstaaten eigene Entscheidungen treffen, die ihre Mitglieder rechtlich binden. Im Europarecht wird Supranationalität daher verstanden als „verfassungsrechtliche Durchsetzbarkeit

1. H.-P. SCHWARZ, „Die Fünfziger Jahre als Epochenwende“, in: *Wege in die Zeitgeschichte*, Hrsg. J. HEIDEKING, G. HUFNAGEL, F. KNIPPING, Berlin, New York 1989, pp. 473-496.

öffentlicher Gemeinschaftsgewalt gegen Staatsgewalt.“<sup>2</sup> Eine supranationale Organisation wird daher auch zumindest in den ihr zugesprochenen Teilbereichen zu einem eigenständigen politischen Akteur im internationalen System. Die erste supranationale Organisation war die Europäische Gemeinschaft für Kohle und Stahl, die 1952 gegründet wurde und auf den Schuman-Plan vom Mai 1950 zurückging. Ihr übertrugen die Mitgliedstaaten die zuvor nationalen Kompetenzen in bezug auf die Kohle- und Stahlpolitik. Ab 1958 entstand auf der Basis der Römischen Verträge die Europäische Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft, heute die erste Säule der Europäischen Union (EU), der die Mitgliedstaaten schrittweise Teilbereiche der Wirtschaftspolitik übertrugen. In anderen Bereichen wie der Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik hat die EU hingegen keine Kompetenzen, die Entscheidungen auf nationaler Ebene zu präjudizieren. Die EU ist heute die einzige supranationale Organisation. Hingegen ist die UNO eine internationale Organisation. Der Sicherheitsrat kann zwar Beschlüsse fassen, die für alle Mitglieder verbindlich sind, doch haben die fünf ständigen Mitglieder des Sicherheitsrates, Rußland, USA, Großbritannien, Frankreich und China, ein Vetorecht, ihre nationale Souveränität wird also nicht eingeschränkt.

## I

Im Gegensatz zur Geschichtswissenschaft hat die politikwissenschaftliche Integrationsforschung schon bald einige Ansätze zur Interpretation dieses neuen Phänomens entwickelt.<sup>3</sup> Die Neofunktionalisten sahen die supranationale europäische Gemeinschaft als Keimzelle einer neuen politischen Autorität jenseits des Nationalstaates, die wegen ihrer höheren Problemlösungskompetenz sukzessive immer mehr nationalstaatliche Aufgaben anziehen würde. Seit den sechziger Jahren wurde die europäische Integration daher auch als aktive Friedenspolitik beschrieben, die den Nationalstaat als vermeintliche Ursache der beiden Weltkriege überwinden werde. Kritiker warfen den Neofunktionalisten vor, eine teleologische Entwicklung zu einem europäischen Nationalstaat zu konstruieren, die zudem stark idealistisch geprägt sei. Im Gegensatz hierzu interpretierte die realistische Schule die europäische Gemeinschaft als internationale Organisation, die die Interessen der Nationalstaaten koordiniere ohne sie jedoch wirklich zu überwinden. Über den Ministerrat behielten die Nationalstaaten die Kontrolle über die Aktivitäten der Gemeinschaft, von einer überstaatlichen Organisation könne daher keine Rede sein.

2. H.P. IPSEN, *Europäisches Gemeinschaftsrecht*, Tübingen 1972, p. 67. Vgl. auch T: BUERGENTHAL, K. DOEHRING, J. KOKOTT, H. G. MAIER, *Grundzüge des Völkerrechts*, Heidelberg 1988, pp.47-51; J. WEILER, The Community System:the Dual Character of Supranationalism, in: *Yearbook of European Law*, Vol.1 (1981) Oxford 1982, pp. 267-306.

3. M. JACHTENFUCHS, B. KOHLER-KOCH, „Regieren im dynamischen Mehrebenensystem“, in: dies. (Hrsg.), *Europäische Integration*, Opladen 1996, pp. 15-44.

In den letzten Jahren nahm die Politikwissenschaft Abschied von diesen allzu allgemein gehaltenen Erklärungstheorien und interessierte sich vor allem für die veränderte Staatlichkeit der Europäischen Union im Vergleich zu den herkömmlichen Nationalstaaten. Diese basierten, wie Beate Kohler-Koch und Cornelia Ulbert kürzlich noch einmal herausarbeiteten, auf einer Kongruenz von politischer Herrschaft, Wirtschaftsorganisation, rechtlicher Verfassung und gesellschaftlicher Selbstdefinition.<sup>4</sup> Durch die intensivierten internationalen Austauschbeziehungen sei dieses System jedoch brüchig geworden, das herkömmliche Modell demokratischer Herrschaft damit verloren gegangen. Diese Entwicklung habe die nationalen Regierungen veranlaßt, einzelne konkrete Politikbereiche auf die supranationale Ebene zu übertragen. Hierdurch entstand ein komplexes Gesamtsystem, das am besten mit dem Begriff „Mehrebenensystem“ erfaßt werden könne. Die Politik sei damit gleichsam der Entwicklung der internationalen Wirtschaftsbeziehungen hinterhergelaufen, um den Gestaltungsspielraum zurückzugewinnen, der ihr durch die Internationalisierung der Wirtschaft verloren gegangen sei. Dies ist jedoch ein ambivalenter Prozeß: Zum einen ist die Europäische Union eine Reaktion auf die Internationalisierung der Wirtschaftsbeziehungen, zum anderen treiben ihre Institutionen diese Entwicklung selbst voran.

Zu diesem Problem hat der Freiburger (Schweiz) Finanzwissenschaftler Guy Kirsch eine Interpretation vorgelegt, die sich an den Kategorien der ökonomischen Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse orientiert:<sup>5</sup> Nach der Katastrophe des Zweiten Weltkrieges, der die potentielle Destruktivität des internationalen Systems auf der Basis der Nationalstaaten verdeutlicht habe, hätten Politiker nach Wegen gesucht, um das Problem der Friedenssicherung zwischen den Nationalstaaten mit geringeren Transaktionskosten zu bewältigen. Die konventionelle Form der Verhandlungen zwischen den Regierungen sei zu umständlich und langwierig geworden, als daß sie dem Problem der „kollektivexternen Effekte“ (gemeint ist hiermit die Sicherung des Friedens zwischen den Nationalstaaten) hätten gerecht werden können. Durch die supranationale Integration seien die externen Kosten der Friedenssicherung zwischen den Nationalstaaten internalisiert worden – zum Vorteil aller. Hieran hätten die Gründer der EWG durchaus auch persönliches Interesse gehabt: Ihnen blieben über den Ministerrat wesentliche Kompetenzen erhalten, gleichzeitig konnten sie die Verantwortung für unpopuläre Entscheidungen gegenüber dem Wähler abgeben. Die Entscheidung der verantwortlichen Politiker, nationale Souveränität zugunsten einer supranationalen Institution abzugeben, sei also durchaus rational und im eigenen Interesse gewesen. So elegant diese Interpretation auf der Basis der wirtschaftswissenschaftlichen Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse auch anmutet, es fragt sich doch, inwieweit ökonomische Kategorien das Handeln von Politikern in der internationalen Politik erfassen können und ob es überhaupt gerechtfertigt ist, die auch

4. B. KOHLER-KOCH, C. ULBERT, „Internationalisierung, Globalisierung und Entstaatlichung“, in: *Nationalstaat im Spagat: Zwischen Suprastaatlichkeit und Supranationalität*, Hrsg. R. HASSE, Stuttgart 1997, pp. 53-88.

5. G. KIRSCH, „Der Nationalstaat im Spannungsfeld von Suprastaatlichkeit und Infranationalität“, in: *Nationalstaat im Spagat*, pp. 9-37.

in der Volkswirtschaftslehre umstrittene Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse auf nicht-ökonomische Bereiche zu übertragen. Zudem ist es unmöglich, die komplexe Motivationsstruktur etwa Jean Monnets, Konrad Adenauers oder Johan Willem Beyens hinsichtlich der supranationalen europäischen Integration mit solchen Globaltheorien zu erklären.

Aussagekräftiger sind in diesem Zusammenhang die zuletzt von der Politikwissenschaft empirisch ermittelten Erklärungsansätze, in deren Mittelpunkt ebenfalls das Phänomen „Supranationalität“ stand. Maurizio Bach wies auf die Bedeutung der bürokratischen Elite der EU in Brüssel, Luxemburg und Straßburg hin, die wegen ihrer relativen Autonomie gegenüber den politischen Leitungsgremien und des Initiativ-Privilegiums im Policy-Making-Prozeß im Vergleich zu nationalen Bürokratien gestärkt seien.<sup>6</sup> Weil diese Eliten zudem unabhängig von ihrer nationalen Herkunft agierten, sei eine genuin europäische supranationale Verwaltungselite entstanden, ein neuer „transnationaler Regimetypus“, der eine neue Steuerungsebene jenseits der Nationalstaaten bilde. Dem ist ohne weiteres zuzustimmen, doch erklärt die Untersuchung nicht, warum sich die nationalen Regierungen entschlossen, bestimmte Politikbereiche aus der nationalen Kompetenz auszugliedern, um sie einer supranationalen Organisation zu übertragen, sondern beschäftigt sich vielmehr mit den Folgen dieser Entscheidung.

Auch in der Rechtswissenschaft ist seit den siebziger Jahren eine Debatte um die Bedeutung der Supranationalität als neues Phänomen des Völkerrechts in Gang gekommen.<sup>7</sup> Während man auch hier die Europäische Gemeinschaft zunächst als „Zweckverband europäischer Integration“<sup>8</sup> interpretierte, setzte sich seit 1990 zunehmend die Erkenntnis durch, daß das europäische Gemeinschaftsrecht eine supranationale Rechtsordnung mit Verfassungscharakter darstelle.<sup>9</sup> Entscheidend sei neben der „Doktrin von der unmittelbaren Wirkung des EG-Rechts“<sup>10</sup> der Grundsatz von „Vorrang“ des Gemeinschaftsrechts gegenüber dem nationalen Recht.

„Solange jene Grundsätze (...) akzeptiert werden und der Europäische Gerichtshof (EuGH) imstande bleibt, Zweifelsfälle verbindlich zu entscheiden, haben wir es mit

6. M. BACH, „Vom Zweckverband zum technokratischen Regime. Politische Legitimation und institutionelle Verselbständigung in der Europäischen Gemeinschaft“, in: *Nationalismus, Nationalitäten, Supranationalität*, Hrsg. H. KÄELBLE und H. A. WINKLER, Stuttgart 1993, pp. 288-308.

7. Zusammenfassend hierzu: Jachtenfuchs/Kohler-Koch, „Regieren im dynamischen Mehrebenensystem“, pp. 18-19. M. SEIDEL, „Die Rechtsordnung der Europäischen Gemeinschaft als supranationale Rechtsordnung – Ausrichtung und Struktur“, in: *Nationalstaat im Spagat*, pp.179-196.

8. IPSEN, *Europäisches Gemeinschaftsrecht*, pp. 176f.

9. Jörg GERKRATH, *L'Emergence d'un droit constitutionnel pour l'Europe. Modes de formation et sources d'inspiration de la constitution des Communautés et de l'Union Européenne*, Bruxelles 1997.

A. von BOGDANDY, „Supranationale Union als neuer Herrschaftstypus: Entstaatlichung und Vergemeinschaftung in staatsrechtlicher Perspektive“, in: *Integration*, Bd. 16 (1993), pp. 210-214. C. JOERGES, „Das Recht im Prozeß der europäischen Integration. Ein Plädoyer für die Beachtung des Rechts durch die Politikwissenschaft und ihre Beteiligung an rechtlichen Diskursen“, in: Jachtenfuchs/Kohler-Koch, *Europäische Integration*, pp. 73-108.

10. Joerges, *Das Recht*, p. 78.



einer supranationalen Rechtsordnung zu tun, die sich von den internationalrechtlichen Regeln zum Verhältnis von Völkerrecht und Landesrecht signifikant unterscheidet.“<sup>11</sup>

Damit, so wird betont, sei aber noch kein europäischer Nationalstaat begründet. Die Europäische Union sei vielmehr eine Rechtsordnung „sui generis“, die sich von der anderer internationaler Organisationen ebenso wie von der der Nationalstaaten unterscheide. Gerade jene, von der Forschung inzwischen allgemein anerkannte, Formulierung von der europäischen Gemeinschaft als Rechtsordnung „sui generis“ bestätigt, daß die supranationale Integration ein Novum in der Geschichte der internationalen Beziehungen im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert ist, trägt aber nichts zur Erklärung jenes Phänomens bei.

Aus geschichtswissenschaftlicher Sicht haben die Berliner Historiker Hartmut Kaelble und Heinrich August Winkler 1993 einen Tagungsband veröffentlicht, in dem auch die Unsicherheit der Geschichtswissenschaft gegenüber dem Phänomen der Supranationalität deutlich wurde.<sup>12</sup> Ein wichtiger Ansatz findet sich in den Werken des britischen Wirtschaftshistorikers Alan Milward, der sich ausführlicher mit dem Problem der Supranationalität beschäftigte.<sup>13</sup> Er analysierte seit den zwanziger Jahren unseres Jahrhunderts einen allgemeinen Wandel in der Bedeutung des westeuropäischen Nationalstaates für den Wirtschaftsprozeß. Hatten sich Regierungen im 19. Jahrhundert darauf beschränkt, der Wirtschaft die Rahmenbedingung für ihre Aktivitäten zu garantieren, so griff der Staat seit den zwanziger Jahren unseres Jahrhunderts mehr und mehr in den Wirtschaftsprozeß ein; die öffentliche Hand wurde ein eigenständiger Wirtschaftsakteur. Dahinter stand die von John Maynard Keynes entwickelte Wirtschaftstheorie, derzufolge der Staat den Wirtschaftsprozeß durch antizyklische Wirtschaftspolitik stabilisieren und lenken müsse. Zudem spielten die wachsenden Ansprüche der Gesellschaft nach sozialer Wohlfahrt und Sicherheit eine Rolle. Dieser Funktionswandel des Staates im Wirtschaftsprozeß, so Milward, führte aber zu einer vor allem finanziellen Überforderung des Staates, der sehr bald an die Grenzen seiner Möglichkeiten stieß. Um der gewachsenen Aufgabe dennoch gerecht zu werden, hätten sich die westeuropäischen Nationalstaaten in den fünfziger Jahren zusammengeschlossen, um das gemeinsame Potential auszunutzen und die Aufgaben der sozialen Sicherheit und antizyklischen Wirtschaftspolitik besser wahrnehmen zu können. Die wirtschaftliche und finanzielle Notsituation, so Milward, führte also in fünfziger Jahren dazu, daß sich die Regierungen entschlossen, nationale Souveränität im Bereich der Wirtschaftspolitik an eine supranationale europäische Institution abzugeben.

Die von Milward entwickelte These trifft in Teilbereichen der Integration der fünfziger Jahre sicherlich zu: Vor allem die Vierte Französische Republik befand sich wegen der politischen Instabilität, den Kolonialkriegen und den strukturellen Wirtschaftsproblemen nahezu immer am Rande der wirtschaftlichen Leistungsfä-

11. Joerges, *Das Recht*, p. 80.

12. Vgl. vor allem den zusammenfassenden Beitrag von H. KAELBLE, „Supranationalität in Europa seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg. Einleitende Bemerkungen“, in: *Nationalismus, Nationalitäten, Supranationalität*, Hrsg. H. KAELBLE und H.A. WINKLER, Stuttgart 1993, pp. 189-206.

13. Zusammenfassend in A. MILWARD, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*, London 1992.

higkeit und trachtete daher danach, kostenintensive staatliche Aufgaben auf die europäische Ebene zu übertragen. Die Milwardsche Theorie versagt allerdings, wenn man die Bundesrepublik Deutschland in die Analyse einbezieht. Im Gegensatz zu Frankreich, das schon damals unter einem chronischen Zahlungsbilanz- und Haushaltsdefizit litt, erwirtschaftete die Bundesrepublik ab 1952 einen aus heutiger Sicht unvorstellbaren Haushaltsüberschuß. Bonn konnte daher in den fünfziger Jahren sozialpolitische Maßnahmen mit Leichtigkeit aus dem nationalen Budget finanzieren. Trotzdem war die Bundesregierung eine der eifrigsten Verfechterinnen der supranationalen europäischen Integration; die Montanunion und die EWG wären ohne die starke politische Unterstützung Bonns nie gegründet worden.

Es muß also aus der Sicht der damals verantwortlichen Politiker weitere Motive für die Gründung supranationaler europäischer Institutionen gegeben haben. Welche das waren und wie sie im Zusammenhang mit den von Milward und der Politikwissenschaft entwickelten Thesen stehen, das soll im Folgenden anhand deutscher, französischer, niederländischer und italienischer Quellen beispielhaft gezeigt werden.

## II

Schon in der Zwischenkriegszeit entstanden die ersten Konzeptionen für einen supranationalen europäischen Zusammenschluß, die schon damals um das Kernproblem der europäischen Staatenordnung kreisten, das auch nach 1945 die Diskussionen um die europäische Integration beherrschen sollte: Der französische Wunsch nach Sicherheit vor möglichen deutschen Aggressionen und das deutsche Bestreben nach Gleichberechtigung und internationaler Anerkennung im Staatensystem.<sup>14</sup> Der durchaus vielversprechende Erfolg, den beide Staaten im Vertragssystem von Locarno 1925 erzielten, wurde allerdings durch die zunehmend aggressive deutsche Revisionspolitik seit Beginn der Präsidentskabinette zunichte gemacht. Unter diesen Voraussetzungen hatte der vom französischen Außenminister Aristide Briand erstmals 1929 lancierte Vorschlag einer europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft keine Chance.<sup>15</sup> Während des Zweiten Weltkrieges entstanden in der französischen Exilregierung um Charles de Gaulle verschiedene Modelle für eine europäische Nachkriegsordnung, in denen vor allem Jean Monnet die Gedanken

14. P. KRÜGER, *Wege und Widersprüche der europäischen Integration im 20. Jahrhundert*, München 1995, pp. 18-25.

15. P. KRÜGER, „Europabewußtsein in Deutschland in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts“, in: *Europa im Blick der Historiker*, Hrsg. R. HUDEMANN, H. KAEUBLE und K. SCHWABE, *Historische Zeitschrift*, Beihefte NF Bd. 21, München 1995, pp. 31-54.

Briands von 1929 aufgriff und weiterentwickelte.<sup>16</sup> Er wurde zum geistigen Vater der ersten supranationalen Institution, der Montanunion.

Der Vorschlag Schumans vom 9. Mai 1950 sah vor, die deutsch-französische Kohle- und Stahlproduktion unter die Kontrolle einer gemeinsamen Hohen Behörde mit supranationalen Befugnissen zu stellen, die grundsätzlich auch anderen westeuropäischen Regierungen offenstehen sollte.<sup>17</sup> Während die Benelux-Staaten und Italien die Einladung zur Teilnahme an den Verhandlungen annahmen, blieb Großbritannien abseits. Die Londoner Regierung lehnte bis 1961 das Prinzip der Supranationalität mit Hinweis auf die Verpflichtungen bezüglich des Commonwealth und die „special relationship“ zu den Vereinigten Staaten ab.

John Gillingham und Gilbert Trausch<sup>18</sup> haben ein ganzes Bündel von Zielen herausgearbeitet, die die französische Regierung mit ihrer Initiative verfolgte. Schuman selbst nannte in seiner Erklärung drei Intentionen, die eng miteinander verflochten im Kern auf das gleiche hinausliefen: Die Vergemeinschaftung der Schlüsselindustrien sollte dem Frieden dienen, einen Ausgleich zwischen den früheren Kriegsgegnern Deutschland und Frankreich herbeiführen und die europäische Einigung fortführen. Das eigentliche Ziel war also die Friedenserhaltung, die beiden anderen Motive können als Mittel zu diesem Zweck gesehen werden. Mindestens ebenso wichtig wie die offen verkündeten Ziele waren aber die im Hintergrund der französischen Initiative liegenden Intentionen des französischen Außenministers. In diesem Zusammenhang spielte die knapp ein halbes Jahr zuvor gegründete Bundesrepublik Deutschland eine Schlüsselrolle. Diese war zwar auf der Basis des Besatzungsstatuts vom 8. April 1949 in Kernbereichen nationaler Souveränität wie der Außenpolitik und der Außenwirtschaftspolitik sowie durch die Demilitarisierung und das Ruhrstatut in ihrer Entfaltungsmöglichkeit erheblich eingeschränkt. Gleichwohl war schon 1950 erkennbar, daß sich dieser Status angesichts der amerikanischen Initiative im Kalten Krieg nicht lange aufrechterhalten lassen würde. Damit ergab sich aus französischer Sicht ein Sicherheitsproblem: Wie sollte eine erneute deutsche Aggression gegen Frankreich wie 1914 oder 1940 verhindert werden? Der Schuman-Plan erwies sich in dieser Hinsicht als kluger Schachzug, der die kriegswichtige Kohle- und Stahlindustrie dem deutschen, allerdings auch dem französischen, nationalen Zugriff entzog und damit eine schnelle

16. A. WILKENS, „Neuordnung Europas? Die Nachkriegsplanungen im Comité Français de Libération Nationale“ 1943/44, in: *1945 – 50 Jahre danach. Aspekte und Perspektiven im deutsch-französischen Beziehungsfeld*, Hrsg. T. HÖPEL und D. TIEMANN, Leipzig 1996, pp. 81-93.

17. Die Literatur zur Geschichte der Montan-Gemeinschaft wird zunehmend unüberschaubarer. Grundlegend: J. GILLINGHAM, *Coal, Steel and the Rebirth of Europe, 1945-1955. The Germans and French from Ruhr-Conflict to economic Community*, Cambridge 1991; K. SCHWABE (Hrsg.), *Die Anfänge des Schuman-Planes*, Baden Baden, Milano, Bruxelles, Paris 1988; zuletzt M. KIPPING, *Zwischen Kartellen und Konkurrenz. Der Schuman-Plan und die Anfänge der europäischen Einigung*, Berlin 1996. Einen Überblick bietet M.-T. BITSCH, „La première institution supranationale: du nouveau sur l’histoire de la Communauté européenne du charbon et de l’acier“, in: *Journal of European Integration History*, No. 1, Vol. 1 (1995), pp. 129-142.

18. G. TRAUSCH, „Der Schuman-Plan zwischen Mythos und Realität. Der Stellenwert des Schuman-Planes“, in: *Europa im Blick der Historiker*, pp 105-128.

unkontrollierte deutsche Aufrüstung wie in den dreißiger Jahren unmöglich machte. Es ging also darum, die Bundesrepublik mit ihrem gewaltigen Wirtschaftspotential in Westeuropa zu verankern und so nationale Alleingänge, vor allem auf militärischem Gebiet, auszuschließen.

Neben diesen außen- und sicherheitspolitischen Argumenten spielten jedoch auch wirtschaftspolitische Aspekte eine Rolle, auf die vor allem Jean Monnet großen Wert legte. Im Januar 1946 war in Paris unter seiner Leitung das Commissariat Général du Plan gegründet worden, eine wirtschaftliche Planungsbehörde mit der Aufgabe, einen Modernisierungsplan für die durch den Krieg zerstörte französische Wirtschaft zu erarbeiten.<sup>19</sup> Ein Schwerpunkt der von Monnet entworfenen französischen Modernisierungsstrategie lag auf dem Stahlsektor, damals einer Schlüsselindustrie, deren Produktionsziffern vielfach als Indikatoren für die Leistungsfähigkeit der Volkswirtschaft angesehen wurden. Französische Wirtschaftspolitiker forderten 1946, daß das französische Produktionsniveau nie mehr unter das deutsche sinken dürfe. Aber schon 1949 hatte die westdeutsche Stahlproduktion die französische eingeholt; 1950 erzeugte die Bundesrepublik unter alliierter Kontrolle 12,1 Millionen Tonnen Stahl, Frankreich kam trotz größter Anstrengung lediglich auf 8,6 Millionen Tonnen.<sup>20</sup> Der Modernisierungsplan von 1946 drohte also schon 1950 zu scheitern, und Jean Monnet versuchte, ihn durch einen gemeinsamen deutsch-französischen Markt für Kohle und Stahl zu retten. Die französische Wirtschaft sollte der harten deutschen Konkurrenz ausgesetzt und dadurch zu Höchstleistungen angespornt werden. Erst unter dem Druck des Wettbewerbs, so spekulierte Monnet, würde sich die französische Stahlproduktion dem internationalen Niveau anpassen.

Welche Rolle spielte in dieser Konzeption die Supranationalität? Warum wählte die französische Regierung diese Organisationsform für die Gemeinschaft für Kohle und Stahl? Für die wirtschaftspolitischen Ziele war die supranationale Struktur nicht erforderlich. Wenn Monnet die französische Stahlindustrie der deutschen Konkurrenz aussetzen wollte, dann hätte es ausgereicht, die künstlichen Handelsbarrieren zwischen beiden Ländern im Rahmen einer Freihandelszone abzubauen. Die Sicherung der deutschen Ruhrkohle für die lothringische Stahlindustrie, ein weiteres Ziel der französischen Initiative, wäre leichter über langfristige bilaterale Handelsverträge zwischen Paris und Bonn zu erreichen gewesen. Die supranationale Konstruktion der Gemeinschaft diente also allein den sicherheitspolitischen Zielen der französischen Initiative. Die leistungsfähige deutsche Kohle- und Stahlindustrie sollte dem deutschen nationalen Zugriff entzogen werden, um eine Großmacht-Stellung des westdeutschen Teilstaates in Europa zu verhindern. Das verweist auf einen anderen Zusammenhang: Unter den Attributen, die die Groß- oder gar Weltmachtstellung eines Landes im internationalen System begründen, war die

19. P. MIOCHE, „L’Invention du Plan Monnet“, in: *Modernisation ou décadence. Etudes, témoignages et documents sur la planification française réunis par B. CAZES et P. MIOCHE*, Aix en Provence 1990, pp. 13-46.

20. Zahlen in: *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1954*, „Internationale Übersichten“, p. 60, Stuttgart, Köln 1954.

Bedeutung des Faktors Wirtschaft gegenüber den anderen Faktoren seit dem 19. Jahrhundert beständig gewachsen. Um eine deutsche Großmachtstellung in Westeuropa zu verhindern, entschlossen sich die französischen Politiker daher, die Kohle- und Stahlindustrie als eines der wichtigsten Attribute einer Großmacht aus dem deutschen nationalen Zuständigkeitsbereich auszugliedern und einer Hohen Behörde zu unterstellen. Problematisch aus französischer Sicht war, daß Paris selbst nun seine Kohle- und Stahlerzeugung aus der nationalen Zuständigkeit entlassen mußte, aber das war der Preis für den deutschen Verzicht. Entscheidend war, daß diese sicherheitspolitische Maßnahme allein mit dem Instrument der supranationalen Integration erreicht werden konnte. Nur wenn die Bundesrepublik großmachtrelevante Faktoren ihrer nationalen Souveränität aufgab, konnten die französischen sicherheitspolitischen Bedürfnisse befriedigt werden.

### III

Die deutsche Bundesregierung ging 1950 unmittelbar auf die französischen Vorschläge ein, weil sie ihr Anerkennung und Gleichberechtigung in der internationalen Politik versprochen. Europapolitik diente der Regierung Adenauer bis 1954 dazu, „überhaupt wieder in die Außenpolitik zu kommen“, wie der Kanzler im Frühjahr 1956 an Wirtschaftsminister Ludwig Erhard schrieb.<sup>21</sup> Das wichtigste außen- und europapolitische Ziel, die nationale Souveränität und Gleichberechtigung, wurde mit der Unterzeichnung des „Deutschlandvertrages“ und dem westdeutschen Beitritt zur NATO im Oktober 1954 erreicht. In Bonn mußte man sich daher Gedanken über den Fortgang der Europapolitik machen, und auch hier spielte das Instrument der Supranationalität eine zentrale Rolle.

Erste Überlegungen für die Fortführung der deutschen Europapolitik für 1955 stellte der Abteilungsleiter für Europafragen im Auswärtigen Amt, Carl Friedrich Ophüls, an. Dessen Überlegungen kreisten im Frühjahr 1955 um sehr grundsätzliche Fragen. Er entwarf eine Denkschrift mit dem Titel „Die Möglichkeit des Weltfriedens“, in der er verschiedene internationale Systeme von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart unter dem Aspekt der Friedenssicherung analysierte.<sup>22</sup> Für die Gegenwart der fünfziger Jahre zog er daraus die Konsequenz, daß der Weltfrieden am besten durch ein Gleichgewichtssystem aus zwei Blöcken gesichert werden könnte, in dem sich eine Kombination aus der Sowjetunion und China sowie den Vereinigten Staaten und Westeuropa gegenüberstanden. Voraussetzung hierfür aber war, daß Westeuropa als Einheit in der Weltpolitik agierte, denn nur geeinigt konnte es das Potential einer Großmacht aufbringen, die gleichberechtigt mit den USA das Gegengewicht zur kommunistisch beherrschten Welt bildete. Schon am 26. März

21. Brief Adenauers an Erhard 13.4.1956, zit. nach V. HENTSCHEL, *Ludwig Erhard. Ein Politikerleben*, Landsberg am Lech 1996, p. 254.

22. *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes* (PAAA), *Nachlaß Ophüls*, Bd. 10, *Die Möglichkeit des Weltfriedens*, 24.5.1955.

1955 hatte Ophüls daher in einer weiteren Denkschrift die Situation der Bundesrepublik und Europas in der Weltpolitik untersucht.<sup>23</sup> Die Sowjetunion, so meinte Ophüls, habe durch das Scheitern der Europäischen Verteidigungsgemeinschaft einen wichtigen Erfolg errungen. Durch die Ersatzlösung mit einer Kombination aus Westeuropäischer Union und NATO, wie sie im Oktober 1954 gefunden wurde, sei die Katastrophe zwar noch abgewendet worden.

„Die militärische Verknüpfung zu einem Allianzsystem mit integrierter Führung stellt aber weder eine Integration dar, noch enthält sie in sich den Zwang zur Integration. Die NATO ist und bleibt notwendigerweise ein Allianzsystem. Daß die nationalen Interessen zur Zeit nicht stärker hervortreten, liegt an der faktischen Präponderanz Amerikas. In dem Maße wie diese gegenüber den stärkeren Beiträgen der Europäer zurücktritt, werden die nationalen Interessen sich akzentuieren. Ebenso enthält die WEU (...) kein wirklich vorwärtstreibendes Element der Integration.(...) Der Prozeß der Desintegration wird von außen, von der Sowjetunion, zunehmend gefördert werden. Sie wird auf die einzelnen europäischen Nationen durch Appelle an die Sonderinteressen, durch Erregung besonderer Schwierigkeiten, durch Versprechen und Drohungen einwirken, um das schwach geknüpfte Band zwischen ihnen vollends zu zerreißen. Die Anfänge sehen wir schon.“<sup>24</sup>

Diese Gedanken wurden von Staatssekretär Walter Hallstein im wesentlichen übernommen und in der Sitzung des Auswärtigen Ausschusses des Bundestages am 3. Mai 1955 vorgetragen. Hallstein spitzte die Situation hier sogar noch zu: Die europäische Integration, so erläuterte er, sei

„Ausdruck der Lebensnotwendigkeit Europas unter den gegenwärtigen Verhältnissen. Europa kann politisch und wirtschaftlich nur leben, wenn es sich einigt. Für Deutschland wie für alle anderen Staaten ist nicht die Frage, ob sie nationalstaatlich bleiben oder sich integrieren wollen, sondern nur wohin sie sich integrieren wollen: in die freie Gemeinschaft einer europäischen Integration oder in eine östliche.“<sup>25</sup>

Das deutsche Auswärtige Amt plante im Frühjahr 1955 also den Ausbau der Montanunion zu einer umfassenden politischen und wirtschaftlichen Union, die im Endeffekt über ein ähnliches Potential verfügen würde wie die Vereinigten Staaten oder die Sowjetunion. Supranationalität war aus dieser Sicht aus zwei Gründen notwendig: Zum einen wurde durch eine über den Nationalstaaten stehende Institution ein neuer politischer Akteur geschaffen, der allein die Interessen der Gemeinschaft verfolgte und deswegen dem Integrationsprozeß eine Dynamik verlieh, die die von den nationalen Regierungen abhängigen internationalen Organisationen wie die WEU oder die NATO nicht erzeugen konnten. Der Präsident der Montanunion – der erste war seit 1952 Jean Monnet – hatte allein die Aufgabe, die gemeinschaftlichen Interessen der sechs Mitgliedstaaten bezüglich der Kohle und Stahlpolitik zu vertreten. Die mit der Gründung der EWG eingerichtete europäische Kommission vertrat unabhängig von nationalen Regierungen ausschließlich die Interessen der

23. PAAA, NL Ophüls, Bd. 9, Aufzeichnung vom 26.3.1955.

24. Ebd.

25. PAAA, Abt. 2, AZ 225-10-01, Bd. 900, „Aufzeichnung zur europäischen Integration für die Sitzung des Auswärtigen Ausschusses“, 3.5.1955.



Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft. Durch die Supranationalität wurde der Integrationsprozeß dynamisiert und wurden nationalstaatliche Interessen relativiert.

Zum anderen konnte Westeuropa nur dann die von Ophüls und Hallstein angestrebte Weltmacht-Rolle einnehmen, wenn die wirtschaftlichen, technologischen und politischen Ressourcen des Kontinents unter einer Führung vereinigt würden. Kein europäischer Nationalstaat konnte aus eigener Kraft die Kosten für den Bau moderner Langstrecken-Verkehrsflugzeuge tragen, keiner konnte alleine die zivile und militärische Nutzung der Kernenergie finanzieren. Hierzu war das Potential eines gesamteuropäischen Gemeinsamen Marktes notwendig, der zudem durch einen politischen Akteur nach außen vertreten wurde und europäische Interessen in der Weltpolitik artikulierte. Letztlich strebte also das deutsche Auswärtige Amt eine westeuropäische Weltmacht an, die die im Zweiten Weltkrieg verlorene Weltmachtstellung Frankreichs, Großbritanniens und auch des Deutschen Reiches ersetzen sollte. Auch hier gilt also, was schon im Zusammenhang mit den französischen Überlegungen hinsichtlich des Schuman-Planes entscheidend war: Die Bedeutung der wirtschaftlichen Leistungsfähigkeit als Bestandteil jener Faktoren, die eine Groß- und Weltmacht definierten, war seit 1917, seit dem Aufstieg der USA und der Sowjetunion, beständig gewachsen. Seit dem Ersten Weltkrieg hatten sich mit der Sowjetunion und den Vereinigten Staaten zwei Akteure auf weltpolitischer Ebene etabliert, deren seit 1945 überragende Rolle vor allem auf ihrem wirtschaftlichen Potential beruhte. Damit war ein ökonomischer Maßstab für eine Groß- und Weltmachtrolle gesetzt, dem Europa nur mit einem Gemeinsamen Markt begegnen konnte. Hier liegt der Grund, warum sich die supranationale Integrationsform erst nach 1945 und nicht schon in der Zwischenkriegszeit durchsetzte. Erst nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg konnten die USA und die Sowjetunion ihr ökonomisches Potential vollständig einsetzen und zwangen das um Gleichberechtigung im globalen Konzert der Mächte bemühte Europa damit zum supranationalen Zusammenschluß. Supranationalität ist also aus dieser Perspektive die Konsequenz des fundamentalen Wandels des globalen Staatensystems durch den Aufstieg der Supermächte USA und Sowjetunion und die damit verbundene Neubewertung des wirtschaftlichen Potentials als eines der Attribute einer Groß- und Weltmacht. Das gewaltige ökonomische Potential dieser beiden Staaten verhalf ihnen ja nicht nur zu wirtschaftlicher Hegemonie in dem von ihnen beherrschten Teil der Welt, die ökonomische Macht verschaffte ihnen auch den Zugang zu technischen Innovationen (Kernenergie, Flugzeugtechnik), deren Bedeutung im Rahmen der Faktoren, die die Großmachtstellung eines Staates begründen, ebenfalls gewachsen war. Supranationalität war also – zugespitzt formuliert – die europäische Antwort auf den Verlust der Weltmachtrolle durch die beiden Weltkriege. Ähnlich wie die beiden Spitzenbeamten des deutschen Auswärtigen Amtes dachte der belgische Außenminister Spaak. Auch aus seiner Sicht war der wirtschaftliche europäische Zusammenschluß notwendig, um eine von den USA unabhängige europäische Großmacht zu errichten:

„Comment l'Europe peut-elle s'affirmer avec la puissance nécessaire si l'on ne réalise pas un large marché en face des marchés de 150 et de 200 d'habitants, dont les États-Unis et l'URSS nous donnent respectivement l'impressionnant spectacle?“

fragte er den französischen Botschafter Rivière am 24. November 1954.<sup>26</sup>

#### IV

Um aber die angestrebte europäische Weltmachtrolle übernehmen zu können, reichte das deutsch-französische Potential nicht aus, es mußte um das der kleineren Staaten Niederlande, Belgien, Luxemburg und Italien erweitert werden. Die deutschen Überlegungen über eine supranationale europäische Einigung wurden in diesen Staaten dankbar aufgenommen. Doch spielte der Gedanke einer europäischen Weltmacht hier eine untergeordnete Rolle, schließlich hatte keines dieser Länder vor 1939 je eine Groß- oder gar Weltmachtrolle gespielt, man vermißte sie daher auch nicht.

Wichtiger bezüglich der Supranationalität waren hier andere Überlegungen, die der niederländische Außenminister Johan Willem Beyen in einer Rede vor dem niederländischen Parlament Anfang März 1955 formulierte.<sup>27</sup> Wie zur gleichen Zeit Hallstein in Bonn forderte auch Beyen eine supranationale europäische Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft. Der Hintergrund dieser Forderung war folgender: Am Rande der Pariser Konferenzen vom 19./20. Oktober 1954 wurde zwischen der Bundesrepublik und Frankreich ein Handelsvertrag vereinbart, der der exportorientierten französischen Landwirtschaft erhebliche Vorteile auf dem umstrittenen deutschen Absatzmarkt einbrachte.<sup>28</sup> Auch die Niederlande und Italien waren wichtige Agrar-Exportstaaten, die ihre Produkte ebenfalls in der Bundesrepublik absetzen wollten, nun jedoch durch die Frankreich gewährten Privilegien ins Hintertreffen zu geraten drohten. Aus diesem Grunde forderte die niederländische Regierung, die bilateralen deutsch-französischen Vereinbarungen durch eine supranationale Zollunion der sechs Montanunionstaaten zu ersetzen, so daß alle von diesen Vereinbarungen profitieren könnten. Die Staaten der Montanunion, so erklärte Beyen in der erwähnten Parlamentsrede, bildeten eine Gemeinschaft, deren Mitglieder alle die Berücksichtigung ihrer Interessen beanspruchen konnten und die damit bilaterale Vereinbarungen gegen die Interessen dritter innerhalb der Gemeinschaft ausschloß. Eine europäische politische Gemeinschaft könne nur erfolgreich sein, so formulierte das niederländische Außenministerium, „que par des réalisations concrètes

26. *Documents Diplomatiques Français* (DDF) 1954, Tome II, No. 401: Rivière (Bruxelles) à Mendès France, 30.11.1954.

27. A.E. KERSTEN, A. HARRYVAN, „The Netherlands, Benelux and the Relance européenne 1954-1955“, in: E. SERRA (Hrsg.), *Il Rilancio dell'Europa e i trattati di Roma*, Bruxelles, Milano, Paris, Baden Baden 1989, pp. 134/135.

28. G.-H. SOUTOU, „La France, l'Allemagne et les accords de Paris“, in: *Relations Internationales*, Vol. 52 (1987), pp. 227-251. A. WILKENS, „Das Programm von La-Celle-St. Cloud. Der Ausbau der deutsch-französischen Wirtschaftsbeziehungen“, in: *Revue d'Allemagne*, Vol. 25 (1993), pp.565-580.



créant d'abord une solidarité de fait, et par l'établissement des bases communes de développement économique.“<sup>29</sup> Aus diesem Grund forderte der niederländische Außenminister eine supranationale europäische Institution. Nur wenn die Kompetenz der Nationalstaaten an eine über diesen stehende Organisation übertragen wurde, war die Solidarität zwischen den Teilen der Gemeinschaft gesichert und bilaterale Alleingänge nach dem Muster der deutsch-französischen Vereinbarungen ausgeschlossen. Unterstützung fand dieser Gedanke beim italienischen Außenminister Gaetano Martino, der in einer Parlamentsrede am 12. Oktober 1954 ebenfalls als Reaktion auf die deutsch-französischen Vereinbarungen eine „Organisation der europäischen Solidarität“ forderte.<sup>30</sup>

Supranationalität erscheint also hier als das Instrument, mit dem die kleinen Staaten der Gemeinschaft, Benelux und Italien, die Dominanz der Großen, Bundesrepublik und Frankreich, ausgleichen wollten. Durch die Übertragung der wirtschaftspolitischen Kompetenzen an eine über den Nationalstaaten stehende Hohe Behörde wurde die Dominanz der großen Mächte im europäischen Staatensystem gebrochen, und die kleinen konnten innerhalb des zuvor festgelegten Abstimmungsmechanismus der Hohen Behörde ihre Interessen besser zur Geltung bringen. Die außenpolitischen Interessen der kleineren Staaten innerhalb der Montangemeinschaft waren also im Gegensatz zu denen Frankreichs und der Bundesrepublik weniger am globalen Mächtesystem ausgerichtet, sondern orientierten sich am Prinzip des Gleichgewichtes innerhalb der westeuropäischen Staatengemeinschaft.<sup>31</sup>

## V

Doch war dies nicht der einzige Grund, warum sich speziell die Niederlande vehement für eine supranationale Organisationsform der europäischen Integration einsetzten. Außenpolitik wurde in Den Haag traditionell weniger unter machtpolitischen Gesichtspunkten konzipiert als vielmehr pragmatisch an den wirtschaftlichen Interessen des Landes ausgerichtet.<sup>32</sup> Die europapolitischen Initiativen der niederländischen Regierung, der Stikker-Plan für eine europäische Freihandelszone im Rahmen der OEEC oder auch der Beyen-Plan für eine Zollunion im Rahmen der Europäischen Politischen Gemeinschaft, sie alle trugen vor allem der Bedeutung des westeuropäischen Absatzmarktes für die Handelsnation Niederlande Rechnung. In diesem Zusammenhang spielten landwirtschaftliche Produkte, deren

29. Jaarboek van het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken 1954-55, 's-Gravenhage 1955, p. 234. (zit. nach A. Harryvan, A. Kersten, „The Netherlands“, p.131.)

30. E. SERRA, „L'Italia e la conferenza di Messina“, in ders. (Hrsg.), *Il Rilancio dell'Europa*, pp.93-124, hier p. 97.

31. M. STEINERT, G.H. SOUTOU, „Ordre européen et construction européenne – XIXe-XXe siècles“, in: *Relations Internationales*, No. 90, été 1997, pp. 127-143.

32. W. WOYKE, *Erfolg durch Integration. Die Europapolitik der Benelux-Staaten 1947-1969*, Bochum 1985.

Anteil am niederländischen Gesamtexport in den Jahren 1949/50 über 40% betrug, eine besondere Rolle.<sup>33</sup> Schon seit 1950 befaßte sich daher Landwirtschaftsminister Sicco Mansholt mit Plänen für eine europäische Agrargemeinschaft nach dem Vorbild der eben von Robert Schuman vorgeschlagenen Europäischen Gemeinschaft für Kohle und Stahl. Wie diese sollte auch der künftige gemeinsame Agrarmarkt nach niederländischen Vorstellungen von einer supranationalen Hohen Behörde geleitet werden. Doch wurden die niederländischen Planungen für eine supranationale Agrargemeinschaft nicht nur am französischen Konzept ausgerichtet, für die supranationale Hohe Behörde gab es vor allem wirtschaftspolitische Motive, wie eine Aufzeichnung der Abteilung „Internationale Organisationen“ im Haager Landwirtschaftsministerium ausführte.<sup>34</sup> Ursprünglich, so setzte die Analyse an, waren die Staaten die Träger der höchsten Souveränität, die nach außen durch das sich entwickelnde Völkerrecht sowie durch das Recht des Stärkeren begrenzt wurde. Durch die rasante Entwicklung der Technik und die mit ihr verbundenen neuen Kommunikationsmittel seien die Staaten und Gesellschaften im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert aber immer enger miteinander verbunden worden; auch der Handel habe nationalstaatliche Grenzen überwunden. Hierdurch sei eine gegenseitige Abhängigkeit entstanden, die dazu führe, daß kein Nationalstaat mehr wirklich autark sei.

„De toestand is op het ogenblik nog zo, dat de staaten door de moderne techniek in een toestand van onderlinge afhankelijkheid gedrongen, steeds meer moeten samenwerken om in stand te blijven en hun domein moeten inperken op een wijze, die op het internationale vlak ligt, door middel van wilsovereenstemming, het verdrag dus.“<sup>35</sup>

Die supranationale Integration der europäischen Staaten war aus dieser Perspektive die notwendige Konsequenz der zunehmend grenzüberschreitenden Handelsströme und der durch sie entstandenen Abhängigkeit der Nationalstaaten voneinander. Die Niederlande, deren Wohlstand vor allem auf der bedeutenden Stellung des Landes im internationalen Handelsverkehr beruhte, waren von dieser Entwicklung besonders betroffen. Auf die zunehmende Entgrenzung des Handels reagierte die niederländische Politik also mit einer institutionalisierten internationalen Kooperation im Rahmen supranationaler Institutionen; die Expansion der Wirtschaftsströme sollte mit Hilfe der supranationalen Integration politisch eingeholt werden.

33. R. GRIFFITHS, „The Mansholt-Plan“, in: ders. (Hrsg.), *The Netherlands and the Integration of Europe*, Amsterdam 1990, pp. 93-109. Für den Gesamtzusammenhang G. THIEMEYER, *Vom „Pool Vert“ zur Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft. Europäische Integration, Kalter Krieg und die Anfänge der gemeinsamen europäischen Agrarpolitik*, München 1999.

34. Ministerie van Landbouw, Natuurbeheer en Visserij, Archiefdepot, Den Haag, (ML) Direktie Internationale Organisaties, Blok2, Vol. 822, De functionale zijde van de west-Europese integratie, 9.4.1952. Die Aufzeichnung stammt wahrscheinlich vom Leiter dieser Abteilung, J.J. van der Lee.

35. Ebd., p.3. „Die Situation ist im Augenblick noch so, daß die Staaten durch die moderne Technik in den Zustand gegenseitiger Abhängigkeit gedrängt werden, sie müssen immer mehr zusammenarbeiten, um weiter bestehen zu können, und sie müssen ihre Zuständigkeiten einschränken in einer Weise, die auf der internationalen Ebene liegt, durch die Methode der Übereinkunft, einen Vertrag mithin.“

Doch war dies aus niederländischer Sicht nur ein Vorteil der supranationalen europäischen Integration. In einem bemerkenswerterweise deutschsprachigen Memorandum über die Landwirtschaftsintegration faßte Landwirtschaftsminister Sicco Mansholt am 18. Juni 1953 seine Argumente für die Supranationalität zusammen:

„Nur auf diese Weise kann vermieden werden, daß Entscheidungen, welche erwünscht und erforderlich sind, auf das Veto von einem oder mehreren Teilnehmerstaaten scheitern. Ein solches Veto wird öfters ausgesprochen, wenn unveräußerliche Interessen angegriffen werden sollten. In einigen Ländern haben Gruppen unveräußerlicher Interessen Stellungen eingenommen, die sich nicht oder nur zum Teil vom wirtschaftspolitischen Standpunkte aus verantworten lassen. Solche Gruppen fühlen sich sicher hinter den Barrieren protektionistischer Natur. Diese Barrieren wurden aufgeworfen durch den Einfluß, den die betreffende Gruppe auf die Regierung ausübte. Es sei denn daß die beratende Methode durch ein supranationales System ersetzt werden würde, werden solche Gruppen dauernd Widerstand, wie oben umschrieben, leisten können.“<sup>36</sup>

Der Hintergrund dieser Aufzeichnung war die schlechte Erfahrung, die Sicco Mansholt mit den Landwirtschaftsverbänden vor allem in Frankreich gemacht hatte. Dort war es den agrarischen Interessenvertretern aufgrund einer komplizierten innenpolitischen Interessenkonstellation, die ihnen eine Schlüsselrolle im parlamentarischen Entscheidungsprozeß zuspielte, gelungen, die vom wirtschaftspolitischen Standpunkt als notwendig erachtete europäische Landwirtschaftsintegration zu verhindern.<sup>37</sup> Auch in der Bundesrepublik agitierten der Deutsche Bauernverband und die ihm nahestehenden Parlamentarier gegen die europäische Integration auf diesem Sektor. Der aus Mansholts Sicht für das Allgemeinwohl schädliche Einfluß der Interessenverbände sollte ausgeschaltet werden, indem die wirtschaftspolitischen Entscheidungen nicht mehr durch die von demokratischer Legitimation abhängigen nationalen Regierungen und Parlamente getroffen wurden, sondern durch eine unabhängig von diesen agierende, dem Allgemeinwohl verpflichtete supranationale Behörde. Die Vertreter dieser Behörde, so Mansholts Überlegungen, könnten unabhängig von der Gunst der Wähler auch unpopuläre, aber aus wirtschaftspolitischer Sicht richtige Entscheidungen treffen. Wirtschaftspolitik sollte auf die entpolitisierte Ebene eines technokratischen Expertengremiums übertragen werden.

Hinter diesen in ihrem Kern undemokratischen Vorstellungen stand eine staats-theoretische Auffassung, die von einer strikten Trennung zwischen dem politischen und ökonomischen Sektor des öffentlichen Lebens ausging. Die Wirtschaft war hierin ein autonomes System, das seine Aufgaben nur dann erfüllen konnte, wenn es ausschließlich nach den ihm eigenen Regeln funktionierte, deren Ziel die Effizienz ist. Und damit ist das eigentliche Motiv für die Mansholtsche Forderung nach Supranationalität benannt: Es ging darum, dem marktwirtschaftspolitischen System wieder die Effizienz zurückzugeben, die es im demokratischen Pluralismus durch den beständigen systembedingten Streit der Interessen verloren hatte. Um die Effizienz zu steigern, sollten wirtschaftspolitische Kernbereiche aus dem politischen

36. ML Blok 2, Vol. 822. Memorandum über die Landwirtschaftsintegration, geheim, 18.6.1953.

37. G. NOEL, *France, Allemagne et „Europe Verte“*, Bern 1995, vor allem pp. 49-100.

Entscheidungsprozeß ausgegliedert werden. Hier liegt einer der Gründe für das heute so oft und zurecht bemängelte Demokratiedefizit der Europäischen Union.

## VI

Supranationale Integration – so ließe sich ein vorläufiges und vorsichtiges Fazit ziehen – hatte in der Frühphase der europäischen Integration in den fünfziger Jahren vier Ursachen:

1) Die schon vor Jahren von Alan Milward gewonnene Erkenntnis, daß die supranationalen europäischen Zusammenschlüsse der fünfziger Jahre eine Konsequenz der veränderten Rolle des Nationalstaates im Wirtschaftsprozeß sind, ist nach wie vor gültig. Seit dem Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts hatten die Regierungen immer mehr soziale Aufgaben übernommen und griffen auch im Rahmen der – damals noch nicht so genannten – antizyklischen Wirtschaftspolitik immer mehr in den vom Markt dominierten Wirtschaftsprozeß ein. Das jedoch erforderte einen immer größeren finanziellen Aufwand, so daß der klassische Nationalstaat bald an die Grenzen seiner Möglichkeiten stieß. Um dennoch den gewachsenen wirtschaftspolitischen Aufgaben gerecht werden zu können, entschlossen sich die nationalen Regierungen, ihre Souveränität in Teilbereichen an eine supranationale Institution abzugeben, um das im Vergleich zum Nationalstaat ungleich größere Potential der Gemeinschaft besser nutzen zu können.

2) Der supranationale Zusammenschluß war auch die Reaktion der europäischen Staaten auf die seit dem Ersten Weltkrieg beständig steigende Bedeutung der ökonomischen Leistungsfähigkeit als Faktor für eine Großmachtrolle in der internationalen Politik. Einerseits mußte das für europäische Verhältnisse überragende westdeutsche Wirtschaftspotential zur allgemeinen Sicherheit eingebunden werden. Der französische Entschluß vom Mai 1950, einen von nationalen Regierungen unabhängigen westeuropäischen Markt für Kohle und Stahl zu gründen, hatte allein außenpolitische Gründe; die mit dem Schuman-Plan verbundenen wirtschaftlichen Zielsetzungen wären auch ohne das Instrument der Supranationalität zu erreichen gewesen. Andererseits hatte sich seit 1917, dem Jahr des amerikanischen Eintritts in den Ersten Weltkrieg und der russischen Revolution, ein fundamentaler Wandel des globalen Staatensystems angekündigt, dessen Konsequenzen erst nach der europäischen Katastrophe des Zweiten Weltkrieges vollständig sichtbar wurden. Jetzt beherrschten mit der Sowjetunion und den Vereinigten Staaten zwei Mächte die Weltpolitik, deren überragende Rolle vor allem auf ihrem überlegenen Wirtschaftspotential beruhte, und die so die um Gleichberechtigung bemühten europäischen Staaten zwangen, ihr wirtschaftliches Potential unter einer supranationalen Institution zu vereinigen. Nur ein gemeinsamer westeuropäischer Markt lieferte das Potential, das notwendig war, um in technischer, militärischer und wirtschaftlicher Hinsicht zu einer Dritten Kraft zwischen den beiden Supermächten zu werden.

3) Die supranationale europäische Integration war drittens aus der Sicht der Handelsnation Niederlande ein Instrument, um die durch die intensiven Wirtschaftsbeziehungen wachsende Abhängigkeit der Nationalstaaten voneinander politisch zu sichern. Der Wohlstand der Niederlande beruhte auf der Einbindung des Landes in die internationalen Handelsströme, vor allem in Westeuropa. Diese Situation zwang die niederländische Regierung zu internationaler Kooperation. Supranationale Organisationen waren aus niederländischer Sicht notwendig, um den durch die Internationalisierung der Wirtschaft verlorenen politischen Gestaltungsspielraum zurückzugewinnen und die Expansion der Handelbeziehungen auf politischer Ebene wieder einzuholen.

4) Begleitet und möglicherweise auch beschleunigt wurde diese Entwicklung durch einen ebenfalls in der ersten Hälfte des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts entstandenen neuen Anspruch an wirtschaftspolitisches Handeln, in dem die Kategorien Effizienz und Produktivität eine entscheidende Rolle spielten. Durch den wachsenden Einfluß von Verbänden und organisierten Interessen auf wirtschaftspolitische Entscheidungen im demokratischen Staat drohten die marktwirtschaftlichen Systeme der westeuropäischen Staaten jene Effizienz zu verlieren, die sie den planwirtschaftlich organisierten Systemen Osteuropas voraus hatte. Wirtschaftspolitische Entscheidungen sollten einem über den Nationalstaaten stehenden supranationalen Organ übertragen werden, das allein dem Allgemeinwohl verpflichtet war. Ein von tagespolitischen Stimmungen und demokratischer Legitimation befreites Expertengremium, so hoffte der niederländische Landwirtschaftsminister Mansholt, würde wirtschaftspolitisch richtige, aber unpopuläre Entscheidungen schneller fällen als eine von der Wählergunst abhängige Regierung. Deswegen forderte er speziell für die Agrarpolitik eine supranationale europäische Organisation.

Die Bedeutung dieser Argumente für die Entwicklung der Supranationalität im europäischen Staatensystem der fünfziger Jahre ist kaum zu gewichten. Entscheidend war vielmehr das Zusammentreffen jener politischen, wirtschaftlichen und gesellschaftspolitischen Entwicklungsstränge, die erst in ihrer Gesamtheit und gegenseitigen Bedingtheit dazu führten, daß die europäischen Regierungen in den fünfziger Jahren zu einem neuen Instrument griffen, um drängende nationale Probleme zu lösen.

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# Legitimität durch Subsidiarität

## Der Beitrag des Subsidiaritätsprinzips zur Legitimation einer überstaatlichen politischen Ordnung in Europa

Die europäische Integration ist mit den Verträgen von Maastricht und Amsterdam weit vorangeschritten. Institutionelle Reformen und Osterweiterung werden die Europäische Union in den kommenden Jahren entscheidend weiterentwickeln. Das wirft die Frage nach der Legitimation der EU auf.

In dieser interdisziplinär angelegten Studie entwickelt der Autor Kriterien für die Legitimität der Europäischen Union. Es wird deutlich, daß die klassischen Legitimitätstheorien trotz ihrer Leistungsfähigkeit im Nationalstaat im europäischen Kontext nicht genügen. Als ein leistungsfähiges Legitimitätsprinzip für die Europäische Union wird demgegenüber das Subsidiaritätsprinzip ausgewiesen – unter Rückgriff auf dessen staatsphilosophische, sozialetische und europarechtliche Dimension.

Die Studie, die sich gleichermaßen als praxisbezogene Analyse wie als Teil der politischen Philosophie versteht, bietet somit eine längst überfällige grundlegende Ortsbestimmung des Subsidiaritätsprinzips in der EU. Ein Anhang enthält die wichtigsten EU-Texte zum Subsidiaritätsprinzip.

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## **“With but not of”: Britain and the Schuman Plan, a Reinterpretation**

*Christopher Lord*

“We are with but not of Europe” Winston Churchill thundered in one of the first memoranda he circulated to the rest of the Cabinet on his return to Downing Street in the autumn of 1951: “our attitude is that we help, we dedicate, we participate, but we do not merge and we do not forfeit our insular or Commonwealth character”.<sup>1</sup> As Churchill had supported European integration in the 1940s and criticised the attitude of the 1945-51 Labour Government to the Schuman Plan, some believed that the return of a Conservative Government would lead to a closer relationship between the United Kingdom and the proposed European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). This prediction, however, masked an important continuity of attitude between the Attlee and Churchill Governments. The first had not seen itself as cutting Britain off altogether from a nascent European Community and the second was no more willing than its predecessor to contemplate full membership of a supranational institutional structure. The policy of both was to seek a half way house, and to the extent that neither found a fully satisfactory means of being “with but not of” the new European Community, Britain’s exclusion was more complete than either intended.

This implies a very different interpretation of British policy towards the first European Community to that found in the existing literature. Thorough accounts of the reasons why full membership of the Schuman Plan was rejected are to be found in Lord Bullock’s biography of British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, in histories of the Labour Government of 1945-51 written by Kenneth Morgan and Peter Hennessy and, above all, in Edmund Dell’s ringing condemnation of what he considers to have been a missed opportunity for British leadership in the process of European integration.<sup>2</sup> Yet the reasons why complete abstention was also considered unacceptable have received less attention. John Young provides a well-documented reconstruction of the sometimes tortuous efforts of British Governments to institutionalize a relationship with the ECSC in his edited collection on Churchill’s peacetime administration, while the penultimate chapter of Dell’s book concludes that the pursuit of association was dogged by the same lack of faith that had kept the British Government out of the Schuman Plan process in the first place.<sup>3</sup> Analysis of how the early politics of supranational integration shaped the preferences of different actors on the form of any British association is to be found in Dirk Spierenberg and Raymond

1. Public Record Office, Kew [PRO], C(51)32, Memorandum by the Prime Minister, 29 November 1951.
2. A. BULLOCK, *Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary 1945-51*, Oxford 1983; K. MORGAN, *Labour in Power, 1945-51*, Oxford 1984; P. HENNESSY, *Never Again: Britain 1945-51*, London 1992; and E. DELL, *The Schuman Plan and the Abdication of British Leadership in Europe*, Oxford 1995.
3. J. YOUNG, “The Schuman Plan and British Association” in Young (ed), *The Foreign Policy of Churchill’s Peacetime Administration 1951-55*, Leicester 1988; and DELL, *The Schuman Plan*, pp. 254-82.



Poidevin's study of the High Authority, and in François Duchêne's biography of its originator and first President, Jean Monnet.<sup>4</sup> Both of these works underscore the institutional interest of the new High Authority in avoiding anything that could have allowed the British – or, indeed, governments – to “supervise” its work. A series of studies consider the interests of the coal and steel industries themselves and the way in which these shaped the policy of various governments. Notable examples are John Gillingham's study of the Franco-German industrial “core” and Ruggero Ranieri's comparative study of the very different ways in which British and Italian industries reacted to an initiative of which they were never intended to be the main beneficiaries.<sup>5</sup> Appraisals of what association achieved after it came into operation in the autumn of 1955 are to be found in William Diebold's early work on the Schuman Plan and, more recently, in Ranieri.<sup>6</sup> The broad conclusion seems to have been that the eventual association agreement was coy in its institutional commitment, slight in its policy content and negligible in its economic effects.

All of these studies, however, tend to assume that a meaningful association with the ECSC was something of a “sideshow” to rejection of full membership, rather than the logical consequence of core assumptions in the foreign and domestic policies of British Governments. Dell even suggests that they were just a cover to reassure Washington and disguise the true extent of British hostility to the ECSC.<sup>7</sup> A possible explanation for this lacuna in the literature is that rejectionist attitudes dominated public statements at the time, while the importance that many in Whitehall attached to remaining “with but not of” a supranational community only emerges from more recondite sources. Likewise, the hostility of the Labour Party and of the coal and steel industries themselves was played out in the public arena in the early 1950s, while evidence of more nuanced reflections would languish in the archives until the 1980s, probably only appearing in accessible form with the publication in 1986 of Roger Bullen and M.E. Pelly's volume in the *Documents on British Policy Overseas* series covering European integration between 1950 and 1952.<sup>8</sup> Even as recently as 1993, Ranieri would write that “a strong case for the steel industry to associate with the ECSC” was the “remarkable story of the working parties which were set up in 1950, and it is a story whose details have yet to emerge.”<sup>9</sup>

4. D. SPIERENBERG and R. POIDEVIN, *The History of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community: Supranationality in Operation*, London 1994; and F. DUCHÊNE, *Jean Monnet: The First Statesman of Interdependence*, London 1994.

5. J. GILLINGHAM, *Coal, Steel and the Rebirth of Europe, 1945-55: The Germans and French from Ruhr Conflict to European Community*, Cambridge 1991; and R. RANIERI, “Inside or Outside the Magic Circle? The Italian and British Steel Industries face to face with the Schuman Plan and European Coal Iron and Steel Community” in A. MILWARD et al. (eds.), *The Frontier of National Sovereignty: History and Theory 1945-92*, London 1993.

6. W. DIEBOLD, *The Schuman Plan: A Study in Economic Co-operation 1950-59*, New York 1959.

7. DELL, *The Schuman Plan*, p. 165.

8. R. BULLEN and M. PELLY, *Documents on British Policy Overseas, series II, vol. I, The Schuman Plan, The Council of Europe and Western European Integration 1950-2*, London 1986.

9. RANIERI, “Inside or Outside”, p. 139



The received wisdom might none the less be justified on the grounds that outright rejection of the Schuman Plan was the outcome of British Government policy even if it was not the exact intention. Because the ambition to be “with but not of” was confused, and the opposition of the Labour Party and steel industry often decisive, British policy drifted by default to a near-complete separation from the Schuman Plan process. The study of constraints on policy is, however, no substitute for an accurate characterisation of policy itself. In contrast to authors such as Dell, this article aims to show that both British Governments of the early 1950s were in earnest in seeking meaningful association with a supranational coal and steel authority. The failure of British leadership did not lie in an outright rejection of the Schuman Plan but in the conceited belief that the United Kingdom could secure the status of influential outsider.

### **The Origins of the Association Policy**

On 9 May 1950, the French Foreign Minister, Robert Schuman, announced a proposal to “pool” the coal and steel industries of France and Germany. Although the proposal was from the start directed mainly at Franco-German reconciliation, other countries were welcome to join if they wished. The key feature of Schuman’s proposal was that the “pool” would be managed by a supranational authority, strictly independent of governments.<sup>10</sup> Whilst the French Government did not insist that participation in detailed talks should involve acceptance of a supranational solution in advance, it did stipulate that no other institutional mechanism should be discussed at the conference table. Considering this to be a distinction without enough of a difference, a hurried meeting of the British Cabinet on the evening of 2 June 1950, confirmed that the United Kingdom would not take part in the negotiations.<sup>11</sup>

Whereas this can be seen in hindsight to have been a decisive parting of the ways between the United Kingdom and the new European Community, it must be emphasised that this was not exactly how things appeared at the time. The view of the inter-departmental committee of officials that advised the Cabinet on the Schuman Plan was that it was “unlikely that by refusing to join in now on the French terms we shall be prevented from participating in European discussions in some manner later on”.<sup>12</sup> Five days later, British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee assured

10. The British Government reprinted the full text of Schuman’s announcement in “Anglo-French Discussions regarding French proposals for the West European Coal, Iron and Steel Industries May-June 1950”, *Command 7950* of 1950.

11. PRO, Cabinet Papers [CAB] 128/17, Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street, 2 June 1950.

12. PRO, CAB 129/40, Integration of French and German Coal and Steel Industries, A Report by a Committee of Officials, 2 June 1950.

the French Ambassador, René Massigli of his hope that “at a later stage we might be able to come in more fully”.<sup>13</sup> And by the end of the month, policy had crystallised into the position that Britain would associate closely with a supranational coal and steel community and in all probability join an intergovernmental one. A Foreign Office memorandum summed up the position as one of preference for an “inter-governmental system in which we can participate fully” combined with confidence that it would nonetheless “be possible to find means of associating ourselves with whatever organisations may emerge from successful schemes of integration”.<sup>14</sup>

Some in the Foreign Office even anticipated a new and more fruitful relationship with both continental Europe and the United States now that Britain had seen off attempts to force it into a supranational structure and Washington had seemingly acknowledged that the arguments for European integration did not apply in Britain’s case. Forebodings of the dangers that could follow from a process of integration confined to just six states (France, Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries) were balanced by more hopeful expectations that the Schuman Plan could – if properly handled – be the initiative that finally squared the circle between the need for Franco-German reconciliation, the desire of a handful of continental states to integrate more closely, the demand of the United States for a measure of European unification in parallel with the development of its own security commitments to the region, and the wish of the United Kingdom to retain a “leading role” in Western Europe without participation in supranational institutions. For reasons such as these, Sir Roger Makins took the view that “we should take the risk of letting European federal tendencies develop and seek, if anything, to encourage them while seeking for ways of associating ourselves as closely as possible”.<sup>15</sup> Even a year later – when consideration of the Schuman Plan had become entangled with the still more dramatic Plevin Plan for a European Defence Community – exclusion from a supranational core could still be seen as a source of diplomatic opportunity in Whitehall. The notion – common in the late 1940s – that the incoherence of European politics would provide a firm basis for a British leadership role in the region was quietly replaced by the contrary assumption that a tightly organised European Community would increase the need for Britain to act as a middle man with the United States. Typical of this point of view was a memorandum produced by the influential Permanent Under-Secretary’s Committee of the Foreign Office in February 1951:

13. PRO, Prime Minister Office [PREM] 8/1428, Record of Mr Attlee’s conversation at lunch with the French Ambassador, 7 June 1950.

14. PRO, Treasury [T] 232/194, Memorandum on the consequences of contemporary movements in Western Europe towards forms of economic integration having federal implications, 19 July 1950. See also *ibid.*, Note of a meeting in Sir E. Bridges’ (Permanent Secretary to the Treasury) Room, 14 July 1950; and BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, pp. 231 and 263, Note by Sir Edwin Plowden, head of the Economic Planning Board, of a conversation with Mr Baldwin, US Embassy, 30 June 1950, and Letter from Sir Roger Makins, Deputy Under Secretary responsible for the Schuman Plan in the Foreign Office, to Sir Oliver Franks, British Ambassador in Washington, 17 July 1950.

15. BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, p. 257, Minute from Makins to Sir William Strang, Permanent Under Secretary to the Foreign Office, 12 July 1950.

“Not only would the United Kingdom perhaps have more opportunities for acting as a bridge between West Europe and North America; the fact that continental Europe has come more closely together and that the United Kingdom was less directly concerned in its grouping than some other members might well lead to closer ties between the United Kingdom on the one hand and the United States on the other”.<sup>16</sup>

Such Panglossian arguments that all could yet be made to turn out for the best depended, however, on two critical assumptions about the ability of the United Kingdom to maintain its influence in Western Europe through association with the ECSC. The first was that any association mechanism would be grounded in the common interest of European states and the external support of the United States, rather than an all-too-reversible concession to British special pleading. The second was that it would be a relationship of political equality between the United Kingdom and the Six. The calculation of both the Churchill and Attlee Governments was that a supranational nucleus of six states would probably have to consult – and even co-ordinate – with an intergovernmental grouping of all West European states if the region was not to be fatally divided by the formation of the new European Community. Britain would, in all probability, emerge as the natural leader of the “outs”. And its role as a security provider in West Europe would combine with its economic weight – not least in the coal and steel industries themselves – to give it assured influence in a body in which it was only an associate member. These thoughts – that a supranational core could be contained within an outer intergovernmental ring and that the relationship could be structured to leave Britain at least as influential as before the Schuman Plan – surfaced in a conversation in August 1950 in which Bevin told Massigli of his hope that the “two systems could co-operate” and “if possible be complementary”. He also implied that Britain had enough unilateral bargaining leverage to be comparatively indifferent about the risks of allowing the Six to co-ordinate positions between themselves before negotiating with the United Kingdom: “when they (the Six) had agreed, we as a country with a great coal and steel industry would meet the new European organization, whether this took the form of a supranational organization or governmental authority”.<sup>17</sup>

### **The Economic Case for Association with the ECSC**

One set of reasons for wanting a meaningful association agreement between the United Kingdom and the ECSC was economic in nature. The existing literature correctly identifies the reasons why the Labour Government in particular was reluctant to share control of Britain’s coal and steel industries with a supranational authority. These were industries that had only recently been nationalised (coal) – or which were in the process of being brought under public control (steel). Many in

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 393-400, Should Western Europe federate without the United Kingdom?, Memorandum by the Permanent Under-Secretary’s Committee, 13 February 1951.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 299, Bevin to Hayter, British diplomat in Paris, 31 August 1950.

the Labour movement, therefore, saw the Schuman Plan as a threat to what they had only just achieved after a thirty-year campaign of social transformation.<sup>18</sup> It was further argued that a European Coal and Steel Authority would constrain new Keynesian techniques of macroeconomic demand management in which so many hopes of avoiding a return to interwar levels of unemployment had been invested. In 1950, it was fashionable to look to Whitehall's new influence over the timing of investment in coal and steel – commonly regarded as the “commanding heights” of the economy – as the best means of stabilising the economy and ensuring full employment.<sup>19</sup> While from a point of view of Franco-German reconciliation, Monnet and Schuman could hardly have made a better choice than coal and steel to initiate their project of “sectoral integration” in Western Europe, in the case of Britain the selection of those industries cut right across the main assumptions of the post-war domestic settlement.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the Labour Government had been conditioned by repeated external payments crises to resist any move that might reduce British earnings of foreign currency, even as part of a transition to more efficient international trading and payments regimes. Michael Hogan evocatively describes British policy towards the European Payments Union (which was also being negotiated in 1950) as one of wanting to construct a “sluice gate” that could open and close between the British and west European economies, depending on the United Kingdom's overall external account.<sup>21</sup> The problem with the Schuman Plan was that the allocative decisions of a supranational high authority, or even the market logic of a customs union in coal and steel, might prevent a British Government from “managing” its balance of payments with Western Europe, so adding to an already difficult balancing act between domestic full employment, high levels of welfare expenditure and the fragile underwriting of the Commonwealth sterling area (which remained the second largest currency zone in the international trading system at a time when commerce was tightly constrained by shortage of liquidity).

On the other hand, many politicians and officials doubted whether British economic policy could remain cocooned in the assumptions of Keynesianism in one country, or indifferent to European markets and their political management structures. The starting point for this analysis was that the coal and steel industries had peculiar characteristics that could well require some regime of international capacity management if the economic errors of the interwar period were to be avoided: given the lumpiness, or to be more technical, the enormous scale and indivisibilities of capital formation in these sectors, it was easy for producers in any one country to miscalculate output and investment with adverse effects on the overall stability of the economic cycle across Western Europe as a whole. Because the United King-

18. MORGAN, *Labour in Power*, p. 106.

19. Labour Party Archives, “Summary of Discussions at Dorking”, 19-21 May 1950, Harvester Press, Microfiche 389, and “European Unity”, Draft Policy Statement, Harvester Press, Microfiche 394.

20. C. LORD, *Absent at the Creation: Britain and the Formation of the European Community 1950-2*, Dartmouth 1996.

21. M. HOGAN, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain and the Reconstruction of West Europe 1947-52*, Cambridge MA 1987, p. 300.

dom produced as much coal as the Six put together, and forty per cent as much steel, there was a good case for a measure of co-ordination in capacity management. The Government’s Economic Adviser, Robert Hall, thus informed Attlee in June 1950 that the inter-departmental working party of top officials charged with advising the Government on the Schuman Plan had “come to the conclusion that there would be a great advantage to Europe and the United Kingdom in freer market conditions, the co-ordination of investment, regulation of production in a slump and exchange of information”.<sup>22</sup> The head of the Economic Planning Board, Sir Edwin Plowden spoke of the “real problems facing the coal, iron and steel industries of Europe which we felt could be best settled by an international authority”.<sup>23</sup> And there were some suggestions that the United Kingdom could expect to do especially well out of such a regime. As its “development plans in coal and steel” had “in many cases been completed” and it had a high level of existing capacity in the industries in question, it had, on the one hand, little need to take decisions that could tempt the interventions of an international regulator and much to fear, on the other, from international crises of over-production that could flow from unregulated markets.<sup>24</sup> At the end of 1951, the Churchill Government received similar advice from the working party of officials on the Treaty constituting the European Coal and Steel Community:

“there are many interests at stake that would make it desirable for Britain to co-operate in an international coal and steel authority. It would be in our interests to see a satisfactory balance of demand and supply (...) and maintain a price level that was not open to wide fluctuations. The European coal and steel industries stand out as the obvious first choices for an experiment in integration. They are basic to the whole industrial structure of Western Europe; they are interdependent; they are peculiarly prone to wide fluctuations between boom and slump. Steel is a highly capitalized industry in which the individual producing unit is necessarily large and in which costs per hour rise sharply when plant is not working to full capacity. Instability brings dangers of violent price wars.”<sup>25</sup>

Nor was support for a measure of international capacity management in the European coal and steel industries confined to officials. Labour Party documents on the postwar reconstruction of Europe had long recognised the need for British involvement in some international planning authority to co-ordinate capacity management in West Europe’s coal and steel industries. Even before the announcement of the Schuman Plan, the Labour Party had arranged to host an international socialist conference on the control of Europe’s basic industries. The briefing notes that the Party’s international department prepared for ministers predicted that the total capacity

22. PRO, PREM 8/1428, Hall, Director of the Economic Section of Cabinet Office, to Attlee, 21 June 1950.

23. BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, p. 231, Conversation between Plowden and Baldwin, 30 June 1950.

24. PRO, CAB 129/40, Integration of Western European Coal and Steel Industries, Report by a Committee of Officials, 1 July 1950.

25. PRO, T, Franco-German Working Party [FG(WP)](51)(43), Report of the Working Party of Officials on the Treaty Constituting the European Coal and Steel Community, 31 December 1951.

of West Europe's steel industries was likely to exceed demand by eight million tons by 1953 and that this could only be eliminated by a private cartel, by cut-throat competition or by international planning. The latter was clearly to be preferred.<sup>26</sup>

The outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 removed the immediate threat of an international slump induced by excess capacity in European coal and steel industries. However, it also demonstrated that the case for some measure of co-ordination of these industries could be grounded as much in threatened shortages of vital raw materials as in the risk of their over-production. As Dell explains, access to raw materials was considered in the early 1950s to be a key determinant of a country's economic performance and political influence. In this regard, the British Government thought that it held most of the aces in its Commonwealth relationship.<sup>27</sup> As if to underscore the point that it was moving in the opposite direction to any "pooling" with Western Europe, it was actively considering a scheme that would corner the market in many vital supplies for the United States and the British Commonwealth, shamelessly relegating continental neighbours to inferior rights of access and a dependent relationship. However, the United States would have none of this. In any case, it became apparent as plans for the ECSC developed that the United Kingdom was not entirely free of its own supply dependencies on the Six. During 1951, the Labour Government found that its ability to meet its commitments to NATO rearmament without abandoning domestic objectives and possibly imperiling its political survival came to depend on access to scrap steel in West Germany. There was, moreover, an institutional message here. As the official working party explained to the incoming Churchill Cabinet, persistent shortages of key raw materials since the war had only been handled without economic dislocation or political conflict because "the distribution of German supplies had been under allied control". However, these controls – and any powers to allocate supplies in case of shortage – would now be superseded by the high authority on which the United Kingdom would not be represented. A further problem was that by forming themselves into a bloc the Six would improve their bargaining clout with third parties on whose raw materials (Swedish and North African iron ore) the United Kingdom was also dependent: "our steel is largely dependent on imported iron ore from outside the ECSC but from which the ECSC itself draws its supplies".<sup>28</sup>

Detailed industry assessments presented to both the Attlee and Churchill Cabinets suggested that from an economic point of view Britain would be well placed to associate with the ECSC (while avoiding conflicts with wider trading obligations that could come with full membership). As far as coal was concerned, it was argued that "Britain enjoys good access to ports, good quality coals and coal that is suitable for the plants of (European) consumers". British coal was clearly ahead on productivity with one index calculating this at 1.27 to Germany's 1.07 and France's 0.75 (1.00 = average productivity of Britain and the Six). Recent restrictions on

26. Labour Party Archives, Background notes for the International Socialist Conference on the control of Europe's Basic Industries, 16-18 June 1950, Harvester Press, Microfiche 392.

27. DELL, *The Schuman Plan*, p. 80.

28. PRO, T, FG (WP) (51) (43), Report of the Working Party of Officials cit., 31 December 1951.



West German production meant that the United Kingdom would start with a lead in the capitalization and modernization of its steel industry. It also had lower material and transport costs and a somewhat better match between its coal and steel industries. Across both industries, the United Kingdom would only be at a competitive disadvantage in its relatively higher wage costs. However, officials expected continental wages to converge on British levels, rather than the other way round.<sup>29</sup> While Britain had no immediate need to gain access to continental markets (it exported less than two per cent of its coal production to the Six and a mere one hundred thousand tons of steel) the working party anticipated some long-term risks to Britain’s competitive position if it failed to develop a relationship with the ECSC. The principal difficulty was that the removal of existing tariffs of between twenty and thirty-three per cent would allow an integrated coal and steel industry to develop amongst the Six. This would, in turn, enjoy economies of scale and specialization that would create a dilemma for the United Kingdom. If Britain let this low-cost West European production into its own domestic markets, its own coal and steel industries would suffer; if it excluded it, British engineering industries would be at a competitive disadvantage to continental rivals who would be able to obtain their raw materials more cheaply. With the replacement of a Labour Government with a political base in coal and steel areas by a Conservative Administration, the official working party even seemed emboldened to suggest that it was in Britain’s competitive interest for its European policy to give priority to new industrial sectors at the cutting edge of the product cycle, such as engineering. Observing that “our whole economy is dependent on engineering products in which members of the ECSC are our chief competitors”, the December 1951 report to the Churchill Cabinet continued:

“It is not an ultimate objective that we should be self-sufficient in steel. It is much more important that we should have cheap and assured supplies as the basis of our engineering exports. It would be dangerous to hamper our engineering industries when competitors have access to cheap steel. If the Community’s steel were to become cheaper than ours, it is important that we should have access to it”.<sup>30</sup>

A further risk was that ECSC countries might offer low-cost coal and steel to Commonwealth countries. This could tempt the Commonwealth away from the system of preferential tariffs that linked it to the United Kingdom and depress Britain’s export earnings, especially if the Six “dumped” surplus production on third markets at below cost price. Such arguments suggested some appreciation that Britain’s comparative insulation from the West European trading system – at its peak in 1950 – might turn out to be artificial and temporary. For example, D.M.B. Butt, who followed the Schuman Plan on behalf of the Economic Section of the Cabinet Office, complained of the “naive view that imperial preference will retain our steel export markets *ad infinitum* and that these are the only export markets that are really vital”.<sup>31</sup>

29. PRO, Cabinet Papers [CP] 378/10/8, Opinion of the Coal Board, 18 May 1950. See also T, FG (WP) (51) (43), Report of the Working Party of Officials cit., 31 December 1951.

30. PRO, T, FG (WP) (51) (43), Report of the Working Party of Officials cit., 31 December 1951.

31. PRO, T 230/182, Butt, Cabinet Office Representative on the inter-departmental working party on the Schuman Plan, to Hall, 4 July 1951.

If West European markets were important after all, the United Kingdom could not afford to remain indifferent to the possibility that the new Coal and Steel Community might just be the first step in the creation of a more general economic authority. The official working party remarked that “if the ECSC works effectively, it will inevitably involve greater unification of the economic policies of the Community. The necessary consultations in the coal and steel context will tend to draw the countries together in their (overall) trade policies”.<sup>32</sup> In the early 1950s, many politicians and officials in the British Government, whose successors would argue otherwise after 1961, were prepared to acknowledge that, once in place, supranational institutions could develop rapidly in the direction of a comprehensive governance structure. The Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Stafford Cripps, told the House of Commons of the Government’s view that the Schuman Plan “would hardly prove workable in democratic communities without complete federation”. Meanwhile, the Foreign Office described the new High Authority as a “sub-federal machinery (...) a functional internationalism”, designed as a “step towards federation” and “a proto-type of federal institutions in Europe”.<sup>33</sup> Ministers were repeatedly advised that they should only consider participation if they were prepared to be “hustled along the road to full federation through the creation of supranational authorities controlling a widening range of functions or commodities”.<sup>34</sup>

Faced with the possibility of the new Community assuming widening responsibility for the economic governance of West Europe, the arguments for institutionalising British contacts were of two kinds. First, to have a say in the making of rules and institutions to which a future British Government might want to adhere, if only on a “pick and mix” basis. And second, to protect the United Kingdom from “negative externalities”. The earlier any such influence was exerted the better. It would clearly be easier to make sure that ECSC arrangements anticipated British preferences, rather than risk a struggle to unpick what had already been agreed amongst the Six. It was a reasonable surmise that rules and structures devised for the ECSC would serve as models for further initiatives. In addition, Britain’s own bargaining position would be at its strongest before the Six had fully cohered and while continental Europe lagged Britain in its postwar recovery. As early as May 1950, Cripps had doubted whether “we would ever be able to come in later to a scheme which had been worked out by France, Germany and the Benelux”. He, accordingly, urged that “we should collaborate from the outset (...) to ensure it was not inconsistent with our essential interests”. In the following month, he would even succeed in pushing a committee of ministers (but not the Cabinet as a whole) in the direction of an alternative British blueprint for a coal and steel community, which would probably come

32. PRO, T, FG (WP) (51) (43), Report of the Working Party of Officials cit., 31 December 1951.

33. House of Commons Debates, 26 June 1950, Vol 746, Col 1949.

34. PRO, CAB 134/295, Constitutional problems involved in a supranational authority as envisaged by M. Schuman, 16 June 1950. See also *ibid.*, Note by the Foreign Office, 16 June 1950, and BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, pp. 534-6 and 587-94, Wilson (Foreign Office official) to Butt, 5 May 1951, and Memo by the Permanent Under-Secretary’s Committee of the Foreign Office, 9 June 1951.



closer to a compromise with supranationalism than anything that would be considered at senior British Government level before Prime Minister Harold Macmillan opened the possibility of full membership of the Treaty of Rome in 1961.<sup>35</sup> A group of economists from the Treasury and Cabinet Office, who were especially eager that the United Kingdom should not abdicate the “whole economic future of the continent to others”, insisted on Britain’s overwhelming interest in ensuring that any economic institutions the Six established for the core of the West European economy were viable: “if we wish the Community to develop on the right lines – expansive rather than restrictive, planned rather than cartelistic – we need to establish as close relationships as possible”. Hugh Gaitskell, now Chancellor of the Exchequer, likewise warned his Cabinet colleagues in the summer of 1951 that:

“the industrial giant that looks like being created across the Channel could do us considerable harm. It is very much in our economic interest that the Community, in running its economic affairs competently, should adhere to its stated principles and intentions; and that we should not drift into a condition of mutual hostility. A close and continuous relationship at the Government level (i.e., not supranational) seems to be eminently desirable.”<sup>36</sup>

In all, there seemed to be four areas of concern that demanded continued British influence over the new authority: that the new grouping should not have a “deflationary bias”; that it should, in contrast, work to stabilise the economic cycle; that Britain’s economic circumstances – and those other non-member states – should be included in the “policy judgements” of the Six; and that the Six should not develop microeconomic market structures – such as cartels – that might encourage protective and predatory practices.

Never far from the surface was an image of Western Europe as a region with two industrial centres, the United Kingdom and West Germany. In this regard, an interesting appreciation of the risks of a European Community with which the United Kingdom was insufficiently associated emerged from the Foreign Office at the end of 1951:

“The main danger lies rather in the economic predominance which Germany’s trained industrial man-power and her natural resources would certainly enable her eventually to assume in any continental union. We cannot be sure that she would not use this position to our disadvantage both in the commercial and political field. This is a development we would be powerless to prevent and with respect to which we could hardly expect to exercise a balancing influence, for two reasons. First, it could be very difficult to detect the precise stages of its progress and to choose the precise moment at which to try to call a halt. Second, German economic predominance would tend to bind the union together, rather than, as with military and political predominance, to set up a strain leading to disintegration.”<sup>37</sup>

35. LORD, *Absent at the Creation*, pp. 131-2.

36. PRO, CAB 134/230, Memorandum by Gaitskell, 17 July 1951.

37. BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, pp. 781-8, Memorandum by the Permanent Under-Secretary’s Committee, 12 December 1951.

The Attlee Cabinet was likewise concerned that “the Schuman Plan might give to German industrialists extensive control over the coal and steel resources of Western Europe, and they might use their powers ruthlessly at the expense of this country. It would not be a contribution to the defence of Western Europe if the vulnerable industries of the Ruhr were expanded at the expense of the iron and steel industries in this country”.<sup>38</sup> The implication of these arguments was that in the absence of continued British influence the ECSC could provide West Germany with a competitive advantage over the United Kingdom; the new Community would then end up magnifying German political influence, rather than multilateralising and containing it; and NATO would be exposed to problems of commercial rivalry (between Germany and the United Kingdom) and industrial under-performance (arising from the division of the European economy between the ECSC “ins” and “outs”).

So, to sum up so far, the traditional historiography of British Government attitudes to European economic integration needs to be qualified in relation to the Schuman Plan. As early as 1950 the inter-departmental working party felt that the United Kingdom should respond to the prospect of German competition by seeking comparable market access for its own producers. In relation to the coal and steel industries, the United Kingdom was estimated to be evenly matched with West Germany, and both were thought likely to benefit from industrial integration at the expense of France, Italy and Benelux. Nor were the old heavy industries invariably privileged in British policy-making at the expense of new ones like engineering. Nor did all British policy-makers dismiss the Europeans as “unnatural” trading partners on the grounds of the soon to be out-dated economic theory that countries that are too alike have nothing useful to exchange. Nor did it follow – even for those who held these Ricardian views – that Britain and the Six would be entirely free of interdependencies of supply and demand requiring some co-ordination of their policy regimes.

### **The Foreign Policy Case for Association with the ECSC**

On the foreign policy side, both governments judged their options towards the Schuman Plan by the “three circles doctrine”. This anticipated that Britain should use its position as the only country that lay at the intersection of the interdependent circles of the non-communist world – the English-speaking North Atlantic nations, Western Europe and the British Commonwealth – to emerge as the trusted intermediary of all three. This concept of Britain’s international role seemed to make full membership of the ECSC doubly problematic. On the one hand, participation in the Schuman Plan threatened to invert Britain’s own preferred order of priority between the three circles. As Churchill put it “Our first object is the unity and consolidation of the British Commonwealth (...) our second, the fraternal association of the Eng-

38. PRO, CAB 128/19, Cabinet Conclusions, 16 April 1951.

lish-speaking world; and *third*, United Europe, to which we are a separate closely and specially related ally and friend”.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, the three circles was conceived as a foreign policy of manoeuvre, rather than one of commitment; and it was believed in London that this was as important to the overall stability of the western world as to Britain’s own global status.<sup>40</sup> As late as 1950, the British Government maintained the policy mantra that it would not integrate its security interests with Western Europe beyond a “point of no return”. This clearly could be the effect of allowing the location and capacity of two industries critical to the United Kingdom’s national defence to be determined by the administrative direction of the ECSC or by market forces unleashed by the new Community. Because Schuman had presented his plan as “the first step in a cumulative process of European integration” the Foreign Office feared that the United Kingdom could not accept membership without radically changing the manner in which its foreign policy intentions were perceived elsewhere in the international system: the long-term cultivation of European relationships would henceforth be regarded as the primary goal of British policy; the United Kingdom would soon be seen as far too committed to Western Europe to play a transatlantic bridging role; and it would risk unleashing self-fulfilling fears that it was turning away from the Empire/Commonwealth. Even in the limited field of trade in coal and steel, the Foreign Office (and still more the Commonwealth Office) was concerned that an independent supranational authority might impose unacceptable constraints on policy instruments that were important to the maintenance of Britain’s non-European relationships.

Yet, the three circles idea also required Britain to retain *some relationship* with West Europe. The option of a “two circles” foreign policy (the Commonwealth and the United States) does not seem to have been considered very seriously. A key ingredient of three-circles thinking was that Britain should have independent sources of international influence that would allow it to deal with the United States as a great power in its own right, so offsetting what would otherwise have been a highly unequal relationship. By 1950, the Commonwealth could no longer play this role, since it was already increasing British dependence on the United States, rather than compensating for it. Dollar aid was needed to prop up the financial stability of the sterling area and the United States was also beginning to underwrite Commonwealth security. A few months after the publication of the Schuman Plan, Sir Oliver Franks, British Ambassador in Washington, warned that representatives of the British Government could only roam the corridors of power in Washington, pressing their positions with confidence and independence, in those rare moments when British and Commonwealth finances were sufficiently secure for there to be no need to seek favours from various US agencies. Pointing to the economic consequences of the Korean War and the rearmament programme, he went on to caution that “instead of economic independence, we envisage years of economic dependence on the United States”.<sup>41</sup> A close relationship with an integrating Europe was

39. PRO, CAB 129/48, European Army: Schuman Plan, 29 November 1951.

40. J. FRANKEL, *British Foreign Policy 1945-73*, London 1975.

41. PRO, Foreign Office [FO] 371/11914/106, Memorandum by Franks, 27 September 1950.

thus needed as an insurance policy against a weakening Commonwealth. On his return to the Foreign Office in October 1951, Anthony Eden, who was not the most enthusiastic supporter of close relations with the ECSC, is reported as having rejected “the naive view that the Anglo-American relationship or the new Commonwealth provided alternative routes for Britain which would enable it to dispense with a close European association”.<sup>42</sup>

Indeed, British diplomatic thinking tended to represent the three circles as being closely interdependent. Success or failure in any one would, it was assumed, feed through into the other two. Fear that the whole delicate construct could unravel because of Britain’s incapacity to react to structural change in any one circle (such as the unification of Western Europe) often contended with excessive optimism about the United Kingdom’s ability to pivot between all three. The formation of a European Community in which Britain had little say threatened to improve the ability of others to perform the very international roles to which the United Kingdom itself aspired, not least because a position of influence that rested more on a clever structuring of relationships than real superiority of resources was always open to imitation. Even initial British reactions to the Schuman Plan were laced with suspicion that it was a deliberate attempt to alter the diplomatic hierarchy of the Western world to France’s benefit and Britain’s disadvantage. From November 1950, however, the ECSC was joined by the Pleven Plan for a European army, defence ministry and political community. The possibility of the Six developing a co-ordinated foreign policy could no longer be ignored. This sharpened fears in the Foreign Office that a West European “federation would be dominated by an American/German partnership” and that if such a grouping were to be “neglected” by Britain it would be tempted to “bid for US support against the United Kingdom”.<sup>43</sup> The implication of this view was that Britain should protect the flank of its “special relationship” with the United States by maintaining a presence in the process of European integration.

Diplomatic neglect of the new European Community also seemed to be excluded by the pressing need to construct a collective defence of the west through NATO. In 1950 NATO was still a precarious achievement of uncertain substance. Without difficult decisions that had yet to be taken on German rearmament, the permanent positioning of US forces in Europe and the nature of command structures, there was a danger that the NATO Treaty would remain no more than a declaration of intent. Yet, the British Government was foremost amongst those pressing for an ambitious conception of NATO. Whatever their own feelings about the Schuman Plan, neither the Attlee nor the Churchill Governments could ignore the role of the ECSC in ensuring the active co-operation of the three other countries that were indispensable to the NATO coalition. To cut a long story short, there were limits to which the United States was prepared to commit itself to an economically weak,

42. E. SHUCKBURGH, *Descent to Suez, Diaries 1951-6*, London 1986, pp. 17-8.

43. BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, pp. 393-9 and 457-62, Should Western Europe federate without the United Kingdom?, Memorandum for the Permanent Under-Secretary’s Committee, 13 February 1951, and Minutes of a Meeting of the Permanent Under-Secretary’s Committee, 29 March 1951.

politically divided and militarily under-resourced West Europe. Yet France was only prepared to agree to the removal of production controls on West German industry (not to mention German rearmament that came on to the agenda from September 1950) in a framework that made Franco-German conflict “materially impossible” (in the words of the Schuman Plan). Meanwhile, West Germany, would only provide a secure territorial base for western defence if it was afforded a measure of political equality and reconciliation with the West, as well as integration to its co-prosperity sphere. Otherwise, there was a risk that forces susceptible to Soviet offers of reunification in exchange for neutralisation would gain the upper hand in West German politics. NATO countries would then have little choice but to pull back to a far less defensible front line around the outer perimeter of a unified Germany. It is significant that US Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, made this point forcibly to Bevin just three days after the announcement of the Schuman Plan.<sup>44</sup>

Because the Schuman Plan and concrete arrangements for the development of NATO increasingly emerged as parallel bargains for France, West Germany and the United States, the British Government lost the important option of opposing the ECSC outright. By July 1950, the Ministry of Defence argued that “any failure to give effect to the Schuman proposals would amount to a setback in the cold war”.<sup>45</sup> Various assessments in the Foreign Office echoed the theme that “if we are going to allow ourselves to appear to be the deliberate enemy of the closer union of continental states, we shall find ourselves knocking down with one hand the European structure which we are trying to set up with another”.<sup>46</sup> Foreign policy practice thus increasingly drifted away from foreign policy doctrine: as NATO took shape, it became progressively less realistic to present Western Europe as a poor third in British priorities or to pretend that the United Kingdom was not already doing any other than committing itself to the region beyond a point of no return.

So, to summarise, the two British Governments were unable to oppose the Schuman Plan outright; they were unwilling to join as a full member; yet, they were reluctant to forfeit influence over a project that would impact on the three circles doctrine and intersect with the key objective of constructing a common defence through NATO. Without continued British influence, it was feared that European integration would “foster dangerous illusions” of a third force Europe: continental countries would be tempted to believe that they could defend themselves at a lower cost and risk – not to mention with greater foreign policy independence – by declaring themselves to be neutral in the superpower conflict. As one Foreign Office memo put it two days after the announcement of the Schuman Plan, “History teaches that powers which seek to maintain their neutrality or play a balancing role fall miserably between two stools unless they have the strength and coherence for such a policy”.<sup>47</sup> Likewise, in his request for a review of the events of May-June 1950, Kenneth Younger (who was temporarily in charge of the Foreign

44. Lord, *Absent at the Creation*, pp. 95-121.

45. PRO, CP 50/154, Memorandum by the Minister of Defence, 1 July 1950.

46. BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, pp. 292-4n.

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 35-8, The French Plan from the Political Point of View, 11 May 1950.

Office during Bevin's absence) asked British Ambassador in Paris, Sir Oliver Harvey, to comment on the possibility that France was seeking a Europe that could "stand between the United States and the Soviet Union and endeavour to practise the same neutrality as was practised by Vichy."<sup>48</sup> A further danger was that an economic division of Western Europe – between the Six and the rest of the OEEC countries – would hamper effective security collaboration in NATO. Given these concerns that European unification might encourage neutrality or division in the Atlantic Alliance, the Foreign Office concluded that Britain should seek "so to guide the course of the integration movement that any continental union which emerges should take its place as a part of the wider Atlantic community."<sup>49</sup>

### **Implementing Association: Difficulties and Disappointments**

When in June 1950 the British Cabinet first adopted association as its policy, there was little detailed reflection on what it might mean, or on whether it really could deliver a middle course between full membership and isolation from the Schuman Plan. Nonetheless, the objectives that any association agreement would have to satisfy can be inferred from the arguments that were made for remaining "with but not of" the ECSC. Under the three circles doctrine, the form of association would have to be sufficient to sustain Britain's supposed leadership of Western Europe, as well as its intermediating role between the Six and the United States. On account of anxieties about Atlantic Unity, it would have to be close enough to permit the United Kingdom to argue persuasively for the sustained loyalty of the Six to NATO and to steer them away from any experimentation with neutrality. Given the delicacy of Britain's external economic position, it would have to be strong enough to prevent the Community from taking any decisions harmful of British commercial interests, or those of the sterling area; and to allow the United Kingdom an influence over the future development of the Community.

The Permanent Under-Secretary's Committee of the Foreign Office suggested Britain should seek an arrangement that would allow it to be "an influence of moderation in Europe (...) while also keeping (...) wide freedom of action outside Europe (...) and selecting points of association most advantageous to ourselves economically".<sup>50</sup> The Cabinet Office and Treasury felt the key issue was whether Britain should have a say in any extension in the Community's competence beyond coal and steel: "in the narrow sense of making bargains on coal and steel matters, we could probably get on well enough outside. But if we wish the Community to develop on the right lines (...) we need to establish as close relationships as possi-

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 171-5, Younger to Oliver Harvey, British Ambassador in Paris, 12 June 1950.

49. *Ibid.*, pp. 781-8, European Integration, 12 December 1951.

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 587-94, Background to the Problem of European Integration, Memorandum of the Permanent Under-Secretary's Committee, 9 June 1951.



ble".<sup>51</sup> Amongst the Commonwealth countries, New Zealand hoped the United Kingdom would be able to negotiate a "special form of association which would put it in a position to moderate economic policies evolved by the authority which would be to the disadvantage of the United Kingdom or other members of the Commonwealth".<sup>52</sup> In a sense, these objectives were strikingly ambitious, as Bevin's successor as Foreign Secretary, Herbert Morrison, conceded in his observation that any relationship would have to be a substantial one if the Six were to be persuaded to "limit their plans in our favour".<sup>53</sup>

Whether such an association agreement was attainable would be tested over four distinct phases between 1950 and 1954. From the summer of 1950 to the spring of 1951- the British Government decided to "lie doggo".<sup>54</sup> From the spring of 1951 to its fall in October 1951 it further postponed the opening of talks until the ECSC Treaty had been ratified by the parliaments of the Six and not merely agreed by their governments. Meanwhile, it began an internal appraisal of concrete options for association. This, revealingly, opened with the interdepartmental working party on the Schuman Plan advising that Britain should seek "formal association at the least and partial membership at the most" and finished with the Foreign Office recommending that Britain should deal with the ECSC "in rather the same way as the United States has been associated with the OEEC in Paris, on the basis of a close and friendly relationship without any formal agreement". It would, in other words, be enough just to send a "delegation to reside permanently at (the Community's) seat of operation".<sup>55</sup> By September 1951, the Cabinet Office noted that the Foreign Office was floundering in its attempts to find a form of association that matched the original ambitions of the inter-departmental working party.<sup>56</sup>

For reasons that we will examine in a moment, the incoming Conservative Government was, however, more confident that rejection of supranationalism need not mean inactivity or non-participation. A third phase, accordingly, began with the so-called Eden Plan of January 1952. The new Government went ahead with the appointment of a permanent representative to the ECSC, and it proposed that the Six should co-ordinate their activities with the other members of the Council of Europe (then all fourteen non-communist European countries with the exception of Spain and Portugal). Through the simple and superficially ingenious suggestion that the "Council of Europe might provide the institutions from the Schuman Plan and the EDC", Eden hoped to provide the Six with a number of ready-made institutions – a Secretariat, Council of Ministers and Assembly – while ensuring that other European countries had continued access to their discussions. By proposing that

51. PRO, T 229/753, Brief by Pitblado, Treasury Representative on the inter-departmental working party on the Schuman Plan, 20 July 1951. See also *ibid.*, Butt to General Sir Brian Robertson, British High Commissioner in Germany, 15 September 1951.

52. BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, p. 700n.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 488-90, Morrison to HM Representatives in Western Europe, 16 April 1951.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 225, Makins to Strang, 28 June 1950.

55. PRO, CAB 134/264, Minutes of the Economic Steering Committee, 9 July 1951.

56. PRO, T 229/753, Butt to Robertson, 15 September 1951.

all subsequent initiatives should also be mediated through the Council, he hoped to defuse future arguments over European integration. For, if there was some framework for regulating the rights of the “ins” and the “outs” it would, he believed, be far easier to allow projects to proceed according to different memberships, speeds and decision-rules. The Eden Plan was, however, successfully blocked by Monnet (now installed as President of the High Authority of the ECSC), with the support of the Italian and West German Governments.

From the end of 1952, British policy thus entered a fourth phase of retreat towards a modest association with the ECSC.<sup>57</sup> In the summer of 1953, a new inter-departmental forum, the Schuman Plan Committee, recommended a single market in steel between Britain and the Six, together with certain common policy regimes to deal with shortages or surplus production. Meanwhile, the positions of Monnet and Eden converged on how the relationship between Britain and the Six might be given institutional form: a Council of Association would be created which would allow common problem-solving practices to develop at various levels, ministerial, official and industrial. During the course of 1953-4, however, the substantive policy content of these recommendations was stripped out of Britain’s association policy, mainly because the Cabinet was unwilling to override objections from the coal and steel industries themselves. When an association agreement was eventually signed in December 1954, it concentrated on just setting up an institutional mechanism (the Council of Association) in the hope that as yet unspecified policy initiatives would follow later.

The foregoing policy oscillations reflected the confusion at the heart of the aspiration to be “with but not of” the new European Community: a modest agreement would not deliver on all the aims of association, while a substantial one would entail similar risks to those that had led to the rejection of membership in the first place. It is worth exploring the problem through a comparison of the second and third phases identified above. By the last months of the Attlee Administration, the Foreign Office was beginning to question whether any one really knew what “we mean by a close but non-committal association or procedure for putting forward our own views in the Schuman authority”; and it further wondered whether it really was possible to “contemplate association for certain economic purposes without becoming involved in the political machinery”. Looking to the future, it doubted whether the United Kingdom could go on proliferating *ad hoc* association arrangements every time the Six developed a new initiative, without at some point coming under domestic or international pressure to tidy everything up under a single political authority with unified democratic control: the “UK position could then become embarrassing. Continued association would be harmful, but withdrawal would be difficult”.<sup>58</sup> Even in the early 1950s, it was possible to foresee circumstances in which association might leave British policy-makers with less autonomy than full membership itself: British Governments would be institutionalising an arrangement

57. DUCHÊNE, *Jean Monnet*, pp. 238 and 260-2.

58. BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, pp. 482n, 518-9nn and 587-93.



in which the agenda-setting body (the High Authority) had no mandate to consider British interest, and in which it would only be brought into the bargaining process after the Six had reached a common position.

It was to avoid being sucked too heavily into the work of the new Community that the dominant view in the last months of the Attlee Government was that Britain and the ECSC should associate in a way that would leave them to make policy independently of one another, albeit with an exchange of information. In expressing this preference for an informed *unilateralism* – or what modern game theorists call a non-co-operative game with communication – the inter-departmental working party predicted that “even as non-members our bargaining power and goodwill would be considerable”. The Permanent Under-Secretary’s Committee of the Foreign Office was, likewise, confident that the Six would not be able to “put their federal ideas into practice without at least the blessing and probably the active participation of the United Kingdom”.<sup>59</sup> There would, in other words, be little need to rely on a formal treaty instrument or to institutionalise co-ordination, as the Six would be under considerable pressure to adjust to British preferences. In contrast, the Eden Plan was *multilateral* in structure. It envisaged that the British Government would have observer status at ECSC meetings; it encouraged the possibility that Britain and the Six might make some policies in common (albeit according to inter-governmental decision-rules); and, above all, it anticipated that six monthly meetings of the Council of Europe would function as a kind of “top-table” that would allow British Governments to continue to participate in a political overview of the whole pattern of international organisation in Western Europe.

The incoming 1951-5 Government provides useful clues why a modest association policy was no more sustainable than an ambitious one. It needed something far more substantial than its predecessor’s association policy if it was to maintain its internal balance and attain its foreign policy goals. During the first six months of office, there were tensions in the Cabinet where Macmillan, then Minister of Housing, launched a determined campaign to persuade his colleagues to “announce the kind of European Union we would be prepared to join”.<sup>60</sup> And there was unease in the parliamentary party where pro-European Conservatives formed an identifiable group, known as the *Strasbourgers* capable of causing trouble for a government with a small majority of seventeen.<sup>61</sup> Meanwhile, the opportunity to make a fresh start with continental opinion was at risk of being replaced by real bitterness, made all the more corrosive of British influence by the way in which the Conservatives had seemed to play with pro-European sentiments in opposition only to abandon them in government. In December 1951, Churchill, accordingly, wrote of his “distress” that

59. PRO, T, FG(WP)(51)(43), Report of the Working Party of Officials cit., 31 December 1951. See also BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, pp. 457-62, Minutes of a Meeting of the Permanent Under-Secretary’s Committee, 29 March 1951.

60. BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, pp. 812-8, European Integration, Note by the Minister of Housing and Local Government, 16 January 1952.

61. YOUNG, “The Schuman Plan”, p. 111.

“we have succumbed to the Socialist Party hostility to a United Europe.”<sup>62</sup> Above all, the change of government in London coincided with one of those moments when Britain’s claims to a special relationship with the United States looked to be endangered by disagreements over Europe. At the end of 1951, the Foreign Office was particularly concerned that a delegation of US Congressmen to the Council of Europe would persuade their colleagues to make “aid under the Mutual Security Act” – on which the United Kingdom was dependent for around a half of its massively expensive rearmament programme – “dependent on adherence to the aims of economic union and political federation in Europe”.<sup>63</sup> As Churchill had plans to crown his career by reviving Britain’s involvement in superpower diplomacy, it was important to avoid tensions and distractions in Britain’s relations with the United States.<sup>64</sup>

On the other hand, the Eden Plan neglected one of the key reasons why the Foreign Office had been inclined in the summer of 1951 to a modest relationship, limited to a diplomatic mission and to exchange of information: the Six were unlikely to agree “to our accepting the obligations and rights which benefited us and rejecting those which did not. We should invite a rebuff if we proposed such a form of association”.<sup>65</sup> In spite of brave efforts to frame the Eden Plan in a manner that would neither destabilise the Six nor privilege the United Kingdom, it was perceived as doing both those things, with the result that it invited precisely “rebuff” that the Foreign Office had predicted. Monnet was clear in his own mind that the ECSC would only “retain” its competence by “exercising it” and that the Eden Plan was an attempt to “recover control” over the new Community by “diluting it in the Strasbourg organisation”.<sup>66</sup> He felt that it would be very difficult to embed a supranational core within a wider intergovernmental forum without the one seeming to have a “supervisory” role over the other. A fundamental weakness of Britain’s position was that Monnet only had to press ahead with the steady implementation of the ECSC Treaty for the Eden Plan to be rendered redundant by the end of 1952. In any case, the West German and Italian Governments had none of the reserve of the French in rejecting Eden’s proposal. The Federal Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, shared Monnet’s view that the Eden and Schuman Plans were structurally incompatible. He feared that any attempt to institutionalise a relationship with Britain in a manner that set a precedent for a looser form of collaboration might encourage others amongst the Six to slip the leash of supranational control of their coal and steel industries. This would undercut the mechanism that was supposed to reconcile France to the economic revival of West Germany and its return to political equality. Supranational controls, applicable to all ECSC states, were the only alternative to discriminatory restrictions on West Germany’s political and economic development.

62. BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, p. 781.

63. PRO, FO 953/1207, Foreign Secretary Eden to HM Representatives Overseas, 15 December 1951.

64. J. YOUNG, *Winston Churchill’s Last Campaign: Britain and the Cold War 1951-5*, Oxford 1996.

65. PRO, CAB 134/264, Minutes of the Economic Steering Committee, 9 July 1951 (see intervention by Makins). See also CAB 134/230, Memorandum by Gaitskell, 17 July 1951.

66. J. MONNET, *Mémoires*, Paris 1976, pp. 444-5.

Yet, even as late as 1952, Britain might have been accorded influence without full membership of the European Community if there had been more confidence in the United Kingdom as a valuable source of leadership services.<sup>67</sup> Schuman himself was less hostile to the Eden Plan than either Monnet or Adenauer. French Governments still had to “twin-track” between the construction of a supranational community and continued British involvement in continental affairs if they were to command domestic majorities for further initiatives such as the European Defence Community. On the other hand, the Schuman Plan was both expression and catalyst of important doubts about the capacity of British governments to contribute towards the integration of Europe. After its initial success in organising a European response to the Marshall Plan in 1947-8, the British Government had gained a reputation for obstructing multi-state frameworks designed to sustain the economic recovery of the continent and allow a European trading and payments system to develop with credible political guarantees against any return to the economic nationalism of the interwar period. It opposed negotiations for a Franco-Italian-Benelux free trade area, cold shouldered overtures for a Franco-British commodity agreement, failed to consult on a sharp devaluation of sterling, and, at one stage, held up negotiations for a European Payments Union for fear of the impact that Belgium alone could have on the United Kingdom’s balance of payments. Far from being in a position to underpin their claims to political leadership of Western Europe with economic favours, British Governments seemed to be constrained to follow un-neighbourly policies that condemned the continent to a lower level of economic welfare. The problem with treating West Europe as the residual arena of the three circles doctrine, when Britain was itself strapped resources, was that neighbouring countries would soon learn the nature of their status, discover that Britain did not have the economic leeway to maintain a leadership role that was profitable to all countries in the region and seek a degree of self-organization. Just a few days before the announcement of the Schuman Plan, the Foreign Office had received a warning along these lines from Britain’s Ambassador in Paris: “they (the French) cannot exorcise the fear that Britain’s special relationship with the United States may become so close and so satisfying that no third parties will be admitted”; on the other hand, “Britain’s Commonwealth relationship” was “associated with isolation from Europe”.<sup>68</sup>

The Schuman Plan always had the potential to be a diplomatic revolution in the politics of European integration whose principal casualty would be British claims to a leadership role. Under pressure of the cold war, the Foreign Office had long conceded that the United Kingdom could not pursue a divide-and-rule approach to continental politics.<sup>69</sup> The Schuman Plan now took matters much further. By offering a credible scheme of Franco-German reconciliation and establishing embryonic supranational institutions, it under-cut the main assumptions on which British lead-

67. R. MASSIGLI, *Une comédie des erreurs*, Paris 1978.

68. PRO, FO 1041/10/50, Harvey to Bevin, 27 April 1950.

69. BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, pp. 781-8, Memorandum by the Permanent Under-Secretary’s Committee, 12 December 1951.

ership had been predicated: the inability of the two largest West European countries to form a strong bilateral relationship and the search of smaller states for some protection from the consequences of Franco-German divisions. To the extent that external leadership was still needed (as Franco-German tensions could not be conjured away overnight) the Schuman Plan accelerated the transfer of this role from London to Washington. Whereas in the summer of 1950, the Foreign Office had confidently predicted that the Six would ultimately need to call Britain into the Schuman Plan negotiations – and that the United Kingdom would then be in a strong position to develop a scheme that was more to its liking – it was, in fact, the United States that helped remove the last obstacles to Franco-German agreement in the spring of 1951. The United States was altogether better placed than the United Kingdom to underwrite European integration. While Britain was boxed in by the balance of payments problems of the Commonwealth sterling area, the United States had the resources to make short-term compromises of its own commercial interests to ensure that European integration was launched into a virtuous circle of economic growth. Its political elite was committed to the model of supranational integration. Above all, it was able to trump the only strong card in the hands of British governments. The argument that Britain's contributions to NATO would continue to give Britain an implicit veto over the shape of European integration was as nothing compared with the power of the United States to use its leverage to insulate the development of the Six from any outside British interference. While accepting that Britain could not be forced in to the ECSC, the Truman Administration was disinclined to regard Britain's non-participation in European integration as a permanent concession to British "exceptionalism" or as endorsement of any pretensions to leadership from the outside.<sup>70</sup>

At every turn, fear of American displeasure cramped British attempts to develop the status of influential non-participant in relation to the ECSC. In June 1950, Makins concluded "we did not think we should intervene to prevent progress towards a Western European Federal system (...) we should incur the utmost political odium were we to do so".<sup>71</sup> Later that summer, the British Government refrained from publishing its own counterproposals for a coal and steel community for fear of being accused of sabotage. It then employed the same argument to reject a French offer to negotiate a British association in parallel with the main Treaty, although there would have been obvious technical and bargaining advantages to such an approach.<sup>72</sup>

While the United States kept the United Kingdom at arm's length, the ability of British Governments to play the role of influential outsider deteriorated further. Common commitment to the creation of a European Community soon produced an element of political solidarity amongst the Six, in spite of serious differences on policy detail and methods of integration. By the autumn of 1950, there were al-

70. LORD, *Absent at the Creation*, pp. 81-4.

71. BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, p. 225, Makins to Strang, 28 June 1950.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 299, Bevin to Hayter, 31 August 1951.

ready signs that any future negotiations with the United Kingdom would be governed by what would later be known as the *acquis communautaire* doctrine: if the Six were not to be plunged into costly and acrimonious renegotiations every time they considered a relationship with a non-member, outsiders would have to accept all previous decisions in full and without amendment. The French Government thus conceded that its offers to show the United Kingdom draft texts of the ECSC Treaty were not as generous as at first appeared, as there would only be limited opportunities to suggest changes and British comments could not “bear on the substance of the proposals – only the manner in which we might cooperate with the consortium.”<sup>73</sup> An additional difficulty was that while the Six learnt more about each other’s preferences, and developed habits of communication and norms of collaborative behaviour, the British Government came to doubt its ability to make rational or even calculable judgments in relation to the Schuman Plan process. Within six months of British self-exclusion from the main negotiations, the Foreign Office concluded:

“we are in the awkward position of having to consider a text without having taken part in any of the discussion and bargaining that led up to it. This difficulty affects not only our understanding of what the text means, but also our estimate of the adjustments which participating governments have made in order to arrive at agreements”.<sup>74</sup>

### Conclusion

Even if there is room for dispute as to whether the precise timing of any error came with the decision not to participate in the Schuman Plan (1950) or the Treaty of Rome (1957), several studies of the United Kingdom’s postwar foreign policy have suggested that British Governments overestimated their ability to maintain effective economic and foreign policies apart from the new European Community.<sup>75</sup> If the argument of this article is correct, the nature of any policy error was rather different: British Governments understood the importance of maintaining a close relationship with the new Europe but, wrongly, believed that this could be done as an influential outsider. In reality, the search for an ambitious half-way house between membership and non-membership proved elusive. A further implication of this hypothesis is that the decision of the Macmillan Government to apply for full membership of the European Economic Community in 1961 was less of an about-turn than previously thought. For many in British Governments circles it had always been important to secure a high level of influence over the nascent Euro-

73. PRO, Ministry of Power [POWE] 41/16, Younger to Jebb (Foreign Office official), 11 September 1950.

74. BULLEN and PELLY, *Documents*, pp. 349-51, Wilson to Hood, Foreign Office officials, 25 November 1950.

75. FRANKEL, *British Foreign Policy*, and F. NORTHEDGE, *Descent from Power: British Foreign Policy 1945-70*, London 1973.

pean Community. However, they were only prepared to confront the difficult choice of full membership after they had exhausted all the possibilities for semi-attachment and found each to be either unobtainable or unsatisfactory.

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## Italy and the Free Trade Area Negotiations 1956-58

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The year after the so-called “relaunch of Europe” signs the birth of the Free Trade Area project (henceforth FTA), proposed and strongly supported by the British Government. Owing to their sentiment of having a special relationship with the United States and to their leadership of the Commonwealth, the British did not accept equal status with the other European powers and refused to take part in the Messina talks of the spring of 1955, which opened the negotiation process that led to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC). Since the British could not accept the possibility of pooling sovereignty with other European countries or of entering a customs union subject to supranational control, their idea was to elaborate a plan for an alternative to prevent the implementation of the Messina proposals. Contrary to British expectations, the Six did swiftly proceed with their customs union project, which eventually materialised in March 1957, while the free trade area idea found reluctant attitudes on the part of the future EEC partners.<sup>1</sup>

The Six did not want an agreement that excluded agriculture. Food imports had to be subject to a common external tariff and Britain as a member of a customs union could not have cheaper food than the rest of Europe.<sup>2</sup> The Treaty of Rome became a reality in spite of British hostile tactics and the more or less overt British effort to delay its ratification. Notwithstanding this, Harold Macmillan, then member of the British Cabinet and future Prime Minister, continued with the discussion of possible methods of European cooperation. The discussion did go on until the

1. The Six “continued to regard the FTA project as a maliciously conceived diplomatic initiative intended to prevent the successful conclusion of the customs union negotiations”. See the detailed illustration of Britain’s “sabotage policy” in the book by W. KAISER, *Using Europe. Abusing the Europeans. Britain and European Integration 1945-63*, London 1996 (quotation, p. 92). See also by the same author, “Challenge to the Community: the Creation, Crisis and Consolidation of the European Free Trade Association, 1958-1972”, *Journal of European Integration History* (henceforth, *JEIH*), vol. 3, no. 1, 1997.
2. “The British Government was horrified by the declaration in the Spaak Report that all obstacles to trade in agricultural products within the Six must be “eliminated”. This meant that if Britain were to join the EEC all preferential duties on food from the Commonwealth would have to be abandoned. Here was the sticking point on which future negotiations were to founder”. For an interesting archival-based account see R. LAMB, *The Macmillan Years 1957-1963. The Emerging Truth*, London 1995, pp. 104 ff. (quotation, p. 107). On Britain’s position toward the Common Market see H. MACMILLAN, *Riding the Storm, 1956-1959*, London 1971, pp. 449-50, in which Macmillan states his worries about ending the progress towards general European cooperation to which he personally attached much importance. Yet, it was Macmillan himself to put forward the attempt to destroy the Messina initiative in November 1955. For an account of moves on the part of the British Government after 1955 – including a few revealing official statements – that were interpreted as a threat to the Common Market see R.T. GRIFFITHS and S. WARD, “‘The End of a Thousand Years of History’: The Origins of Britain’s Decision to Join the European Community, 1955-61”, in GRIFFITHS and WARD (eds), *Courting the Common Market: the First Attempt to Enlarge the European Community 1961-1963*, London 1996, pp. 12-13.



French, in November 1958, openly stated that without a single external tariff barrier round the seventeen countries and without harmonisation in the economic and social spheres it was not possible to create a European-wide FTA. The French refusal to any further consideration of the FTA project implied that the rest of the Six could not go on either, given that the Treaty of Rome bound the six countries to a common commercial policy. Recent research in the field has shown that some EEC members were even grateful to France's unilateral decision because none of them ever considered undermining the Treaty of Rome and opting for the FTA solution.<sup>3</sup>

This essay takes a closer look to the economic motives that made Italy shrink away from the FTA proposal. By concentrating the analysis on the economic sphere, this article will endeavour to throw light on how the prospect of participating in a European OEEC-wide FTA was of no interest for the Italian Government as it encountered the open hostility of the industrial world from the outset. The impossibility to reconcile British and Italian standpoints on agriculture and on the external tariff, the more favourable consideration (in accordance with Italy's own interests) of these questions to be found within the Common Market, and Italy's growing trade links with the EEC countries during the 1950s, all three factors explain why the Italian Government was more than happy to comply with the French decision to keep the EEC outside any free trade area.

## I

At the end of 1955 the British representative withdrew from the Spaak Committee, which had been set up at the Messina Conference as a forum for the negotiations leading to the creation of the EEC. Sir Hugh Ellis-Rees, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), explained to the heads of delegation the reasons that led to this decision:

“Whereas we have been working to adopt general principles of freer trade and payments on the widest possible basis, the creation of a European Common Market as now envisaged would be an exclusive grouping and as at present advised it might take the form of a discriminatory bloc”<sup>4</sup>

After the publication of the Spaak Report, accepted by the Six as the basis for their future negotiations, in July 1956 the OEEC Council, on a British proposal, de-

3. “None of the Six ever considered giving up the European Community (...) even the Dutch, the most ardent supporters of the Free Trade Area, did not want to jeopardise the Treaty of Rome”. See E. BLOEMEN, “A Problem to Every Solution: the Six and the Free Trade Area”, in T.B. OLESEN (ed.), *Interdependence Versus Integration. Denmark, Scandinavia and Western Europe, 1945-1960*, Odense 1995, p. 195. On this account, see also GRIFFITHS, “The United Kingdom and the Free Trade Area: A Post Mortem”, in *ibid.*, pp. 167-81, and M. SCHULTE, “Industrial Interest in West Germany's Decision against the Enlargement of the EEC. The Quantitative Evidence up to 1964”, in *JEIH*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1997, pp. 35-61.

4. R. DUCCI, *L'Europa incompiuta*, Padua 1970, p. 299.

cided to establish a special working party – Working Party No. 17 – to study forms and methods of association between the Six and the rest of the OEEC. The first official suggestion of a free trade area was made by Macmillan, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, in October 1956. Two months later Macmillan informed the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gaetano Martino, of the British Government's decision to pursue the setting up of a free trade area for industrial goods among countries of the OEEC in association with the customs union then being worked out in the discussions in Brussels among the six member countries of the European Coal and Steel Community. The Minister was exhorted by Macmillan not to decide on Common Market procedures

“which could not be applied within the free trade area or were not acceptable to its members and which might therefore hinder the operation or, in extreme form, frustrate the creation of a free trade area.”<sup>5</sup>

Italy had already spotted four principles to be followed in the formation of a free trade area, which were in contrast with British ideas in the field. The same day of Macmillan's move towards Rome, the Italian Delegation at the OEEC released a memorandum on the principles to be followed in the formation of a free trade area, which were considered fundamental to “ensure harmonious economic development of all member countries”. These principles were the following: the establishment of a common external tariff, the free movement of all factors of production, the inclusion of agriculture in order to avoid further disparities among members country, and financial assistance for those economic sectors in special difficulty. Italy feared that a FTA which did not provide for

“the intervention of appropriate factors to restore equilibrium, would further aggravate the existing differences in the standard of living and the economic development of member countries”.

The term of comparison was Italian unification (1860) considered as the “typical example of the consequences which may ensue from the integration of economies of different structures, at different stages of economic development (...) in the case of Northern and Southern Italy disparities have become more marked”.

The goal of enhancing the harmonious growth of all underdeveloped regions in member countries could not be achieved, according to the Italian memorandum, without greater mobility of factors of production, among which labour was of utmost importance in view of the high level of Italian unemployment. Unemployment, “weighting so heavily on Italy's economic situation”, could also be encountered by joint financial assistance aimed at “the re-organisation and re-adaptation on a sound economic basis of sectors which are in difficulties”.<sup>6</sup>

Once the OEEC Council resolved to start negotiations on a free trade area, in February 1957, the official Italian position did not change, despite the occasional

5. Archivio Storico, Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Direzione Generale Affari Economici, pacco 480, telesspresso 44/18815, 10 December 1956.

6. Public Record Office [PRO], Foreign Office [FO] 371/1222057, “Principles to be followed in the formation of a free trade area. Memorandum by the Italian delegation”, 10 December 1956.

changes in priorities depending upon the political personalities in power. From April 1957 to May 1958, a crucial time for the FTA negotiations, Guido Carli was Minister of Foreign Trade and Giuseppe Pella Minister of Foreign Affairs. After May 1958 Emilio Colombo took Carli's place as Minister of Foreign Trade. The dismissal of Carli was an important change in political terms because it meant the disappearance of a very independent personality who felt uneasy with the shifts occurring in Italy's European policy. Quite openly, the reasons alleged for Carli's dismissal referred to his support of the British position in the free trade area negotiations, whereas Colombo was considered to be more in line with the integration policy of the Six, which refused to see the Common Market "absorbed and diluted" within a free trade area.<sup>7</sup> Carli's particular political and economic approach concerning European issues relates primarily to his pragmatic and independent attitude, which was supported by a personal outlook on the shape Europe's economic integration should adopt, which will be examined in section III.

## II

One of the first meetings of some importance between officials from Italy and the United Kingdom on the feasibility of a free trade area, took place in June 1957, on occasion of a private visit to Rome of Sir David Eccles, President of the Board of Trade. At this stage, the Italian attitude towards the OEEC and FTA was considered by the British to be characterised by "lack of interest and even some resistance to the idea of a free trade area." Reports from the British OEEC Delegation left no doubt on the reasons for this lack of enthusiasm:

"The Italians think it is inconceivable that they can sell to parliamentary and public opinion in their country Italian participation in a Free Trade Area from the benefits of which agricultural products were specifically excluded".<sup>8</sup>

Beyond official statements in favour of the establishment of a free trade area "as an essential complement of the Common Market" and of the Italian Government's "agreement" with the FTA proposals, it came clear from these talks, and from those taking place in October, that neither the United Kingdom nor Italy were willing to compromise on the question of agriculture.<sup>9</sup>

The British position on agriculture was characterised by two main features. First, British agriculture was small and had to be protected from reduction in size, and second, fifty per cent of Britain's food was imported, the bulk of which came from the Commonwealth. This could not be diverted to buying from Europe in-

7. M. BONANNI, *La politica estera della Repubblica Italiana*, Roma, 1967, vol. 2, pp. 505-7.

8. European University Institute Archives [EUIA], files of the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation [OEEC], Zone européenne de libre échange [ZELE] 203, J.F. Cahan, member of the British Delegation at the OEEC, to Sir Hugh Ellis-Rees, 19 April 1957.

9. Quotations from PRO, FO 371/128348, "Record of a Meeting held at the Italian Cabinet Offices" and Ashley Clarke, British Embassy in Rome, to Foreign Office, 12 and 17 June 1957, respectively.

stead.<sup>10</sup> Since there seemed to be no question of the British changing their ground on agriculture, apparently the two governments were equally firm on opposite standpoints. To breach the gap, Reginald Maudling, Minister in charge of negotiations with the Six within the British Cabinet and head of the OEEC's inter-governmental committee in charge of the free trade area negotiations, the so-called *Maudling Committee*, proposed the possibility of negotiating two separate agreements, on industrial goods and on the treatment of agricultural goods, which corresponded

“to the two parts into which the Treaty of Rome falls, one a free trade area agreement for industrial goods and the other a separate agreement on the treatment of agricultural goods”.<sup>11</sup>

The reason alleged for making two separate arrangements was the need to maintain the system of imperial preferences, thus allowing the range of agricultural products to be dealt with separately from the industrial free trade area and thus continuing to grant preference on British imports of these commodities from the Commonwealth.<sup>12</sup> Since agriculture for Maudling was mainly a political problem, what the British envisaged as a *separate arrangement* was a system of confrontation on agricultural policies, a procedure for examining complaints and a general development of the kind of cooperation attempted in the OEEC Ministerial Committee for Agriculture and Food. But in the eyes of Italian officials, as was the case in other exporting countries, such a solution remained inadequate.

As to the Italian position on agriculture, the Ministry of Foreign Trade remained firm on the view that “if there were to be true reciprocity, it would be necessary to treat agriculture on the same basis as industry”.<sup>13</sup> By October 1957 the Chamber of Deputies had passed a resolution asking the Italian Government not to join a free trade area which did not include agriculture. Pella, the Minister of Foreign Trade, emphasised the need to seek some compromise formula, otherwise “the negotiations must fail”.<sup>14</sup> Carli said that the Italian Senate would most likely endorse the resolution of the Chamber of Deputies calling on the Government to insist on the inclusion of agriculture in a free trade area. Agriculture needed a special status in a free trade area as in the Common Market. Carli then put forward his own suggestion for a compromise on agriculture, which was not yet known outside the Minis-

10. PRO, FO 371/128348, “Record of a Meeting held at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on June, 12th 1957”.

11. PRO FO 371/128363, “Record of talks between Mr. R. Maudling and Italian Ministers, First Meeting: 11 a.m. October 5th 1957, at Palazzo Chigi”.

12. “Another reason for making separate arrangements for agriculture is that in common with all other European countries we support domestic agriculture by means of subsidies and other Government action, in pursuance of national policy which has been developed on social and strategic grounds. Also the six countries envisage special arrangements for agriculture within the Community and from what we know of their proposals it appears that they are unlikely to create a real freedom of trade in agricultural products among themselves”. PRO, Treasury [T] 234/373, “The European Economic Community and the Free Trade Area”, 20 November 1957.

13. PRO, FO 371/128348, “Conversation with the Italian Minister of Foreign Trade”, 12 June 1957.

14. PRO, FO 371/128363, “Record of talks between Mr. R. Maudling and Italian Ministers, First Meeting: 11 a.m. October 5th 1957, at Palazzo Chigi”.

tries of Trade and of Foreign Affairs. His suggestion provided for a division of agricultural products into two classes. Products in the first class would receive the treatment of industrial goods, that is to say they would be admitted to the free trade area and reductions in duties would take place in the same way and according to the same time-table as for industrial goods. Products classified in the second class would be admitted under a system of quotas. The quota for each of the articles would be fixed annually and whenever consumption increased in any given market the quotas would be increased proportionally. Within the quota system there would be the same, or at any rate a similar scale of tariff reductions to that applying to articles in the other class. Within the second class of agricultural commodities there was room for different treatment according to types of produce and there was room for negotiations on the commodities to be included. The list of the goods that Carli was hoping to include in the second class comprised wines, fruit and vegetables, citrus fruits, olive oil, jams and preserves, vermouth, rice, tobacco, and hemp.<sup>15</sup>

The solution proposed to Maudling in October was definitely abandoned by November. Yet, Carli still felt the need to come up with some idea that could

“guarantee to exporters a satisfactory degree of reciprocity for the opening of their markets to industrial imports and should try to avoid distortions arising from the absence of a Common Agricultural Policy”.<sup>16</sup>

In his opinion the problem as seen by the Six was to reconcile their protectionism (as a unit) with the protectionism of non-member countries. He also considered essential questions to what degree the United Kingdom was prepared to consider variations in its existing protective system and how far any market expansion would be shared among British, Commonwealth and OEEC countries’ producers. Throughout the following meetings the debate did not make any progress, the British holding on to their system of Commonwealth preferences and refusing the idea of dismantling their agricultural tariffs:

“In our view, tariffs are less damaging to the flow of trade than many other forms of agricultural protection and we have said that we are not prepared to accept an obligation to remove our agricultural tariffs”.<sup>17</sup>

In Maudling’s own words:

“The most difficult fields will be that of fruit, flowers and vegetables, which to both France and Italy have an economic and a great political importance. It is difficult to find any logical answer to the proposition that if we are to sell more of our machin-

15. Carli ironically called these special arrangements “part of the machinery of a free trade area.” PRO, FO 371/128363, “Record of talks between Mr. R. Maudling and Italian Ministers, Second Meeting: 12 noon, October 5th, at the Ministry of Foreign Trade.”

16. PRO, T 234/373, British Permanent Delegation at the OEEC to Foreign Office, Inter-Governmental Committee on Free Trade Area, 16 November 1957.

17. PRO, FO 371/134500, Sir Frank E. Figgures, Director of Trade and Finance at the OEEC (and future Secretary-General of the European Free Trade Area Association) to the Foreign Office, April 1958.

ery in France and Italy we should be prepared to take more of the fruit which by and large they can grow cheaper and better than we can".<sup>18</sup>

There were two additional different standpoints to reconcile besides agriculture. The first concerned the free movement of factors of production. Pella was convinced that

"it would be impossible to obtain parliamentary approval in Italy for any treaty relating to the free movement of goods only. Italy was equally concerned with movement of capital, services and labour."

The OEEC rules covering these issues had little practical effect. Pella expected that the FTA initiative would encourage real hope of greater freedom of movement of all three factors by stages. Carli shared completely Pella's ideas on the free movement of factors of production. The former was able to return to the issue during the third meeting of the inter-governmental committee on the free trade area when Minister Carli stated that Italy regarded the acceptance of the principle of free movement of labour as fundamental for her participation in the free trade area. Carli proposed a revision of article eight of the OEEC charter in order to establish two principles: (a) all efforts should be directed to ensuring maximum employment in the area as a whole and not merely in individual countries; and, (b) workers should be guaranteed the right to move to jobs offered them and to stay wherever such jobs were found, enjoying rights equal to those of the nationals of the country.<sup>19</sup> On this point Maudling seemed understanding, but was very pessimistic on the attitude of British labour towards the possibility of free entry of foreign labour. "Trade unionism had taken the place of political nationalism", Pella commented.<sup>20</sup>

The second object of contention related to the impossibility, in the free trade area, of using a single external tariff. Pella admitted that he had been unable to find so far any possible solution to the problem of determining the origin of goods entering from outside countries. Without a solution the Italian Government would have to face opposition from agriculture, industry and labour to the free trade area. On the harmonisation of external duties Carli said that Italy's position was clear. If, as a result of different external duties, goods were able to enter different countries of the free trade area at different prices, the countries with a high tariff (particularly the countries of the Common Market) should be at liberty to impose countervailing duties equal to the difference in duty in each particular case. In this regard, the position of the Italian Confederation of Industry was that, without a single external tariff, Commonwealth raw materials entering the free trade area through the United Kingdom at preferential or nil rates of duty would compete unfairly with raw materials imported directly through the tariff barrier of the Common Market. The official Italian view was that, if the principle of countervailing duty was established, a solution to the problem could be found. Carli concluded by saying that they had not

18. PRO, T 234/373, Progress Report on the FTA agreement by Maudling, 6 December 1957.

19. PRO, T 231/797, Ellis-Rees to the Foreign Office, "Third Meeting of the Inter-Governmental Committee on FTA", 28 November 1957.

20. PRO, FO 371/128363, "Record of talks between Mr. R. Maudling and Italian Ministers, First Meeting: 11 a.m. October 5th 1957, at Palazzo Chigi".



been able to find an alternative formula by which all producers within a free trade area would be put on the same footing in the purchase of raw materials. As to this problem of the external tariff, Maudling suggested a thorough analysis of the question even though he thought that

“whereas agriculture was a political problem, the question of origin was in fact a technical problem and it might prove the hardest of all to solve”.<sup>21</sup>

### III

The lack of a common external tariff envisaged in the constitution of the free trade area proved to be one of the most critical issues for Italy during the negotiations. As we have seen already in the talks with Maudling, both Pella and Carli wished for a special formula to break the impasse. Carli, prone to suggesting possible practical solutions, had put strong emphasis on the possibility to impose countervailing duties, even though the functional details were still to be worked out.

In March 1958, Carli made an important statement at the Maudling Committee. He said that in the Common Market the corollary of uninhibited competition was the agreement on a common external tariff. Thus, it was necessary to accept a broadly similar principle in a free trade area:

“recognising that some countries attached importance to autonomy in their external tariff, the best arrangement would be one under which an upper and a lower limit would be fixed for the tariff on each commodity within which countries would be perfectly free to choose. This would have the effect of reducing disparities and, therefore, the cause of serious deflections of trade. If, however, any country wished to retain duties outside these limits, then a system of special taxes would be necessary to compensate for these differences, when goods were traded inside the free trade area”.<sup>22</sup>

Carli claimed great administrative simplicity for this system and believed it would eliminate the need for origin rules altogether.

On the next meeting, Carli added a few details to his scheme, stressing that the object of the Italian proposal was to suggest a compromise between those who thought that harmonisation of tariffs was essential and those who regarded it as incompatible with the basic principle of a free trade area. In reply to a question from Maudling on whether tariff spread would be measured from a given norm or be merely the difference between an upper and lower tariff for particular commodities, Carli said there was the need to distinguish between the position during and after the transitional period. At the end of the transitional period the Six would have a uniform tariff and this could be considered as a norm with margins of tolerance fixed on each side. Before this, however, there would be differences in the tariffs of

21. *Ibid.*

22. PRO, T 234/375, Ellis-Rees to the Foreign Office, 11 March 1958.



the Common Market countries and it would be necessary to agree on a maximum tolerable spread in every case. At the end, the Committee decided to pass the Italian proposal on to the Group of Trade Experts for a report in time for the following ministerial meeting. It was later decided to ask the Steering Board in conjunction with the trade experts to take on this task.<sup>23</sup>

In July 1958, the Steering Board produced its report on the Carli scheme and on two versions of the conventional origin type plan proposed by the British. During the discussion of the report at the Maudling Committee on 24-25 July, the French view that the problem would have to be negotiated sector by sector was accepted. Five alternates were then instructed to write individual reports on what had become accepted as the five main sectors (machinery, non-ferrous metals, chemical products, textiles, timber and timber products). Their reports together with that produced by the Steering Board were submitted to the Maudling Committee on 14 October. It was then decided that a new committee at ministerial level would make a final attempt to reach agreement on a definitive settlement before the New Year. However, before the ministerial origin committee held its first meeting, Jacques Soustelle, French Minister of Information, made his famous press statement and the FTA negotiations were suspended.<sup>24</sup>

What was the essence of the so-called Carli Plan? The Plan was a proposal for incentives to tariff harmonisation: all future FTA countries would have to bring their external tariffs within a band on either side of the common tariff of the Six, which would be the norm for harmonisation. All products processed in a member country would circulate freely within the area if the external tariffs of the exporting country and the importing country on that product were both within the band and no duty had been drawn back in the exporting country. In cases where harmonisation had not been achieved, and where the tariff of an importing member country on a particular item was higher than that of the exporting member country, a compensating charge based on the difference between these two external tariffs could be levied by the importing country; whether any charge was to be levied and, if so, its rate, would depend on the relationship of the two tariffs to the norm.<sup>25</sup> The Carli Plan aimed at horizontal harmonisation, i.e. free area treatment was to be given to a manufactured product if it could be shown that the tariffs for that product in the importing and exporting countries were sufficiently harmonised. No account would be taken of the relative heights of the respective tariffs for raw materials and semi-manufactures from which the manufactured article in question might have been made.<sup>26</sup> As to the question of origin, the scheme would apply only to goods considered to be of an FTA-country origin. Other goods would pay the ordinary

23. PRO, T 234/375, Ellis-Rees to the Foreign Office, 12 March 1958. The Steering Board of Trade was an already existing OEEC committee of senior officials from eight of the seventeen OEEC member countries who were presumed to act in a personal capacity and not as national delegates.

24. PRO, Board of Trade [BT] 205/371, "Chronological Table of Main Events in the Free Trade Area negotiations with special reference to the origin problem", January 1959.

25. PRO, BT 205/361, FTA 27, "The Carli Plan".

26. "Italy for Compromise on Free Trade Zone", in *New York Herald Tribune*, 12 March 1958.

most-favoured-nation rates of duty. The rules for deciding origin could be those already applied by countries for import licensing purposes.

The system was meant to begin after the four years of the transition period during which it would be agreed internationally whether the tariff arrangements of the various countries called for compensating charges in the case of particular goods traded between particular countries, and if so, what rates should be applied. In practice, the arrangements for the transitional period bristled with administrative difficulties. The workability of the Carli Plan depended to a large extent on how far its object would be attained. If there were to be harmonisation to a very considerable extent, there would be little need for levying compensating charges. If there were not to be harmonisation over a wide field, the full rigours of the administrative arrangements would come into play.

The reactions of the other members of the OEEC to the Carli Plan were not outspoken at first since it was difficult to foresee what the scheme would imply in practice. As the Plan took a more definitive shape – a revised version began to circulate at the end of March 1958 – many countries gave it a sympathetic reception. Among them, the Scandinavians believed that the Carli Plan could have positive advantages for them and could point the way to eventual agreement on the creation of a satisfactory form of free trade area. That was because the Scandinavian countries exported an entirely different range of products from those they imported and a scheme that returned to horizontal harmonisation would give them the prospect of free trade for their exports at the cost of harmonising their import duties on their imports, and they would still be free to maintain the low duties on their imports, which they regarded as essential.

Among the Six the French were the most favourably disposed, but they requested that the Italian proposal be examined for raw materials first, postponing the question of manufactured goods for consideration at a future date. Even though no sharp criticism arose from the EEC countries mainly for obvious political reasons, the Germans did not like the idea of compensatory duties. They were worried about the administrative complication and doubted whether the Italian scheme could ever be made to work.<sup>27</sup>

From the beginning, the most direct opposition to the Carli Plan came from Switzerland and the United Kingdom, as voiced by their delegates at the inter-governmental committee meetings. The Swiss delegate, Mr. Schaffner, expressed serious doubts about the effect of the Plan on the low-tariff countries. Mr. Schaffner believed that

“everything depended on the margins of tolerance and whether they would be fixed in such a way as to force low tariff countries to raise their duties”.

He uttered strong warnings against Europe “tying itself in a regional block” and said that if this happened he could not see how Switzerland could continue to earn

27. PRO, BT 205/361, Cabinet, Economic Steering Committee, Sub-Committee on closer economic association with Europe, “The Carli Plan”, Brief for the Paymaster General, Note by the Board of Trade, 26 March 1958.

the surplus from the outside world which she needed to meet her very large deficit with the Six.<sup>28</sup> The British were not less critical of the proposal:

“Carli would accept the principle that considerable differences of external tariffs might be tolerable without origin formalities, but he would provide for a system of compensation taxes to be applied in cases where external tariffs still fell outside the tolerable limits, thus, in his view giving an incentive to harmonisation of tariffs without making it compulsory for those countries who did not want to go so far. As it stands, the Carli Plan is nonsense and probably dangerous nonsense, but it is not impossible that, with the help of the other members of the Six, it might be turned into something useful”.<sup>29</sup>

Maudling was less optimistic and his judgement of the Carli Plan left little room for doubts: “It was largely incomprehensible, but in so far as it was comprehensible, it was unacceptable.”<sup>30</sup> Yet, he felt that the fact that Italy had endeavoured to make a constructive contribution was in itself encouraging. The British permanent delegation at the OEEC had a less clear-cut opinion on the Carli scheme. Although the members of the delegation had been instructed to avoid “aggressive criticism”, some seemed to believe that the late version of the Italian plan contained features, such as the re-introduction of origin rules, that made the proposal become of some interest. Mr. A. Currall, a member of the British OEEC delegation, realised that the Carli Plan was a proposal for tariff harmonisation whose acceptance in any form would have meant “a departure from some of the basic principles on which the United Kingdom has so far been proceeding.” He also realised that the Plan had received “a formidable degree of support from the Scandinavians and the Six” and did not embody any proposals which “would require the United Kingdom to apply duties against the Commonwealth.” Mr. Currall urged the British Government to adopt a definitive position on the Plan before the following ministerial meeting: as he expressed it,

“we shall have to address ourselves to the question whether we wish now to reject the Plan or are going to give it a sufficiently fair wind to allow continued examination by officials.”<sup>31</sup>

However, as Sir Figgures pointed out,

“the compensation charges would frustrate trade and therefore there would be powerful incentive to *de facto* harmonisation. Any proposals to which we could put our name must not, either overtly or implicitly, prejudice our freedom to admit Commonwealth goods duty free”.<sup>32</sup>

28. PRO, T 234/375, Ellis-Rees to the Foreign Office, Meeting of the Inter-Governmental Committee on FTA, 12 March 1958.

29. PRO, T 234/375, “Impressions of the meeting of the Maudling Committee in Paris, March 11th-12th, 1958.”

30. PRO, T 234/375, Record of a meeting held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 21 March 1958.

31. PRO, T 234/375, British Permanent Delegation at the OEEC, 21 March 1958.

32. PRO, T 234/375, Meeting with Carli-Ducci-Ferlesh, Note for the Record drafted by Figgures, 18 April 1958.

The final statement of British policy on the Carli Plan was formulated in a brief for the Paymaster General entitled “The case against the Carli Plan”. This paper advanced three main arguments for the rejection of the scheme altogether. Firstly, harmonisation of tariffs as an objective policy, or *de facto* pressure towards it through widespread compensation taxes was perceived as a threat to the system of free entry for Commonwealth goods and thus was considered politically unacceptable. Secondly, any widespread system of compensation taxes would have imposed barriers to trade within the free trade area much greater than were required to deal with deflections of trade and, in particular, would have stroke at trade in goods wholly made within the free trade area. Finally, the British insisted on their right to use origin certificates based on percentage or process criteria, because they required them for their own protection against deflections of trade in the absence of harmonisation or compensation charges.<sup>33</sup>

Carli himself seemed not fully convinced of his own Plan. He was well aware of its weaknesses, but he considered it an important weapon to give “presentational advantage in getting the free trade area accepted almost by a trick by the French and Italians” or, in other words, the Plan had “great potentialities for hoodwinking Italian and French public opinion at present hostile to the free trade area”.<sup>34</sup> The Carli Plan could indeed put an end to French fears of unfair competition in their markets since no goods could come in customs-free if they had been produced with the help of cheap imported raw materials, but its major flaw, as it has been said, “was that the issuing of certificates of origin was too complicated and Carli’s Italian Customs were least capable of operating such a system”.<sup>35</sup>

Carli’s favourable and collaborative approach to the FTA issues arose such criticism around his figure in Italy that his ministerial position was in danger at the time of the May 1958 elections. As Carli recalls, “My proposals (inside FTA) found no favour among the European countries; but they had the effect of arousing all sort of suspicion at home.”<sup>36</sup> Prof. Carli was not re-elected and his ministerial position was taken by Colombo in a government which saw only the Christian Democratic Party in power. The Christian Democrats had maintained the tradition of wholehearted support for the integration of Europe through the Six and there was an inclination to regard the free trade area as something which would interfere with that. Carli was right in fearing resistance to the FTA idea in Italy. Beyond the protectionist motives, the plan for a free trade area was interpreted by a large sector of the population as no more than an economic or commercial venture, and often as only a manoeuvre on the part of the British.

33. PRO, BT 205/363, Cabinet, Economic Steering Committee, Sub-Committee on closer economic association with Europe, “The Case Against the Carli Plan”, Brief for the Paymaster General, 22 July 1958.

34. Quotations from PRO, T 234/375, “FTA: State of Play” by Figgures, and Ellis-Rees to the Foreign Office, 1 and 2 April 1958, respectively.

35. LAMB, *The Macmillan Years*, p. 115.

36. G. CARLI, *Cinquant’anni di vita italiana*, Bari 1993, p. 171.

Why Carli took the FTA matter so personally finds an explanation in his attitude towards European integration. Carli feared that the possible exclusion of the United Kingdom from a collaborative relationship with the EEC might “turn the Community in an autarchic Community, while I am in favour of an open Community”.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, he believed the failure of the ongoing FTA negotiations to be very dangerous for Italy since

“it would provoke the most rigorous application of the imperial preference system now operating inside the Commonwealth. We aim at preventing this system to grow stronger, we would like to make it weaker and we think it necessary to establish amicable relations with the United Kingdom and all Commonwealth countries”.<sup>38</sup>

In Carli’s view the more Italy entered a system of international competition the more the country should aim at a policy of industrial efficiency rather than partial integration in a small common market, inward looking protectionist block, closed to foreign challenges. A view which no doubt finally isolated him in the domestic political and economic arena.

#### IV

Italian industrialists never looked favourably upon the proposals in favour of a Free Trade Area. They were involved in the negotiations from the beginning, but their position remained substantially unchanged. In the words of Confindustria’s president Alighiero De Micheli in February 1957,

“we are very doubtful on the possibility to set up, in a larger context than that of the EEC countries, a Free Trade Area aiming at tariff reductions only, or even worse, aiming at excluding vast sectors to freer trade”.<sup>39</sup>

As a member of the British Delegation at the OEEC reported in April 1957,

“although most of the Ministers and officials regarded a Free Trade Area as politically desirable (...) there are, in the Italian mind, no strong economic reasons for supporting the proposal”.<sup>40</sup>

Agricultural trade, which according to the British had to be excluded from the Free Trade Area, was at the root of the Italians’ lack of enthusiasm for an industrial free trade area and represented one of the main areas of conflict between the governments of the United Kingdom and Italy. From the very beginning of the negotia-

37. CARLI, “Sommario delle dichiarazioni fatte alla Unione dei Commercianti della Provincia di Milano, 20 aprile 1958”, reprinted in CARLI, *Commercio Estero, maggio 1957-giugno 1958*, Roma, n.d., p. 53.

38. CARLI, “Intervento all’Assemblea annuale della Confederazione Generale dell’Industria Italiana, Roma, 26 febbraio 1958”, in CARLI, *Commercio Estero*, p. 81.

39. CONFEDERAZIONE GENERALE INDUSTRIA ITALIANA (CGII), *Annuario 1957* (annual report for 1957), p. 297.

40. EUIA, OEEC, ZELE 203, Letter from Cahan of the British Delegation to the General Secretary of the OEEC Council of Ministers, René Sergent, 19 April 1957.

tion process, Italian industrialists showed “remarkable solidarity” with the rural forces in their criticism of the FTA project and incorporated the question of the exclusion of agriculture among their objections to the British proposal. The British had been very direct and clear on this point:

“The United Kingdom and most European countries protect their home agriculture by one means or another for well-known reasons, and will wish to continue to do so. The United Kingdom would not in the foreseeable future be prepared to remove protection in this field (...) nor would expect other countries to take such action”.<sup>41</sup>

It should be remembered that in the end the British were forced to make a few concessions in favour of Danish, Portuguese and Norwegian agricultural exports in order to secure the deal, yet the products involved had no great Commonwealth interest.<sup>42</sup> Italy was not willing to open her domestic market (especially in the agricultural field) further to the competition of other members of the OEEC, outside the Six, since its trade balance with some of them was negative (Denmark in particular for which seventy seven per cent of its exports to Italy consisted in food products in 1958), but wished for the drafting of special arrangements that would protect the weakest members and find markets for their agricultural exports.<sup>43</sup>

In the course of a round table on the FTA at the Council of European Industrial Federations, held in April 1957, the Italian representative, Confindustria’s Vice President Quinto Quintieri, made clear that leaving out agricultural goods from the FTA was unacceptable and clung to this position also in successive occasions.<sup>44</sup> During the June 1957 visit of Sir Eccles to Italy, a meeting was organised with the leading industrialists and Confindustria representatives who showed “substantial reserves on the desirability of the free trade area”.<sup>45</sup> They suggested that the differential in external tariff would lead to unacceptable shunting operations which could neither be controlled by certificates of origin nor in any other way. They felt this as an insuperable difficulty, as a news agency close to Confindustria had already underlined a few weeks earlier:

“If the Common Market countries decide to protect certain raw materials produced in their countries by maintaining a protective tariff, it is inconceivable that a country

41. EUJA, OEEC, ZELE 203, British memorandum to the OEEC on the “Free Trade Area”, 18 July 1957.

42. See on the issue, GRIFFITHS, “The importance of fish for the creation of EFTA”, in *EFTA Bulletin*, no. 1/92, vol. 33, January-April 1992, pp. 37-40.

43. “Italy would like to export freely its agricultural products to Great Britain, but the problem of liberalisation in the agricultural field is not easy since all countries exporting agricultural goods protect this field, with various devices, from foreign competition”; see “Il punto sui lavori per la istituzione di una Zona di Libero Scambio”, in *Bancaria*, 1958:6, p. 681. Carli himself was against the Danish suggestion on complete liberalisation of agricultural trade, since Italy had to defend its internal food production. See Carli’s speech at the Conference on Common Market problems organised by the Confederazione dei Coltivatori Diretti, partially re-printed in *Bancaria*, 1958:1, p. 90.

44. EUJA, OEEC, ZELE 203, “Compte-Rendu de la table ronde sur la Zone de libre-échange”, 26 April 1957.

45. PRO, FO 371/128348, Record of Conversation, Proposed Free Trade Area, Leading Industrialists – Eccles, 12 June 1957. Confindustria representatives were Vice Presidents Senatore Borletti and Quinto Quintieri, and the Deputy Secretary-General, Enrico Mattei.



outside the Common Market should be able to obtain the raw material concerned at a lower price and then sell it duty free within the Common Market".<sup>46</sup>

Also, according to Confindustria, Italy could not afford to open her domestic market to industrial competition in a free trade area unless the other countries concerned opened their markets correspondingly to Italian agricultural produce. On this point Confindustria completely shared Pella's view on the fact that it was

"not possible for a country like Italy, where forty one per cent of its population is still employed in agriculture, to agree on importing industrial products without being allowed to export its agricultural goods".<sup>47</sup>

As Fiat General Manager Vittorio Valletta ironically stated during the meeting, "Western Europe in general and Italy in particular are not able to face the simultaneous upheavals of the Common Market and the Free Trade Area".<sup>48</sup>

In fact, as the British Consulate General in Milan correctly underlined a few days after the meeting,

"Italian industrialists are not going to take kindly to the proposed FTA unless they can see more compensating advantages than are so far apparent".<sup>49</sup>

Yet the defence of agriculture was only instrumental as it comes out from the report presented by Enrico Mattei, Confindustria's Deputy Secretary-General in July 1957. Mr. Mattei updated the members of Confindustria's Executive Committee on the final judgement on the FTA given by the Economic Committee:

"The unfavourable opinion of the Economic Committee springs from insuperable technical difficulties. The problem of unchangeable external tariffs would set on untenable positions and no artificial device could compensate the difference in prices".<sup>50</sup>

During 1957 Confindustria's outspoken opposition to the FTA kept emerging in various articles and interviews. In September 1957, Quintieri released an interview in which he made clear that

"the FTA, first of all, constitutes the solution to an English problem (...) since it cannot overlook a market of one hundred and sixty one million of potential European customers. The most difficult problem to solve remains agriculture and the free determination of the external tariff. The latter would allow low external tariff countries to export extra-FTA products with no duty to high external tariff countries. A possible solution might consist in the elaboration of certificates of origin for the goods traded within the FTA".<sup>51</sup>

A month later, Confindustria's newspaper re-affirmed that the biggest problem of the British proposal remained the "lack of a common external tariff that would cause serious economic repercussions in the EEC countries".<sup>52</sup> These fears were re-

46. EUIA, OEEC, ZELE 206, "Conversations anglo-italiennes sur la Zone de Libre-échange", letter from Cittadini Cesi, member of the Italian OEEC Delegation, to Sergent, 28 June 1957.

47. PRO, FO 371/128367, "Italy's industrial circles' criticism of the Free Trade Area", May 1957.

48. Ibid.

49. PRO, FO 371/128351, British Consulate General, Milan, 21 June 1957.

50. Archivio Storico Confindustria, Fondo Giunta, 1.5/22, "Verbale riunione 9 luglio 1957".

51. *Notiziario della Confindustria*, 1957:17.

52. *Organizzazione Industriale*, "Il mercato comune e la zona di libero scambio", October 1957:3.

inforced by a United Nations study on the plans for freer trade in Western Europe which had calculated that

“the removal of protection against competitors in other member countries of the FTA will probably have the greatest impact on domestic industry in France and, possibly, Italy”.<sup>53</sup>

Last but not least, until the signing of the EEC Treaty on 25 March 1957, the industrialists and part of the Italian Cabinet were convinced that the British proposal for a free trade area was a manoeuvre to delay or even disrupt Common Market negotiations. They felt that because the British produced their plan under the threat of the Treaty of Rome, they were moving primarily to protect British interests in face of the economic strength that would accrue to the Community of the Six through the establishment of the Common Market. According to Confindustria the United Kingdom had accelerated the work at the OEEC in order to conclude the FTA Treaty before the Common Market entered into operation. As a result of this perception, Italy’s Government and economic circles, as well as public opinion, were not being allowed enough time

“to understand that the advantages of a wider market can only be attained by those who are prepared, even if only temporarily, to accept its difficulties”.<sup>54</sup>

As emerges from the conversations between some OEEC officials and a Confindustria representative in Paris, Italian industrialists

“formally shared the position of the French industrial organisation (Patronat français) and above all the fear that British industry »peux manger à deux râteliers«”.<sup>55</sup>

Confindustria had acquired the conviction that if necessary industrialists would eventually “surrender” to the institution of the Free Trade Area, but in so far as Confindustria could influence the economic press, the latter would keep on reflecting very unfavourable opinions on the Free Trade Area.

The speech addressed by Alberto Pirelli, the leading tire and electric cable producer, at a conference of European industrialists, held in London in February 1958, on the problem of the FTA was enlightening. The tone was diplomatic and polite, but the difficulties he raised – levelling the cost of production, free movement of labour, the problem of origin, agriculture – were presented as insurmountable, with little margin for negotiation. Above all, the biggest reserve was that

“in all sincerity many economists and business people in Italy feel that our country may be particularly handicapped, not only in connection with some agricultural issues, but also because we are the last comers amongst the industrialised nations and have factories which are generally small and fitted for a limited domestic consumption. So that many of us think that Italy is taking the largest risks of all”.

In the end, the judgement on FTA left no room for doubts:

53. United Nations, *Economic Survey of Europe in 1956*, Geneva 1957, chapter 4, p. 15.

54. PRO, FO 371/128367, “Italy’s industrial circles’ criticism of the Free Trade Area”, May 1957.

55. EUIA, OEEC, ZELE 206, Memorandum from Cittadini Cesi to Sergent, 6 November 1957.

“The impact of the plan for a Free Trade Area, as at present outlined, would be more favourable to Great Britain in the economic field than to the countries of the Common Market”.<sup>56</sup>

On occasion of the annual address to Confindustria’s General Assembly at the beginning of 1958, De Micheli again expressed his doubts on the FTA proposal:

“We have not spared our criticism on the feasibility of the Free Trade Area since it does not take sufficiently into account the problem of disparities in each country’s position, thus creating unfair situations.”<sup>57</sup>

The following year, his position left little room for compromise:

“We do worry for the risk our industries would be running inside FTA if England could keep its freedom of trade with the rest of the world, uncoordinated with the Common Market, to the benefit of its industries’ competitive position. Such uncoordinated freedom could cause serious upsetting in our market”.<sup>58</sup>

## V

Where Italy’s actual trade interests lay is shown in the following table. In order to highlight Italy’s export trend by principal countries of consumption, a constant market share analysis has been carried out over the period 1951-57. The results show how Italy’s major export trade partners and their relative weight change over the years.

According to Table 1, West Germany shows an exceptional increase of eighty per cent in the share of Italy’s exports between 1951 and 1957. To a lesser degree, also Switzerland increases its importance as a trade recipient (from about seven to ten per cent), while the US share varies between eleven and twelve per cent throughout the period analysed. Though still very important commercial partners, absorbing about eight per cent of Italy’s exports in 1957, the United Kingdom and France were never back to the exceptional 1951 shares of Italy’s exports (respectively seventeen point three and eleven point four per cent), which characterised the period prior to their suspension of trade liberalisation. According to this constant market-share analysis, which has excluded trade recipients importing less than one per cent of Italy’s exports, the EEC countries increased their share from twenty-seven per cent in 1951 to thirty-two point three per cent in 1957, thanks to the relevant performance of West Germany, while the rest of the countries considered in Table 1 – i.e., Austria, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom – absorbed twenty-five point three per

56. Ibid., “Report of the speech by Mr A. Pirelli.”, London, 19 February 1958.

57. CGII, *Annuario 1958*, “Discorso di De Micheli, 26 febbraio 1958, Assemblea Generale”, p. 327.

On occasion of De Micheli’s speech, Carli was invited to illustrate the state of Italy’s foreign trade relations. Referring to Italy’s possible participation in a FTA, Carli said that “the statements of President De Micheli bewildered me, not because he opposes the setting up of a FTA, but because he had less contrary opinions than I thought.”

58. CGII, *Annuario 1959*, p. 342.

**Table 1: Italy's Export Trade by Principal Countries of Consumption (in percentage share)**

Years	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
West Germany	10.03	12.76	14.57	14.47	16.06	16.80	18.25
France	11.45	8.28	6.83	7.54	7.44	8.88	8.15
Belgium-Lux.	2.97	3.12	3.27	3.01	3.44	2.83	3.11
Netherlands	2.59	2.24	2.44	2.86	3.08	3.08	2.79
United Kingdom	17.30	10.49	8.11	10.17	9.27	8.09	8.08
Switzerland	7.18	8.23	8.95	9.27	9.33	9.33	9.88
Austria	4.37	3.51	3.57	4.46	4.73	4.47	4.28
Sweden	3.31	2.98	3.89	3.79	3.43	3.06	3.59
Turkey	2.55	4.07	3.76	2.62	3.33	2.50	3.09
Greece	2.47	3.83	4.66	4.95	2.94	2.19	2.51
Yugoslavia	2.37	2.73	3.06	2.19	4.26	2.76	3.94
United States	8.77	12.77	12.69	10.10	11.01	11.75	11.73
Argentina	3.29	1.57	2.90	2.77	3.97	2.87	2.55
Brazil	3.19	2.97	2.26	2.78	2.66	1.55	1.86
Countries from one to two per cent of Total Trade	17.89	20.45	19.04	19.02	15.05	19.84	16.19
<b>Total</b>	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

(\*) Excluding less than one percent trade recipients. Base year 1955. Source: Calculated from United Nations, *Yearbook of International Trade Statistics*, 1950 to 1957, New York 1975.

cent of Italy's export trade in 1957. From a strictly economic point of view, the trend and export volumes undoubtedly favoured the Common Market solution since the export share grew steadily for the EEC countries as a whole and Germany in particular. Furthermore, it should be remembered that agricultural goods still weighted heavily on Italy's total export trade between 1950-57 – amounting to a yearly average of twenty four per cent.<sup>59</sup> The FTA solution enabling low-tariff Commonwealth agricultural products to compete freely with Italy's home production in a field still so important for the country's balance of trade could not be agreed upon.

59. In this respect, it's interesting to consider the case of Spain, which was commercially very dependent on the Six and found herself unable to expand export markets outside the EEC for its perishable agricultural products and raw materials, suffering "frustration in the effort to reorient foreign trade away from the Six". See F. GUIRAO, "Association or Trade Agreement? Spain and the EEC, 1957-64", in *JEIH*, vol. 3, n. 1, pp. 116-7. For both Spain and Italy the evidence was that the most dynamic export markets for their respective export commodity trade were within the Six.

## VI

In the end, the Italian Government and Confindustria were undoubtedly relieved by the failure of the FTA negotiations and attributed the impasse in the Maudling Committee to the desire of the United Kingdom to keep complete liberty over its tariff policy towards the outside world, while at the same time taking advantage from tariff abolition among the Six. As clearly stated in Confindustria's annual report for 1960, an agreement was to be desired, but not regardless of cost.<sup>60</sup> The countries involved were not to be allowed to benefit from a widening market without assuming the ensuing responsibilities. As asserted on various occasions, the FTA seemed to be "no more than a second-best solution, entirely lacking in political drive". Moreover, the lack of economic policy harmonisation measures, such as a public investment fund, the free movement of labour and provisions for full employment, would have worked against the weakest members of any FTA, and Italy in particular.

Italy's government and industrial circles shared common views on the danger that a FTA would represent to Italian industries and no political solution could overcome their outspoken hostility.

"In the end, we should decide if our economy can face a general reduction of tariffs on goods coming from all over the world (including the United States) notwithstanding the existing profound disparities. If the possibility exists, we should decide what to do in times of recession. If the trend is negative, in the absence of a complete integration strategy as provided for in the Common Market Treaty, tariffs and import quotas become important tools to defend our industries from possible unwelcome surprises".<sup>61</sup>

The FTA proved out of reach because it left the question of agriculture and external tariff unsolved, hurting both the farmers, still holding a large share of voting power, and the industrialists. A great *concession* had already been made by industrialists by approving the EEC. The threat of facing increased international competition through unregulated external tariffs was just too much for Italy's industrial world. Moreover, the beginning of what many authors have defined the years of the *economic miracle* was prompted by what looked like an exceptional export-led growth and the bulk of demand came from the EEC countries. Last but not least, the Common Market economically represented a sounder choice given the fact that it was safer and everything was negotiated and phased out. Italy's needs seemed much better met within the EEC, where agriculture was protected by a particular agreement, the Common Agricultural Policy, industry had been appeased by the safeguard clauses contained in article 109 of the EEC Treaty, while Italy's weak member status was to be alleviated by the creation of the European Social Fund and the Investment Bank, considered as a "personal negotiating success" of the Italian

60. CGII, *Annuario 1960*, p. 345.

61. The analysis of the General Director of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Trade at the time, Carlo Urcioli, on the pros and cons of joining a FTA reflected substantially Confindustria's worries; URCIOLI, "La zona di libero scambio", in *Stato sociale*, 1958:2, p. 204.

delegation.<sup>62</sup> In the end, the FTA seemed to many Italian observers just a British plot to sabotage their efforts and to manipulate decisions of the Six by threatening to spoil the Treaty of Rome. When the Six signed the Treaty in March 1957, the British considered establishing some other link between the Common Market and the free trade area by trying to delay the ratification of the Treaty of Rome in one or more member states. Success in this latter case lay in the assumption that some EEC members did want a free trade area. As it has been said, “it is doubtful whether this was ever the case”.<sup>63</sup> The analysis of the Italian position clearly supports this conclusion. Italy was unlikely to accept a less attractive deal within a free trade area than it had already secured in the Treaty of Rome.

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62. On these issues see, F. FAURI, “La costruzione del MEC negli anni '50. Atteggiamento e posizioni della Confindustria”, in *Rivista di Politica Economica*, February 1996, no. 2, pp. 89-127.

63. GRIFFITHS, “The failure of the wider European free trade area”, in *EFTA Bulletin*, vol. 32, no. 3-4, 1991, p. 18.



## A Tax for Europe: The Introduction of Value Added Tax in France

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From 1969 onwards all member countries of the European Economic Community (EEC) agreed to adopt value added tax (VAT) as their common form of indirect taxation. Although this first step in fiscal harmonization did not entail any loss of national control over the rate at which VAT was set, for all countries except France it meant a fundamental change in their system of indirect taxation. Such major changes in taxation seldom occur outside periods of national emergency, so great is the political sensitivity of the issue. Indeed the fiscal system existing in most European countries was essentially that set up during and immediately after the First World War.

It was to meet the cost of the First World War that many European governments, following the example of Germany, had introduced a cumulative sales tax. This tax, the *Umsatzsteuer*, was levied each time a good changed hands throughout the production process. Its appeal to governments rested on the fact that even at a low rate of tax the yield could be substantial. The ability of the tax to generate revenue outweighed the criticism that it favoured a particular structure of production – that of vertical integration – thereby discriminating against small independent producers. All attempts to reform the tax in the interwar period failed.

However in 1954-55 the French government reformed its fiscal system with the introduction of a new tax on value added to replace the existing taxes on production and sales. VAT which was soon to become the mainstay of the entire fiscal system in France, was not only adopted by the European Community as the common form of indirect taxation in all member states but by many other countries throughout the world. Indeed it has been claimed that in the history of taxation no other tax has swept the world as VAT has done over a thirty-year period.<sup>1</sup> This makes the history of fiscal reform in France of international as well as national importance. Why should France have been the first country to introduce a tax which had been under discussion in Germany since the 1920s, and had been proposed by the American occupation authorities in postwar Japan only to be rejected by the Japanese parliament?

The most common explanation, and the one espoused by tax experts, is that VAT evolved through a process of continual refinement of the fiscal system.<sup>2</sup> Having once in recent times overturned the entire structure of their regime's taxes, the French were more predisposed than most to question their fiscal system and to modify it, according to Carl S. Shoup, a leading American tax expert and the author of the Japanese reform proposal.<sup>3</sup> Why the French should have accepted a system

1. A. TAIT, *Value Added Tax. International Practice and Problems*, Washington D.C. 1988.

2. J.-Y. NIZET, *Fiscalité, économie et politique. L'Impôt en France 1945-1990*, Paris 1991.

3. C.S. SHOUP, "Some distinguishing characteristics of the British, French and United States public finance systems", in *The American Economic Review*, vol. XLVII, no. 2, May 1957.

which relied considerably more on socially-regressive indirect taxes than on direct taxes has been attributed to cultural factors such as the low degree of civic consciousness of French people.<sup>4</sup>

Neither of these explanations is satisfactory. The fact that it took almost fifty years and two hundred parliamentary bills before the system of direct taxation inherited from the Revolution could be reformed, does not fit with Shoup's analysis. Indeed, it was the reluctance of the French people to accept changes in the system of taxation in the period between the French Revolution and the Second World War which most impressed French economic historians. Jean Bouvier and Jacques Wolff explained this inertia in terms of the slow rate of change of French social structures.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the theory that Latin people do not pay their taxes has been disproved, not least by the experience of the post Second World War period in France.

Research based on detailed documentary evidence in France reveals a much more complicated picture. French fiscal reform stemmed from five separate but inter-related factors. The first was the rapid growth in government expenditure after the Second World War and a decline in the willingness of French people to lend money to the government. The second was that the tax system was seen to be profoundly inequitable, with reforms being a constant preoccupation of postwar governments. Thirdly, the tax system was considered to be inefficient and open to wide-scale fraud. The fourth was that the tax system was seen to favour and protect archaic and inefficient methods of production. And finally, the tax system, with its complicated calculations for export rebates and import levies, was seen to discourage trade. However, not all these factors were of equal importance, as will now be explained.

### An Overview of French Fiscal History

In 1945 the fiscal burden (taxation as a proportion of national income) was light in France compared with Britain or the United States, as can be seen from Table One.

**Table 1: Taxation as a Proportion of National Income**

	1938	1945
<b>France</b>	20.9	21.0
<b>United States</b>	25.6	34.1
<b>Great Britain</b>	24.1	40.1

Source: Ministère des Finances, *Inventaire de la situation financière*, Paris 1951, pp. 400-401.

4. C. WEBSTER and A. WILDARSKY, *A History of Taxation and Expenditure in the Western World*, New York 1986.
5. J. BOUVIER and J. WOLFF (eds.), *Deux siècles de fiscalité française, XIXe-XXe siècles*, Paris 1973.

The structure of taxation was also quite different. The French collected anything from a quarter to a third of their revenue from direct taxes, compared with over a half in Britain and three-quarters in the United States. And whereas the system of direct taxation had changed very little since its introduction by Joseph Caillaux during the First World War the system of indirect taxation had been modified constantly.

The system of direct taxation was based on a general income tax introduced in July 1914 and on a number of scheduled taxes levied on distinct categories of income which in 1917 replaced the four direct taxes inherited from the French Revolution.<sup>6</sup> These schedules included for the first time income from salaries and wages. Six different schedules were created: 1) income from property, 2) income from land, 3) agricultural profits, 4) industrial and commercial profits, 5) wages, salaries, pensions, annuities, and 6) profits of non-commercial professions.

In addition there was a seventh category, which was not strictly speaking a schedule: that of income from certain types of securities and investments (*impôt sur le revenu des valeurs mobilières*). This tax had been introduced in 1872 and although it was clearly a tax on income it was collected by the Administration of Indirect Taxes. It was withheld at source by the bank or corporation.

The general income tax introduced in 1914 was superimposed on the scheduled taxes as well as on income from securities and investments. While the scheduled taxes were levied at a flat rate in excess of a minimum the rate of the general income tax was graduated and increased from one per cent on the first ten thousand francs of taxable income to forty per cent on taxable income exceeding one million three hundred and twenty thousand francs.

While some of the scheduled taxes were based on actual income, others were assessed somewhat arbitrarily on the basis of estimated income according to what was known as the *forfait* system. Under this system, the taxpayer submitted a number of crude indicators such as volume of sales, size of stocks, or number of employees, to the tax authorities, who then used a formula to estimate the income. At the outset in 1917 the tax on industrial and commercial profits was based on the *forfait* system. In 1920 this was replaced by assessment on the basis of actual net profits, but then changed again in 1934 to allow small firms which could not afford accurate book-keeping to choose either method.<sup>7</sup>

The tax on farmers' incomes was based throughout the war and interwar period on a variant of the *forfait* system. Curiously there was no definition in French law of "agriculture", which gave the tax administration greater freedom in determining the type of activity subject to this tax, than was the case for industrial or commer-

6. The *Quatre Vieilles* introduced between 1790 and 1799 were: the land tax (*contribution foncière*), a tax of sixteen per cent on income from lands and buildings; the personal income tax (*contribution personnelle mobilière*), a tax of five per cent on individual incomes; the so-called patente tax, a proportional tax based on the rental value of business premises; the windows and doors tax (*impôt des portes et fenêtres*). United States Treasury, "Income Tax Laws of France", prepared in the office of the General Counsel for the Department of the U.S. Treasury, 1938.

7. Ministère des Finances, Fonds Fiscalité, Cabinet du Directeur Général, Min. Fin. Z 809, "Assiette forfaitaire de l'impôt", no date.

cial profits. The most common practice was for assessment of agricultural profits to be made on the basis of the rental value of the land (cadastral revenue), which was itself an estimated value for the purpose of the land register. The reason for assessing tax on the basis of estimated profits was because farmers were not required by law to keep books and accounts. At a time when the contribution to the war effort in terms of human lives of this section of the population was disproportionately high, there was little enthusiasm for adopting a punitive tax regime for farmers.<sup>8</sup>

However, the consequences of this policy were that minimal revenue was raised from the agricultural sector. In 1941, the year that the system was reformed, the taxes paid by the agricultural sector were nought point five per cent of those paid by wage and salary earners. The central feature of the 1941 reform was that the tax on agricultural profits was to be determined by applying different coefficients in each *département*. These coefficients were calculated by comparing average profits per hectare with average rental value of the land. In homogeneous *départements* only one coefficient was applied, whereas in *départements* with distinct agricultural regions, several coefficients were used. This reform did increase the tax paid by the agricultural sector, although by 1945 it was still only about six point six per cent of that paid by wage and salary earners.<sup>9</sup>

Altogether, the burden of direct taxation was very unevenly and inequitably distributed across different groups, as can be seen from Table Two.

**Table 2: Distribution of Direct Taxes (% of total)**

	1935	1938	1946
<b>Wages and salaries:</b>	9.6	10.4	43.0
<b>Industrial and commercial profits:</b>	27.8	26.5	32.6
<b>Profits from non-commercial professions:</b>	2.8	2.1	3.0
<b>Agricultural profits:</b>	0.2	0.3	3.0
<b>Income from land:</b>	17.8	11.2	4.4
<b>Income from securities &amp; investments:</b>	41.8	49.5	14.0
<b>Total:</b>	100	100	100

Source: Ministère des Finances, *Inventaire de la situation financière*, Paris 1951, p. 460.

In 1946 the share of total direct taxes paid by those on fixed incomes had more than quadrupled compared with pre-war, while that of securities and investments

8. Wolff, "Fiscalité et développement en France entre 1919 et 1939", in Bouvier and Wolff (eds.), *Deux siècles de fiscalité française*.

9. Ministère des Finances, *Inventaire de la situation financière*, Paris 1951, p. 460.

had declined by almost the same amount. Since the tax on income from securities and investment was also withheld at source, the decline must have been due to a decline in distributed profits. However, there was no correspondingly large increase in the revenue from profits tax. Since tax rates were roughly comparable across schedules, the uneven returns indicated either a high level of fraud, or a greater ability to avoid paying taxes legally.

In comparison with the system of direct taxes, the system of indirect taxes had been changed many times since the First World War. In 1917 the French government, following the German example, had wanted to introduce a tax which would have a high yield and follow the movement of prices. For this reason, it introduced a stamp duty on all payments. All retail trade was included. But the yield fell far short of expectations. In 1918, one hundred and sixty million francs was raised, whereas one thousand one hundred and fifty million francs had been predicted. The experiment was abandoned and the tax was replaced in 1920 by a turnover tax (*taxe sur le chiffre d'affaires*) at a rate of two per cent for all goods except luxuries, where the rate was higher, and for essentials, mainly foodstuffs, which were exempt.

The tax produced a high yield, but quickly came under attack for a number of different reasons. It was criticized for pushing up prices, and for giving the Ministry of Finance access for the first time to the accounts of industrialists and traders. More serious, perhaps, was the charge that the turnover tax (also known as a cascade tax) pushed up the price of exports, since only the last stage of tax could be reclaimed when a product was exported. The export price therefore included all previous taxes. It was also seen to distort the structure of production by favouring large integrated concerns. The government composed of Radicals and Socialists which was elected in 1924 promised to abolish the tax, although it succeeded only in modifying it. In 1925 it created a single *ad valorem* tax collected at one or more stages of production on specified goods. Each year until 1934 the list was extended, but since the turnover tax was not abolished, the system became increasingly complex and entirely defeated the reforms of 1925.

In 1936 the Popular Front government did manage to abolish turnover taxes, replacing them with a single tax on production. The underlying principle of this tax was that manufacturing could be divided into two processes: production and distribution. The production tax of six per cent was imposed as a good passed from one sector to the other. When it was introduced in 1936 it was based on an annual statement made by the producer to his supplier, checked by the tax authorities and according to which the producer assumed responsibility for paying the tax or delivering the product to another producer, in which case tax was suspended. Although in theory the new tax greatly simplified the system of indirect tax, in practice it introduced a number of new complications. Firstly, the definition of production was often contested. Secondly, depending on the number of producers involved in the production process and thus the number of times that tax was suspended, the system could be open to abuse.<sup>10</sup>

10. Nizet, *Fiscalité, économie et politique*, p. 35.

By exempting small artisans from the tax it gave them a great advantage over larger firms and encouraged the splitting of businesses into segments in order to take advantage of the exemption.<sup>11</sup>

As a result the production tax was soon to prove insufficiently elastic to meet the needs of rearmament, and in 1939 the cascade tax had to be re-imposed, initially under the name of an armaments tax, and later a transactions tax. The rate of the production tax was raised to fifteen point thirty-five per cent in 1940. A local tax was introduced on retail trade in 1942 at a rate of nought point two-five per cent and finally a luxury tax was levied in 1943.<sup>12</sup>

### Public Expenditure in France after 1945

At first it seemed as if public expenditure excluding social security would follow a similar pattern after the Second World War to that after the First World War. In other words, after a period of expansion due to the needs of reconstruction, it would fall, but then stabilise at a level higher than the prewar level.

**Table 3: Public Expenditure as a Proportion of GDP at Constant 1938 Prices**

Year	State	Local	Social	Total Defence expenditure	Authorities Security as a proportion of public expenditure
1872	8.2	2.8	0	11.0	26.4
1912	8.8	3.8	0	12.6	41.1
1920	27.8	5.0	0	32.8	42.4
1947	29.0	3.7	8.1	40.8	32.4
1949	27.0	4.7	6.6	38.3	21.8
1950	28.9	5.3	6.9	41.1	20.9
1953	34.8	5.9	7.9	48.6	36.3
1958	33.3	6.4	10.8	50.5	25.8

Source: Ch. André and R. Delorme, *L'Etat et l'économie*, Paris 1983, pp.723-7.

11. J.F. DUE, "Sales Taxation in Western Europe, Part II", in *National Tax Journal*, vol. VIII, no. 3, September 1955.

12. Min. Fin. Z 814, Note for the Secrétaire d'Etat au Budget and the Ministre des Finances from R. Blot, Directeur Général des Impôts, "Evolution historique des taxes sur le chiffre d'affaires", no date.



Indeed, expressed in terms of GDP, public expenditure, excluding social security, was at a similar level two years after the end of the Second World War to that of 1920. However, after falling in 1949 it rose again in 1950 and continued to rise until 1958, as can be seen from Table Three. This was partly due to the American pressure on its NATO partners to increase their defence spending after the outbreak of the Korean War and partly due to the cost of France's own colonial wars.

However, this increase in defence expenditure, while not high by historical standards in France, did nonetheless raise problems for the French Treasury, since much of the new public expenditure after the war in economic modernisation and welfare had been financed by reducing the proportion of defence spending in the budget. It had also been financed by using the counterpart of Marshall Aid – a source which was due to expire in 1952. Whereas French governments had relied in the past on covering a large part of their expenditure through private loans, after 1945 this was no longer an option given the lack of confidence in the government's ability to restore financial stability.<sup>13</sup> The problem was that it took several years for the French State to accept that it could no longer try to secure its legitimacy by raising money internally. The attempt by Prime Minister Antoine Pinay to solve the budgetary problems caused by re-armament by issuing a loan in 1952 was to mark the end of this illusion.

### **Proposals for Fiscal Reform**

It is somewhat surprising that taxation scarcely featured on the reform agenda for postwar France of the French Resistance. Even though the reforms demanded by it and written into the Charter of the *Conseil National de la Résistance* called for a greatly enlarged role for the State in French economic life, no provision was made for ensuring that the State would be able to finance its activity in a non-inflationary way. Given the social diversity of the resistance groups, all that could be agreed was that those who had profited from collaboration should have their assets confiscated. Thus the laws of 18 October 1944 and 6 January 1945 were designed solely to confiscate "illicit" profits and left intact the wealth made since 1940 and the structure of taxation. Some attempt to remedy this was made with the introduction of a national solidarity tax on 15 August 1945. This took the form of a levy on wealth as assessed on 4 June 1945 as well as a contribution from profits made between 1 January 1940 and 4 June 1945, calculated on a progressive scale from three to twenty per cent.<sup>14</sup> The returns fell well below expectations and were even

13. On the eve of the First World War, the French State, it is claimed, was the most indebted in the world. D. E. SCHREMMER, "Taxation and public finance: Britain, France and Germany", in P. MATHIAS and S. POLLARD (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, vol. VIII, Cambridge 1989, p. 399.

14. 14. Min. Fin. 1A 394, Fonds Cabinet. "L'évolution de la législation fiscale de juin 1940 à l'époque actuelle," no date.

considered to have contributed to inflation, since firms were able to pass them on through higher prices to the consumer.<sup>15</sup> As a result tax revenue covered only forty-five per cent of government expenditure in 1945 (see Table Four).

Of course, this deficit was due in part to the low level of economic activity and could be expected to shrink as the economy recovered from the war. Apart from the socialists who insisted that all normal public expenditure should be financed from taxation, the expectation was that some, particularly the “exceptional” expenditure arising from the need to modernize the economy, could be raised through voluntary loans.<sup>16</sup> However, given the increasingly inequitable distribution of the burden of direct taxation, as is clear from Table Two, no government could resist for long the pressure to reform the fiscal system.

In 1946 the government responded to this pressure by setting up a special committee on tax reform, composed of representatives of the government, the trade unions, civil servants, tax officials, technicians and different categories of taxpayers. While it stimulated several proposals for fiscal reform due to the fact that almost everyone had a grievance, it was unable to produce a majority report.<sup>17</sup>

One of the earliest proposals for tax reform, and by far the most comprehensive, came from the Communist-dominated trade union, the *Confédération Générale de Travail* (CGT). Motivated by both the injustice and the inefficiency of the fiscal system, it called for a number of changes in both direct and indirect taxes and in the administration of the fiscal system itself. These included the replacement of the various income taxes by a single, uniform income tax, based on actual income rather than the *forfait*, an annual tax on wealth, the introduction of a tax on business in the form of a tax on value added to replace the existing multiplicity of taxes on sales or turnover, and the merging of the tax administrations into a single one with greater powers of control.

It was the administrative reform which was in fact the least contentious. Under two decrees in March and April 1948 a single Tax Authority replaced the four separate divisions which had jealously guarded their independence since the French Revolution. These were: the bureau of direct taxes, the bureau of indirect taxes, the customs bureau and the bureau of registration and stamp taxes.<sup>18</sup> This was to mean that taxation could be considered from a single perspective, thereby reducing some of the rigid distinctions between direct and indirect taxes. It was also designed to simplify the collection of taxes and thereby reduce the level of fraud.

However, the CGT’s proposal to replace the production tax and the transactions tax by a new tax on value added did provoke considerable criticism. The CGT argued that from the perspective of pure economic theory a tax on final consumption

15. Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques (INSEE), *Le Mouvement économique en France de 1944 à 1957*, Paris 1958, p. 92.

16. See F. LYNCH, *France and the International Economy: from Vichy to the Treaty of Rome*, London 1997, chapter 4.

17. W. BAUM, *The French Economy and the State*, Princeton 1958, p. 164.

18. Shoup, “Taxation in France”, in *National Tax Journal*, vol. VIII, no. 4, December 1955, pp.325-44.

would have been preferable to a multi-stage tax on value added. In practice, though, the collection of a tax at a single stage called for a high rate which then encouraged the black market, as the luxury tax introduced in France in 1943 had demonstrated. On the other hand a multi-stage tax which was also cumulative, such as the transactions tax, was seen to discriminate unfairly against small specialist firms in favour of large firms which were vertically-integrated. One merit of the value-added tax was seen to be that it would expose fraud since declaration of the value of sales and purchases would have to be made by firms at different stages of production and distribution. Another was that it would furnish the State with a more accurate picture of what was happening in the economy. The CGT proposed a rate for VAT of ten per cent across the board. The only exception envisaged was for exports if it proved necessary. Even then, only the exporter of the final product was to be reimbursed. It was estimated that the final price to the consumer would not be affected by the introduction of VAT although the structure of intermediate prices clearly would be.<sup>19</sup>

Many of these arguments won support within the fiscal reform committee. Maurice Lauré, an *inspecteur des finances*, criticized the complexity of the existing system which allowed different exemptions to apply to the transactions tax, the production tax and the local tax, and which often turned the production tax into a cumulative tax. Pierre Uri, from the *Commissariat Général au Plan*, positively welcomed the introduction of VAT if it were to be applied to the agricultural sector as well as to the products consumed by it. Not only would this increase public revenue, he argued, but it could promote the modernisation of agriculture by reducing the extent of home consumption.<sup>20</sup> However, the majority of the fiscal reform committee criticized the CGT's proposal on a number of grounds. It was felt that it would not be practical to apply VAT to small firms which in most cases lacked proper accounting procedures, nor to abolish all exemptions. It was also argued that if only the final exporter were to be eligible for a tax rebate this would encourage the exportation of semi-finished goods, which would be harmful to the French economy as a whole. The defenders of the production tax argued that it had been set up precisely to reduce the number of firms liable to pay it, as well as to encourage exports. But by far the most serious criticism was levelled against the CGT's definition of value-added. Since this included not only the difference in value between sales and purchases but also changes in the value of stocks, it was argued that this would effectively mean that profits were being taxed twice.<sup>21</sup> As far as the CGT was concerned this was fully justified, since firms were able to reduce their liability to pay profits tax in the short term by accumulating stocks. In a period of rapidly rising prices, stockpiling served as a hedge against inflation whilst at the same time contributing to inflation. This expansion of stocks could also have explained the low tax returns on income from interest and securities, which can be seen in Table Two.

19. Min. Fin. B 28370, Service de la Législation Fiscale, "CGT, Projet de Réforme Fiscale", 25 April 1947; Min. Fin. B 51739, "Exposé du projet de réforme de la CGT", 10 January 1947.

20. Min. Fin. B 28334, Meeting of the Committee on Tax Reform, 16 July 1948.

21. Min. Fin. B 28343, Meeting of the fiscal reform committee, 28 July 1947.

Despite the failure to reach agreement on tax reform, the trend was for taxes to cover a larger proportion of government expenditure in 1946 and 1947. However, in 1948, despite the exceptional taxes levied by Finance Minister René Mayer in January 1948, this trend was reversed. Furthermore, while the government was counting on being able to use the counterpart of Marshall Aid to cover some of the deficit, the American Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) in France was to make the release of counterpart conditional on a reform of the French fiscal system.<sup>22</sup> This condition enabled the government to win a derogation from the 1946 Constitution and introduce such a reform by decree. Despite the inadequacies of the reform the result was for tax to cover an increasing proportion of government expenditure, as can be seen from Table Four.

**Table 4: French budgets, 1945–1957 (in thousand million francs)**

Year	Total Expenditure	Fiscal Receipts	Tax Revenue as a proportion of expenditure
1945	523	238	45
1946	681	462	68
1947	914	685	75
1948	1591	1050	66
1949	2047	1487	73
1950	2380	1770	74
1951	2905	2203	76
1952	3623	2579	71
1953	3751	2814	75
1954	3840	2965	77
1955	4092	3102	76
1956	4767	3479	73

Source: INSEE, *Le Mouvement économique en France de 1944 à 1957*, Paris 1958, pp. 206-11.

### The 1948 Fiscal Reform: an Attack on Fraud

The underlying assumption of those who drafted the reform bill introduced by Finance Minister Maurice Petsche on 8 December 1948 was that the basic structure of the French fiscal system was sound, obviating the need for a radical reform.

22. National Archives of the United States, RG 286, memo from D. Bruce, head of ECA in France, December 1948.

In September 1948 the Ministry of Finance had made some changes to the way in which the production tax was collected, simply in order to increase its immediate yield. This entailed replacing the 'suspension of tax' provision (whereby the tax was paid only by the final producer) by a system of fractional payments. This meant that each manufacturer all along the line from raw material to finished commodity would pay a part of the tax.<sup>23</sup> As a result of this change in indirect taxes, the focus of the fiscal reform proper of December 1948 was on direct taxes. As the Minister of Finance, Maurice Petsche, explained to the National Assembly, the objective of the fiscal reform was two-fold: to equalize the fiscal burden, and to simplify the legislation. The intended result was to reduce fraud and increase tax revenue. For the first time ever, a distinction was to be made between the income of private individuals and that of companies. In each case it was the total income from all sources which was to be taxed together rather than separately under the different schedules.

The personal income tax consisted of a proportional income tax and a progressive surtax. The proportional income tax was a flat tax levied at eighteen per cent on income from all sources with no deductions at the base and calculated on the basis of a direct evaluation by the taxpayer. It was not applied to income from wages and salaries, while artisans, small businessmen and professionals continued to have the option of substituting the *forfait* system for a personal assessment. The progressive surtax was then levied on top of the proportional income tax at nominal tax rates rising steeply from ten to sixty per cent. Although the scale of the new surtax above the first ten per cent was exactly the same as that of the general income tax which it replaced, in practice it favoured those on higher incomes, although the rise in prices disguised this bias.

The tax on corporate profits was levied on all business firms organized in the legal form of corporations, at a uniform rate of twenty-four per cent. Where the profits were distributed they were taxed again at eighteen per cent under the proportional tax and possibly again under the progressive surtax.<sup>24</sup> The new corporation tax attracted particular criticism from the Left when the fiscal reform decree was debated in the National Assembly later that month. It was pointed out that whereas undistributed profits were to be taxed at twenty-four per cent, they would previously have been taxed under the *bénéfices industriels et commerciaux*, often at twenty-eight per cent. Distributed profits which were not put into reserves would be taxed at eighteen per cent under the *taxe proportionnelle* instead of at thirty per cent under the tax on income from securities and investment.<sup>25</sup>

The tax reform was therefore not seen to have created a fairer system but simply to have favoured large companies and shareholders. However, judged by the two objectives of reducing fraud and increasing tax revenue, the fiscal reforms of December 1948 were considered to have been a success. It was calculated that between 1949 and 1951 receipts rose by five hundred and ninety thousand million

23. Shoup, "Taxation in France", pp. 328-9.

24. Baum, *The French Economy*, pp. 132-8.

25. Journal Officiel, 1948, "Maxima des dépenses et voies et moyens pour 1949", intervention by M. Gaston Auguet, deputy, extreme left, 21 December 1948.

francs, of which three hundred and forty thousand million francs were due to an increase in prices and production, and two hundred and fifty thousand million francs were due to an increase in tax rates and the reduction of fraud. Indeed, over the whole period between 1944 and 1951 the increase in fiscal receipts due to increased rates and reductions in fraud was greater than the contribution from the counterpart of Marshall Aid.<sup>26</sup>

Because the reforms introduced in December 1948 were designed to simplify administrative procedures rather than to correct any underlying inequity in the system, criticism of the system continued, and proposals for more fundamental reform were put forward. One proposal came from the *Confédération française de travail chrétien* (CFTC), the small Christian trade union, which argued that while in principle direct tax on income was a more equitable form of taxation, in practice many direct taxes became indirect taxes because in a sellers' market they were passed on in the form of higher prices. For this reason the CFTC advocated replacing almost all direct taxes, apart from those on the highest incomes, by a production tax levied on all consumer goods but at differential rates. The resulting revenue could then be redistributed to families and those on low incomes.<sup>27</sup>

In 1950 revenue from income tax as a proportion of total tax revenue was a mere twenty-eight per cent in France, compared with sixty-five per cent in Britain and eighty-five per cent in the United States. This was not due to significantly lower rates of income tax in France, since in fact the rates were comparable across all three countries. What it was due to was a much narrower tax base in France on account of the large number of evasions or exemptions.

For many people the most shocking exemptions were those granted to the agricultural sector. In 1949, out of a theoretical tax revenue of seven hundred and fifty thousand million francs, agriculture paid a mere seventy thousand million francs. The 1948 reforms had failed to alter the way in which the tax on agriculture was calculated. It was recognised that to base the tax on the actual income of farmers would not work, since the tax authorities simply did not have the resources to check the accuracy of the declarations. To get around this problem the CFTC proposed that *forfaits* should be calculated on an individual basis but this proved less popular than the alternative proposal that mixed farms should be taxed according to whether they were small, medium or large.<sup>28</sup>

26. Min. Fin. B 28357, Memo from P. Allix, Chief Inspector of Taxes, 27 March 1951.

27. Min. Fin. B 28343, "Proposition de loi sur la réforme fiscale présentée par la CFTC en 1949", no date.

28. Min. Fin. B 28371, "Les Revenues de l'exploitation agricole", 15 May 1952.



### **The Road to VAT**

The one event which was to have the most dramatic impact on the fiscal system and which was ultimately to be responsible for the adoption of VAT was the outbreak of the Korean War. Arguments about the inequity of the fiscal system paled into insignificance beside the American demands on France to increase its military spending. Had this been seen as a short-term problem, it would not have provoked the sort of fundamental debate which was to take place in France in the early 1950s. Had the American demands not come at a time when France was already heavily engaged in fighting a war in Indochina, the problem might not have appeared so serious. But as it was, the move to perhaps a permanently higher level of military expenditure combined with the termination of Marshall Aid forced the French government to explore new ways of raising revenue. Taxation was thus to be a major issue in the run-up to the legislative elections of 1951. So much so that the Director of the Budget, Roger Goetze, criticized the prominence given to it by most of the political parties. In Goetze's view taxes could not be raised any further, while constant talk of fiscal reform simply encouraged fraud. As he saw it, the only way to face up to the budget deficit was to address those areas of expenditure where action was most urgent. This meant bringing the defence of Indochina into the international arena, and asking the United States to supply France, free of cost, the military hardware which was being produced in France as a result of the Korean War.<sup>29</sup>

The chief inspector of taxes, Pierre Allix, was equally negative about the possibility of raising the extra revenue required out of taxes. Were he to have increased direct taxes on both individuals and corporations, this would have been socially unjust, given the low standard of living of French workers, and would have jeopardized the attempt at that time to introduce collective bargaining in wages. Were he to have raised the tax on corporations alone, this would not have raised sufficient revenue. Were he to have adopted what might have seemed the most equitable solution, namely to levy the same percentage increase on both direct and indirect taxes, it would in fact have fallen more heavily on indirect taxes and resulted in higher prices. The other option was to levy a new tax on capital, but he considered that this would be more appropriate in dealing with a crisis of over-production rather than one caused by the needs of rearmament.<sup>30</sup> In fact it was the economic as opposed to the financial pressures arising from rearmament which were to prove decisive in the debate about tax reform.

At first sight it had seemed that French industry would be able to meet the increased demands arising from rearmament, without cutting back supply to the market. But the scope for expanding national production, judged to be twelve per cent given the existing capacity, was in fact limited to between six and seven per cent due to a number of bottlenecks. These included an inflexible labour supply; a shortage of housing, which prevented industrial regrouping or relocation which might

29. Min. Fin. B 28361, Memo by Goetze, 12 July 1951.

30. Min. Fin. B 28357, Note for Minister from Allix, 17 October 1950.

have increased productivity; an underlying shortage of energy, particularly of coal; as well as supply bottlenecks of other raw materials and intermediate goods.

Even supposing that production could have been increased to meet the demands of rearmament, it was not certain that it would not have unfavourable repercussions on domestic prices and stability. Any increase in wages would raise the demand for consumer goods and, given the low standard of living of French workers, wages would have been spent in the most vulnerable and most heavily squeezed sectors of the economy, namely the textile and consumer goods industries. Such an increase in demand would have led those industries to invest and to increase the demand for capital goods. The final result would have been an increase in prices and wages and a fall in the exchange rate.

The conclusion drawn by the Ministry of Finance was that, given the labour shortage, a policy based on deficit financing would not work. What was needed was a policy designed to improve labour productivity.<sup>31</sup> Not only would this lead to an increase in output but it would also produce higher fiscal returns with which to cover the additional expenditure on rearmament. This discovery of labour productivity by officials in France fitted well with the new emphasis on labour productivity of the American ECA. But whereas initially ECA's exhortations had found most appeal among French employers, after the Korean War even the planners were shifting their focus away from improving the productivity of capital to improving that of labour.<sup>32</sup>

In April 1952 an official report was published which for the first time argued strongly in favour of the adoption of VAT. This report was the work of the Commission on Productivity and Taxation which had been set up in January 1952. Its principal author, Maurice Lauré, had been one of the few to argue the case for VAT in 1948. Since then he had been on a productivity mission to the United States to find out why the fiscal burden was so much lighter in the United States than in France, as shown in Table Five. The answer lay, he claimed, in the higher levels of labour productivity in the United States. If labour productivity in France could be raised then tax receipts would rise and the overall fiscal burden would fall, he argued.

**Table 5: National Income and Tax Levy (in thousand million dollars)**

	<b>National Income</b>	<b>Levy of Taxes and Social Security</b>	<b>Taxes as proportion of national income</b>
<b>USA 1948</b>	214	54.5	25.4
<b>France 1949</b>	81	5.8	32.2

Source: Min. Fin. IA 394, French Tax Mission to USA, 22 November 1950.

31. Min. Fin. B 28357, "Projet d'exposé des motifs d'ensemble aux éléments composant la loi de finances", no date.

32. A. CAREW, *Labour under the Marshall Plan*, Manchester 1987, p. 161.

Thus, in addition to all the other criticisms of the production tax which had been voiced in 1948 a new one was heard – namely, that it impeded the investment necessary to raise labour productivity. This was because under the production tax the only expenditure which could be set against tax was what was incorporated physically into production. This meant that investment in all those factors which were seen to improve productivity such as research and development, energy, advertising, or capital equipment, were taxed twice. A further advantage was that if the fiscal system could be used to promote investment throughout the economy this would enable the government to cut its own spending on investment.

Publication of the report from the Commission on Productivity and Taxation coincided with the formation of the third government of the second legislature, this time led by Antoine Pinay. Pinay's policy was based neither on trying to increase taxes nor on cutting public expenditure, but on encouraging hoarders of wealth to lend to the government under very favourable terms. His reaction to the report on taxation was to set up another commission on fiscal reform, named after its vice-chairman, Louis Lorient, President of the Finance Division of the *Conseil d'Etat*. Its remit was to report to the government on the ways in which the fiscal system could be simplified while at the same time improving the distribution of taxes and reducing their burden. The Commission was composed of twenty people drawn from among politicians, planners, trade unions, chambers of commerce, the general confederation of the Middle Classes, the association of mayors and three independent experts. The general director of taxes, the general director of customs and indirect taxes, and the director of public accounts, all participated, but in a consultative role.

The planners immediately widened the scope of the Commission to include as objectives of fiscal reform, in addition to financial stability and an equitable distribution of income, the growth of national income and of productivity and the expansion of trade. They argued that unlike the situation in Britain, where the government was able to use fiscal policy to fine-tune the economy, in France the government had so little control over taxes that it was constantly trying to raise revenue without being in a position to consider its economic impact. This resulted in a particularly inequitable distribution of income in France. According to studies undertaken by the planners, wage-earners who constituted over sixty per cent of the active population accounted for less than forty-five per cent of the national income. The average income of a wage-earner, as a proportion of the average national income, was lower in France than in any European country studied by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. Furthermore, the purchasing power of a wage-earner in France, in terms of the prices of certain essential goods, was lower than in other countries. Of course, as the planners pointed out, the UN studies took no account of social welfare benefits. Nonetheless the pressure to increase wages was seen to be one of the main factors in the high rate of inflation in France since 1945.

The fiscal system was not the only factor to blame for this situation. Other reasons for inflation in France were the restrictions on competition, both internal and external, and the monopoly profits which such protection generated. Among the consequences of the poor functioning of the fiscal system was that most tax revenue

came from indirect taxes and that wage-earners paid a disproportionately large amount of the direct taxes. While the planners recognised that it was technically feasible to devise a system of indirect taxation which would meet the same objectives of social justice as one based on direct taxes, they felt that it was very much more difficult. It would call for a system of multiple tax rates with some goods carrying no tax at all and some a very heavy burden, as in Britain. The French experience of having a luxury tax had been short-lived on account of the very high level of fraud. In their view, the tax system should promote the growth of national income and productivity, or at least not impede it. They criticized in this respect the production tax exemptions given to artisans and cooperatives. A further reason for reforming the tax system was to promote foreign trade. Pressure to reduce tariffs at both an international and a European level within the fixed exchange rate system set up at Bretton Woods would leave governments with no means to correct price distortions arising from their fiscal systems, they argued. In a perfectly functioning international economy or common market, goods which were exported would be exempted from domestic taxes, while imports would be subject to the same taxes as domestic products. In reality, and in particular in those countries with a cascade system of indirect taxes, imports had an unfair advantage over domestic products since they were taxed once, whereas domestic products were taxed several times. Since the French production tax was only partially cumulative, France was not the worst affected in this respect.

In fact disputes over differences in member countries' fiscal systems were rife from the beginning of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). In 1953 the opening of the common market in steel had to be postponed because of the complaints of the West German government that its steel exports would be discriminated against for fiscal reasons.<sup>33</sup> The West German argument was that since the French relied more on indirect taxes than the Germans, French exports would be at a competitive advantage due to the fact that according to the rules of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), only indirect taxes could be rebated on export. With steel taxed at eighteen per cent in France and five per cent in West Germany, the West German government wanted indirect taxes in the ECSC to be levied in the country of origin.

However, the recommendation of the Tinbergen Committee, set up by the High Authority to look into the question, was that indirect taxes should be levied in the country of destination and that in countries which operated a cumulative sales tax, only the tax on the final stage should be rebated on export.

The French planners, in considering the advantage of adopting VAT for French foreign trade, were therefore anticipating accurately the issues which would arise as governments removed their tariff barriers and quantitative restrictions on trade.

The specific reforms recommended by the planners in 1952 were firstly the abolition of the transactions tax, since it simply added an extra layer of complication

33. D. SPIERENBURG and R. POIDEVIN, *The History of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community – Supranationality in Operation*, London 1994, p. 83.

to those sectors subject to the production tax. In other sectors it provoked an intolerable degree of fraud with disastrous economic consequences. As far as external trade was concerned it had all the disadvantages of the cascade system – in terms of the inaccuracies of rebates – without any of the supposed advantages in the form of producing greater economic rationalization. The most effective way of reducing taxes was not by reducing costs or shortening circuits, but by eliminating a transaction. What a cumulative tax did was simply favour financial integration without promoting real economies.

With the elimination of the transactions tax reform could be concentrated on the production tax where the degree of fraud was in any case the lowest. In principle it was not a cumulative tax and had the further advantage of not promoting business regroupings to bring purchases and sales together, but in practice it was partially cumulative. This was due to the fact that only those materials which were physically incorporated in the final product or which disappeared entirely, were exempt from tax. Thus for all those supplies and services which went under the heading of general costs, the tax was in fact partially cumulative. On the other hand, tax paid on goods of rapid consumption was subsequently deductible, which gave rise to all sorts of legal cases of definition. To get around this it was proposed to tax the difference in value between purchases and sales at each stage of production and distribution so that the sum of these differences was equal to the final value of the product.

Another problem with the production tax concerned the definition of production. To avoid the legal wrangle which this produced, it was recommended that VAT be levied on all purchases of goods and services outside the firm whatever their form. This still left a number of issues to be resolved – including how to tax investment, stocks, services, trade, exports and the system of exemptions.

The treatment of investment was seen to be particularly difficult. Under the existing system expenditure on fixed investment goods and building works was not tax deductible. This was based on GNP being equal to consumption and investment. But even this involved some double accounting in the sense that it included the value of investment goods when produced and their depreciated value when incorporated into the final selling price. Since investment was in fact taxed twice in this way, it was only viable if the returns were greater than about eighteen per cent, which meant that the improvements in productivity had to be considerable for such investment to be undertaken. It was suggested that this discrimination against investment could be avoided if the basis for taxation were to become the net national product, i.e. prices net of depreciation. This then raised the delicate question of how to calculate depreciation in the taxes on dividends. It was for this reason that the *Commissariat Général au Plan* supported the recommendation made by the Commission on Productivity and Taxation. This was to avoid the discriminatory taxation of investment by including investment goods and building works with all the other purchases which were tax deductible – even if carried out by the firm itself. As far as the treatment of stocks was concerned, no change from the system under the production tax was envisaged. This meant that no tax was paid until the stocks were sold.

The taxation of services was to be greatly simplified. In place of the *taxe sur les prestations de services*, the transactions tax and the local tax, a single tax on value added was to be imposed. As far as exports were concerned, the planners felt that tax rebates were not always necessary, particularly for products which faced little or no competition outside France. On the other hand, for those exports which faced stiff competition and which were subject to indirect taxes in the importing country, tax rebates were to be allowed. One of the perceived advantages of VAT was that it would simplify this system. Those firms which produced almost exclusively for the export market might actually be entitled to a tax rebate if they had paid VAT on their supplies.

Apart from the *Confédération Générale de l'Agriculture*, which was opposed to any change in the fiscal system, many of the interest groups consulted by the Lorient Commission favoured the adoption of VAT. But where they disagreed was over whether VAT should apply to production alone or extend to sales. While it was recognised that most fraud occurred at the distribution stage, it was seen by the wholesale and retail trade as a wholly unacceptable burden to place on the thousands of small firms which characterized this sector. On the other hand not to apply VAT to sales would have greatly reduced the benefits. It would also have meant setting a much higher rate.

The CGT, which had favoured the adoption of VAT in 1947, was most critical of the proposal to exempt new investment from it on the grounds that this contravened the principle of fiscal neutrality. In its view, it was preferable for the government to steer the economy through the use of subsidies rather than use the fiscal system.<sup>34</sup>

Most industrialists, when canvassed by the employers' association, the *Confédération Nationale du Patronat Français* (CNPF), preferred a system of accelerated amortisation to reduce the cost of investment rather than the proposal to exempt new investment from tax.<sup>35</sup> What this meant in effect was that they preferred to maximise their profits through savings on tax rather than by undertaking new investment. Interestingly, the car firm Renault did not share this view and made its support for VAT and for the deductibility of investment quite clear.<sup>36</sup>

Similarly, the steel partnership, the *Société Lorraine de Laminage Continu* (SOLLAC), which had been formed in 1948, argued that the transactions tax, which was levied each time steel products were passed from one steel firm in the partnership to another, undermined the modernisation of steel production which their part-

34. Journal Officiel, Conseil Economique "Etude du projet de loi No. 5798 portant aménagements fiscaux", 26 March 1953.

35. Min. Fin. B 28370, "CNPF, Commission de la Fiscalité", 24 April 1952.

36. Min. Fin. B 28374, Note for the Minister of Finance from H. Montet, 12 November 1952.



nership had been designed to promote. This made SOLLAC a strong supporter of the replacement of both the production tax and the transactions tax by VAT.<sup>37</sup>

Perhaps the most bizarre proposal for fiscal reform which was submitted to the Lorient Commission was that of the industrialist Eugène Schueller. His proposed reform consisted of abolishing all existing taxes, except for customs duties and the tax on alcohol, and replacing them with a single tax on energy fixed at different rates for different sources of energy. According to Schueller, such a tax would reduce the fiscal burden by fifty per cent because it would reduce fraud, and encourage tax dodgers to convert their hoards of gold into loans to the government. As a result of the reduction in taxes prices would fall by twenty per cent, enabling production to rise by thirty per cent and income by fifty per cent. The simplicity of the system would release people from the burden of taxation and the intrusion of tax inspectors, he claimed.

Because of the popularity of the proposal it was examined by both the Lorient Commission and the *Conseil Economique*, both of which quickly demolished Schueller's arguments. Briefly, it was argued that there was no evidence that capital was hoarded only to escape tax. In the unlikely event that it was lent to the government, an increase in government debt was considered undesirable since it would increase the need for taxes to service it. Furthermore, the suppression of fraud would not lead to a reduction of the fiscal burden but simply to its redistribution. Another criticism was that the French economy did not have the capacity to enable production to rise by thirty per cent. In fact the only valid claim was considered to be the simplicity of the proposed tax reform. But even then, experience had shown that simple systems quickly became very complicated as demands for exceptional treatment were made. It was also clear that in taxing the main forms of energy, coal, electricity, gas and oil, incentives would be given to develop alternative forms of energy from water, wood or alcohol. It would give foreign suppliers of energy considerable control over French finances, would make the tax revenue very volatile, discourage mechanisation, and favour the rich. Indeed, the list of disadvantages was considered to be very long.<sup>38</sup>

When it was finally submitted to the government the Lorient report recommended the adoption of VAT in both production and distribution with exemptions of one hundred per cent for investment, energy and services. Pinay reduced these exemptions to fifty per cent before submitting it to the Finance Committee of the National Assembly. Even then the Finance Committee criticized the reform bill not for failing to address the central issues of promoting investment and productivity, but for promoting them too much. As a result it feared that the reforms would be inflationary, would do nothing to reduce the weight of indirect taxes and little to reform di-

37. Min. Fin. Z 157, "Les obstacles d'ordre fiscal à la modernisation de l'industrie sidérurgique et des mines de fer", 7 May 1953.

38. Min. Fin. Z 812, "Observations sur le projet de M.E. Schueller tendant à l'institution de l'impôt sur l'énergie", no date; Ministère des Finances, "La Taxation de l'Énergie", in *Statistiques et Etudes Financières*, no. 47, November 1952.

rect taxes.<sup>39</sup> It felt that the proposed VAT retained much of the complexity of the production tax and merely tinkered with the existing system rather than reforming it. As a result of these criticisms Pinay's government failed to get its fiscal reform through the National Assembly in December 1952. Francis Leenhardt, a socialist, argued that one of the main reasons for the failure was because the government ignored the injustice of its proposal. In trying to raise fifty-eight per cent of its revenue from indirect taxes and thirty-one per cent from direct taxes, the burden of taxation would fall disproportionately on the poor.<sup>40</sup> Leenhardt argued that greater justice should be brought to the French fiscal system by reversing the existing weight of direct and indirect taxes. This could be done, he claimed, by excluding the retail sector from VAT. Such a restriction would have the further advantage of facilitating the control of VAT.<sup>41</sup>

The Mayer government which replaced that of Pinay proposed a number of tax "improvements" which were even more limited than its predecessor's, and were not surprisingly also rejected by the Finance Committee of the National Assembly.<sup>42</sup>

It was only when the Laniel government finally accepted the socialists' argument that the retail sector had to be excluded from VAT that the tax reform bill finally became law on 10 April 1954. A decree of 30 September 1953 allowed provisionally the deduction of half of the production tax due on investment goods purchased by a firm.<sup>43</sup> The law of 10 April 1954 which finally replaced the production tax by VAT allowed the deduction of one hundred per cent of VAT on investment goods. The new rate of VAT was set higher than the rate of the production tax to allow for this exemption, and the rate of corporation tax was increased from thirty-four to thirty-six per cent.<sup>44</sup> In 1955 it was extended to cover wholesale trade, but it was not until 1968, when VAT was adopted as the common form of indirect taxation in the European Community, that it was finally extended to the retail sector, where it had long been acknowledged that most fraud took place.

### Conclusion

Although tax reform was a popular demand in France in the years following the Second World War and advocated by almost every group in society with the exception of the farmers, there was little agreement over the form which it should take. Under pressure from the American Economic Cooperation Administration to reform the fiscal system, the French government opted for administrative simplifi-

39. Journal Officiel, "Loi de finances. Discussion d'un projet de loi", 4 December 1952.

40. Min. Fin. B 28376. Leenhardt writing in *Le Populaire*, 8 December 1952.

41. Min. Fin. Z 807, "Projet de réponse à l'amendement de M. Leenhardt", March 1954.

42. Baum, *The French Economy*, p. 162.

43. Min. Fin. B 28379, "Projet de loi portant réforme fiscale renvoyé à la Commission des Finances", 13 November 1953.

44. Min. Fin. Z 814, "Deux ans de retouches fiscales", November 1955.

cation rather than fundamental reform in the legislation introduced by decree in December 1948. It was the increase in defence spending occasioned by the wars in Indochina and Korea, combined with the ending of Marshall Aid, which led to a more fundamental review of the French fiscal structure. In the fiscal reform commission set up by the Pinay government in April 1952 it was the views of the French planners which were to prevail. The planners recommended the substitution of both the production tax and the transactions tax by a new tax on value added (VAT) with the full exemption of investment from VAT. The perceived advantages of VAT were not only that it would stimulate investment, while taking the cost of much investment out of the central budget, but also that it would promote trade and competitiveness, and reduce fraud. The cost of these changes was to be covered by setting the rate of VAT higher than the existing production tax and increasing the rate of the corporation tax. Criticized by the socialists for increasing the weight of indirect taxes in the French fiscal system, VAT was initially restricted to the production sector.

The adoption of VAT in France was significant in that it both anticipated and facilitated the growth of foreign trade. As the first country to modernize its fiscal system, the French were well-placed to influence the debate about fiscal harmonization in the European Community. During the negotiations leading to the Treaty of Rome the West German government once again tried to argue that indirect taxes should be levied in the country of origin. Faced with the implacable opposition of the French Minister of Finance, Paul Ramadier, all that was agreed was that the export rebate on those goods subject to a cumulative sales tax would be based on the average tax paid on a particular good rather than the tax paid on the final stage of production.<sup>45</sup> When this proved to be unsatisfactory in practice, due to the difficulty of calculating and checking the average tax paid, the West German government finally accepted that it and the other four common market countries should replace their existing turnover tax with the French system of VAT. If European countries had modelled their fiscal systems on that of Germany in the interwar period, France was to provide the model for the postwar world.

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45. Min. Fin. Z 808, Letter from P. Ramadier, Minister of Finance, to Ch. Pineau, Minister of Foreign Affairs, 20 January 1957.

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Reinhard Felke

# European Environmental Regulations and International Competitiveness

**The Political Economy of Environmental Barriers to Trade**

Environmental policy is a prominent source of regulation in the European Union. Of major concern in public debate is the presumably negative effect of stringent environmental rules on international competitiveness. Much less attention is devoted to the role of environmental regulations impinging on foreign trade in the form of discriminatory non-tariff barriers.

The author first provides a thorough analysis of the impact of rising pollution abatement costs on the foreign trade performance of German industries. He goes on to analyse and assess the discriminatory potential of environmental instruments. The analysis follows a political economy of trade approach that explicitly takes account of both industrial and environmental interests and builds on a comprehensive review of European environmental legislation.

The dissertation provides a valuable contribution for all those who take an interest in a better integration of trade and environmental policies.

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(Schriftenreihe des EUROPA-KOLLEGS HAMBURG zur Integrationsforschung, Vol. 20)



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## Book reviews – Comptes rendus – Buchbesprechungen

**Barry EICHENGREEN (Hrsg.). – *Europe's Post-War Recovery*.** Cambridge University Press, 1995, IX + 357 S. – ISBN – 0-521-48279-8. – 49,95 \$.

Der vorliegende Sammelband enthält die Ergebnisse eines Projekts, das von der Association d'économie financière in Paris kurz nach dem Ende des Kalten Krieges initiiert worden ist. Sein Herausgeber Barry Eichengreen, Professor an der University of California in Berkeley und Spezialist für internationale Geld- und Finanzgeschichte, schreibt einleitend, daß durch die Beiträge insofern neues Licht auf den Wachstumsboom Nachkriegseuropas geworfen werde, als die Frage nach der Rolle internationaler Organisationen einen Schwerpunkt des Buches darstelle. Zwar kennzeichnet dies in der Tat den Inhalt des Bandes, unrichtig ist jedoch die Aussage, dies sei bisher allenfalls nebenbei untersucht worden. Vielmehr existieren durchaus manche Arbeiten zum Marshallplan, zur europäischen Integration und zur internationalen Nachkriegswirtschaftsordnung, die ausführlich auch den Einfluß der jeweils im Zusammenhang damit gegründeten Organisationen auf das Wachstum thematisieren. Es verwundert daher nicht, daß einiges, was hier ausgebreitet wird, bereits an anderer Stelle, teils von den gleichen, teils von anderen Autoren, dargelegt wurde und daher bekannt ist. Ein zweiter Kritikpunkt muß gleich angeschlossen werden: Der Titel ist irreführend, denn es wird in dem Band der Nachkriegsaufschwung nur in *Westeuropa* behandelt. Der Ostblock und der Rat für gegenseitige Wirtschaftshilfe (RGW) bleiben ausgeklammert. Osteuropa kommt nur dadurch in den Blick, daß gefragt wird, ob die Mechanik des Aufschwungs in Westeuropa nach 1945 heute ein Modell für die ehemals sozialistischen Staaten Europas abgeben könnte. Diese Frage wird allerdings verneint, was einsichtig ist.

Nach Einleitung und Überblick des Herausgebers folgen zwei Studien zum Marshallplan von Lucrezia Reichlin und Chiarella Esposito, Artikel zum Bretton Woods System (Harold James) und GATT (Douglas Irwin), zur Montanunion (John Gillingham) und zur Europäischen Zahlungsunion (Barry Eichengreen) sowie fünf Länderstudien über Großbritannien (Nick Crafts), Belgien (Isabelle Cassiers), Frankreich (Gilles Saint-Paul) und Westdeutschland (Helge Berger und Albrecht Ritschl sowie Holger Wolf). Den Abschluß bildet ein Register.

Ein in vielen Beiträgen angesprochener Aspekt internationaler Organisationen ist ihr Charakter als Bindungsmechanismus, der die Mitglieder glaubwürdig auf bestimmte Ziele festlegt, in dieser Hinsicht Unsicherheit über die Aktionen der Partner vermindert und so Handeln im Sinne der Zielerreichung fördert. Die Europäische Zahlungsunion, auch das GATT und der Internationale Währungsfonds spielten auf diese Weise in der Tat eine wichtige Rolle bei der Errichtung einer liberalen und multilateralen Weltwirtschaftsordnung in der Nachkriegszeit, welche eine wesentliche Rahmenbedingung für den Wachstumsboom darstellte. Die Europäische Zahlungsunion ihrerseits aber war ein Produkt des Marshallplans und des amerikanischen Drängens auf verstärkte Integration der westeuropäischen Länder unter Einschluß Westdeutschlands, das ein unentbehrliches Glied der Arbeitsteilung in Westeuropa war.

Der Marshallplan erfüllte somit eine entscheidende Funktion für den Wiederaufstieg Westeuropas, wenn auch die finanzielle Hilfe, so im Einklang mit anderen neueren Publikationen der Tenor des Buches, quantitativ zu gering war, um bedeutende direkte Effekte zu haben. Allerdings scheint die These Eichengreens und Reichlins nur schlecht hierzu zu passen, daß nämlich durch die Marshallplan-Hilfe der in Westeuropa zur Verfügung stehende Kuchen vergrößert wurde, wodurch heftigen Verteilungskonflikten vorgebeugt und ein das Wachstum fördernder Sozialvertrag zwischen Kapital und Arbeit geschlossen werden konnte. In diesem Zusammenhang ist auch die Feststellung von Crafts interessant, daß der

in Großbritannien existierende soziale Konsens ein wachstumsfeindliches Gewerkschaftssystem und massive Wettbewerbsbeschränkungen auf den Produktmärkten umfaßte und so den relativ geringen Produktivitätsanstieg miterklärt. Das zeigt, daß beileibe nicht jeder Sozialvertrag als für das Wachstum positiv eingeschätzt werden kann. Im übrigen kann man auch Zweifel daran hegen, ob in den westeuropäischen Ländern die Gewerkschaften sich in ihren Lohnforderungen wirklich zurückhielten oder ob diese nicht vielmehr durch die unerwartet raschen Produktivitätssteigerungen ex post nur so bescheiden aussahen.

Das Buch hat viele Facetten, die, wie bereits gezeigt, keineswegs immer übereinstimmen. So findet man durchaus unterschiedliche Meinungen zur Frage, ob ein früher Übergang zur Konvertibilität für Westeuropa möglich gewesen wäre, was von neoliberalen Ökonomen heute gerne behauptet wird. Interessant – und hochaktuell – ist die Feststellung von James, daß das Weltwährungssystem von Bretton Woods bewußt keine vollständig freie internationale Kapitalmobilität vorgesehen habe, da diese als ein potentiell destabilisierender Faktor galt. Sehr nützlich sind darüberhinaus viele der Tabellen, Graphiken und Übersichten, zum Beispiel zu den Währungsreformen im Westeuropa der Nachkriegszeit, zu den ersten Verhandlungsrunden im Rahmen des GATT oder zu der Entwicklung der Exporte nach dem Ersten und dem Zweiten Weltkrieg im Vergleich.

Insgesamt stimuliert das Buch weiteres Nachdenken und Forschen nicht zuletzt deshalb, weil es die Offenheit der Diskussion in zahlreichen Fragen aufzeigt. Ohne Zweifel ist dies ein komparativer Vorteil eines Sammelbandes, der hier also voll zum Tragen gekommen ist.

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**Bernard CONNOLLY.** – *The Rotten Heart of Europe. The Dirty War for Europe's Money.* London/Boston, Faber and Faber, 1996, 426 S. – ISBN 0-571-17521-X. – 8,99 £.

Als 1995 die erste Auflage dieser Abrechnung eines Insiders mit dem europäischen „Superstaat“ erschien, war das Schicksal der Europäischen Währungsunion und die Einführung des EURO mehr als ungewiss. Das „Europäische Währungssystem“ (Exchange-Rate Mechanism, ERM) war gerade zusammengebrochen, nachdem es 1978 von Helmut Schmidt und Valéry Giscard d'Estaing mit grossen Vorschußlorbeeren aus der Taufe gehoben worden war. Danach war es eine offene Frage, ob dieser Schock heilsam sei oder endgültig den „ökonomisch perversen und politisch abwegigen“ Charakter des ERM offenbaren würde. Für Connolly, der von 1989 bis 1995 innerhalb der Europäischen Kommission als Ausschußvorsitzender für das Europäische Währungssystem verantwortlich war, gibt es da gar keine Zweifel. Der Markt hatte triumphiert und eine Verschwörung europäischer Technokraten – mit den Franzosen an der Spitze – gegen die eiserne Lady Margaret Thatcher und den zu fesselnden Riesen Gulliver, die Deutsche Bundesbank, zum Platzen gebracht. In seinen Augen ist die nach der Krise von 1993 sogar noch gefestigte Absicht, die europäische Währungsunion zu verwirklichen, eine furchtbare Waffe in dem „schmutzigen Krieg“ der „Euroföderalisten“ gegen alles und jeden, der sich dem Aufbau des europäischen Superstaates in den Weg stellt. Hier liegt die zentrale These des Buches: Das europäische Währungssystem und in seiner Fortsetzung noch viel mehr die europäische Währungsunion ist nicht nur ineffizient, sondern auch undemokratisch. Sie bedroht Wohlstand, Freiheit und Frieden in Europa. Auf der Anklagebank sieht der Verfasser in der Rolle der „Schurken“ des europäischen Machtspiels eine machtlüsterne, zynische und verblendete, politische und bürokratische Elite, für die das ERM, bzw. EMU nur Mittel zum Zweck der Befriedigung ihrer Superstaatsgelüste ist. Zu den wenigen Helden, die in dem Finanzpoker um die Macht in Europa mitspielen, zählt dagegen die Deutsche Bundesbank und ihr damaliger Präsident



Helmut Schlesinger. Ihm sei es vor allem zu verdanken, so der Autor, daß 1993 der erste Vorstoß der Euroföderalisten in das monetäre Herz Europas am Widerstand eines aufrechten Liberalen gescheitert ist.

Die zweite, als Paperback erschienene Auflage der Streitschrift schien immer noch rechtzeitig auf den Markt zu kommen, um in die Kontroverse um den EURO einzugreifen und um kompetentes Zeugnis abzulegen gegen eine unlauteren politischen Zwecken dienende europäische Währungsunion. Inzwischen ist jedoch deutlich geworden, daß Connollys Kasandrarupe beim Publikum wie bei den Fachleuten immer weniger Widerhall finden. Aus dem internationalen Bestseller der Mittneunziger Jahre wurde ein politischer Ladenhüter. Ist damit auch gleichzeitig seine inhaltliche Kritik schon widerlegt und obsolet?

Der Kern dieser Kritik liegt in der gut belegten These, das Ziel der europäischen Währungsunion sei ein politisches Projekt, das sich wirtschaftlicher Instrumente – gegen den Markt – bedient, um weiterführende politische Absichten – eben die Errichtung eines europäischen „Superstaates“ – zu tarnen. Daneben macht Connolly sehr deutlich, daß die Motivation, die sich hinter den Plänen der Euroföderalisten verbirgt, sich keineswegs an hehren gesamteuropäischen, supranationalen Ideen orientiert, sondern ausschließlich an nationaler Vorteilssuche und ideologischer Verblendung. Dieser Teil seiner Analyse deckt sich weitgehend mit den Resultaten der professionellen Forschung über die Motive zur europäischen Integration in den fünfziger Jahren. Er variiert den Kernsatz der Europaforschung, daß der europäische Integrationsprozess der Erhaltung nationaler Souveränität diene und nicht etwa dem supranationalen Souveränitätstransfer an sich.

Der Verfasser hat sich freilich offensichtlich geirrt, wenn er einem politisch motivierten Projekt, wie es die europäische Währungsunion tatsächlich ist, jede positive wirtschaftliche Wirksamkeit kategorisch abspricht. Am währungs- und stabilitätspolitischen Erfolg im Vorfeld der Währungsunion, die schon im vergangenen Jahr mit Händen greifbar wurde, zeigt sich, daß Europapolitik nicht mit reiner (neoklassischer) Wirtschaftstheorie analysiert werden kann. Darüber hinaus müsste es gerade einen am liberalen Marktmodell geschulten Beobachter nicht überraschen, daß auch aus der Summe von Eigeninteressen ein gesamteuropäisch akzeptables Ergebnis resultieren kann. Kurzum: Connollys Insiderbericht über die Irrungen und Wirrungen der europäischen Währungspolitik der neunziger Jahre hat nicht das Glück, mit Anstand alt zu werden. Er wird von der Realität überholt. Was bleibt, ist eine vorzügliche Quelle über die Befindlichkeit britischer Europegegner im Vorfeld der Währungsunion.

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**Piers LUDLOW.** – *Dealing with Britain: The Six and the First UK Application to the Six.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997, 282 p. – ISBN 0-521-59242-9. – 50,00 £. (Also available in paperback include full info.)

One cannot analyze an international negotiation without insight into the preferences, strategies, and tactics of all major parties involved. Yet nearly all existing scholarly books and articles view the first British bid for accession to the EC from across the Channel. They draw on British archives, detail the British experience, and, for the most part, voice criticisms of the British government.

Piers Ludlow's new book, *Dealing with Britain*, takes a different perspective. This is a history not of British policy, or that of any other single country, but of the interstate bargaining itself. By detailing deliberations among Britain's six Continental interlocutors, and between them and Britain, and by drawing on archival research in Brussels, Bonn, Koblenz and Paris,



as well as (still primarily) London, Ludlow adds a new dimension to our understanding of this critical episode. His analysis is penetrating, balanced, and intelligent throughout.

Ludlow's most original contribution lies in his subtle and insightful discussion of negotiating tactics – in particular, the formal rules and informal arrangements and practices that shaped the negotiations. Increasingly in recent years – but the argument dates to Leon Lindberg's studies of the EC in the early 1960s – political scientists and policy analysts treat informal negotiating procedures as critical independent determinants of EC bargaining. Governments, it is often argued, can be trapped by the EC "negotiating style," which can lead to inadvertent, unpredictable outcomes quite at variance from the dictates of underlying power and interests. Such negotiations tend, moreover, to empower supranational actors – most of all leading Commissioners – who elaborate and exploit such rules to expand their own influence.

Ludlow's detailed analysis of procedural discussions among the Six and Britain – negotiations over negotiations, as it were – demonstrates the superficiality of such a view. Governments cynically manipulated EC rules, procedures, and symbols to suit their interests. Cloaked in European rhetoric, the French invoked rules, understandings, and symbols to delay, impede, and, when it came to that, veto the negotiations – even when their actions contravened Gaullist ideology. They insisted that the Six negotiate as a block rather than as separate states, encouraged negotiation in writing, and promoted the continuation of normal EC business during the negotiations. The British, by contrast, sought to facilitate negotiations unimpeded by national veto. They thus not infrequently found themselves allied with the federalist Benelux governments in favour of convening a new "Spaak committee" with a strong national chairman and an open-ended mandate. They also unsuccessfully pushed for longer and more frequent meetings. As for supranational actors, the Commission was generally (though far from invariably) helpful, but its proposals were swiftly "marginalized" or "sidelined" whenever its actions did not suit one or more of the Six, in particular France. [pp. 241] Theories of "negotiation style" may be intriguing, but they do not survive the sharp scrutiny of the historian's eye.

It is difficult, however, to evaluate the appropriateness and efficacy of specific international negotiating tactics without a full understanding of the underlying national goals they are meant to achieve. Much of Ludlow's analysis rests, implicitly or explicitly, on less firmly documented suppositions about these preferences. Ludlow's introduction leads the reader to believe that one distinguishing characteristic of his interpretation will be greater attention to economic considerations. This is true. Yet, in the end, he joins nearly all diplomatic historians of this period in his conviction that the wellsprings of French and British interest were geopolitical, not commercial. Time and time again, Ludlow concludes that primary motivations for important actions – whether the motivation of Macmillan's desire to enter the EC, of de Gaulle to veto the British bid, or of the five other Continental members to side with France – were "political" and "military." The Continentals were defending the future possibility for intense political and military cooperation, as promised by the Fouchet Plan; the British were concerned primarily by the fear of being excluded from any such arrangement. "Economic" or "technical" issues were decidedly secondary.

What is most striking about Ludlow's conclusion about the primacy of geopolitics is that it rests almost entirely on secondary sources and a few snippets from documents. Nearly all the primary evidence Ludlow presents about the actual motivations of governments supports the opposite conclusion. To be sure, Ludlow is correct that the details of Commonwealth trading arrangements remaining in early 1963 could probably have been resolved, with remaining problems due largely to deliberate French obstruction. [pp. 202-205, 208] Yet the more fundamental problem was that the French rightly feared an Anglo-German alliance to block the creation of a strong Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and to push the EEC in the direction of an industrial free trade area. There was no way for the British to commit in advance to support arrangements for either CAP pricing or financing that were resolved only in 1966 and 1969. British membership would almost certainly have blocked the creation of

the CAP. The primary evidence in *Dealing with Britain* overwhelmingly supports the conclusion that such considerations were dominant and rendered the negotiations futile from the start. Yet this sort of revision Ludlow cannot quite bring himself to accept. In the end he turns back and cites the existing literature in support of a primarily geopolitical interpretation, with commerce playing a supporting role.

Failure to fully acknowledge the overriding importance of economic motivations leaves Ludlow puzzled by many aspects of the negotiations revealed by his primary sources. This he is forthright enough to admit. Ludlow finds it “paradoxical,” for example, that the negotiations were dominated by “preliminary” and “technical” commercial considerations, while “fundamental” political issues were “marginalized.” Why did the Europeans “postpone” imposing the “political judgement” necessary to accept Britain? [pp. 108-110] Similarly, Ludlow has no explanation for the fact that domestic coalitions reflected largely – Germany being a sole, if important, exception – economic considerations. [pp. 233ff] He makes surprisingly little of the fact that every French official cited on “the basic problem” between France and Britain stresses British opposition to the CAP, not geopolitical issues. [pp. 35, 40, 104, 202, 225]. He cites de Gaulle’s celebrated remarks at the 14 January 1963 press conference as evidence of his concern about US geopolitical influence and the prospects for an independent European “political union.” Yet Ludlow elides the fact that every concrete reference in the General’s remarks to the reasons for the veto-leaving aside ambiguous rhetoric about the British being insufficiently “European” – is explicitly concerned with commercial, particularly agricultural, matters. [pp. 207-209] Ludlow’s speculation that de Gaulle might have deliberately shaded his remarks to make the geopolitically and ideologically motivated veto seem a result of a technical impasse in Brussels remains utterly unsupported and is contradicted by recent documentary revelations about confidential discussions – not least the two volumes of Alain Peyrefitte. Finally, Ludlow shows that when de Gaulle and Macmillan discussed “fundamental” issues of European political cooperation (even the Fouchet Plan) at their summit meetings, the two found themselves fundamentally in agreement – certainly more so than the Six. Yet de Gaulle made no effort to sound out British proposals for political cooperation.

Perhaps most important, the focus on geopolitics leaves Ludlow unable to explain the failure of the negotiations. If only, Ludlow speculates, the negotiations had been handled with “intelligence” and “flexibility”, a “sensible” outcome taking account of special British external commitments could be reached. [p. 99] Most at fault, he argues – a view dating back to Miriam Camps and Robert Lieber – was the British failure to make swift concessions, which, Ludlow rightly observes, would have placed great pressure on de Gaulle before he consolidated his domestic political support in the elections of late 1962. Yet Ludlow’s primary evidence suggests that the concessions Britain made were far more costly than most historians have been willing to accept – largely because of their commercial impact. An economic interpretation suggests, moreover, that even if the British had pressed forward with concessions in 1961 and had somehow assembled domestic consensus to support it, de Gaulle would have vetoed. What, after all, could France lose? The worst possible outcome of an early veto would be a free trade area with ad hoc political cooperation, which is precisely what de Gaulle thought would emerge if Britain joined.

To summarize, Ludlow has written a classic work of diplomatic history. Its attention to new archival sources, grasp of negotiating tactics, cosmopolitan focus on all the negotiating parties, and its caution in drawing revisionist conclusions mark it as a major historiographical contribution and indispensable reading for scholars of European integration. Its limitations are the limitations of the genre. As Alan Milward and others have argued, in order to fully understand the tactics and strategies of nations, we must analyze – and, in the end, theorize – the domestic politics that give rise to national interest. Such an analysis necessarily transcends the rhetoric of leading politicians and the archives of foreign and economic min-

istries, and those of the Commission. Such studies may, however, have the power to reverse the findings of diplomatic historians. Ludlow's splendid study leaves this, the "social history" of European integration, to others.

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**Friso WIELENGA (Hrsg.) – *Niederländer und Deutsche und die europäische Einigung.*** (Nachbarn, Heft 40). Amsterdam 1997, 112 S., – ISSN 0945-009299.

In this volume the Dutch historian Friso Wielenga (University of Utrecht and Groningen) brings together eighteen contributions concerning the historical and current role of German-Dutch relations in the process of European integration. This volume is published under the responsibility of the press and culture department of the Dutch embassy at Bonn. Just before the Amsterdam summit in June 1997 more than twenty historians, journalists, germanists, diplomats, economists, politicians, political scientists and specialists in international relations came together to discuss the subject in a frank and controversial way. The volume realizes on a little more than hundred pages a representative, instructive and very informative survey.

In his introduction, Wielenga presents the common points of the European policies pursued both in The Hague and Bonn since 1949 without concealing the divergences and changes in European integration politics. The aim of continental European integration is slowly removing four decades of Anglo-American orientation of the Netherlands. Dutch expectations that the Federal Republic of Germany will act as a motor of the European integration have grown. In her excellent contribution the Belgian historian Pascaline Winand presents the impressive part which the Dutchman Max Kohnstamm played in cooperation with Monnet's action-committee for the United States of Europe, above all in the preliminary stages of the ratification of the Treaties of Rome in 1957. Edmund P. Wellenstein's article points out the importance of Dirk Spierenburg in the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community since 1952. Wielenga offers a striking portrait of the social-democratic politician Alfred Mozer, since 1933 as a German-Hungarian exile in the Netherlands and since 1945 a convinced German-Dutch European federalist.

Wim P. Timmers describes the successful and often imitated model of the first Euregio, a german-dutch foundation of the frontier regions between the Rhine, the IJssel and the Ems in the sixties, as a matter concerning the citizens.

From the beginning the integration of European traffic used to be a special Dutch concern due to absence of any German support, as Jan Brabers plausibly explains. Confronted with the British applications to join the European Economic Community the Dutch also proved their far-sightedness in European integration affairs very early (Anjo G. Harryvan/Jan van der Harst). With German-Dutch cooperation the 1969 European summit conference in The Hague gave an impetus to the process of European integration, especially with regard to British membership (Albert E. Kesten). The Dutch attitude to the Franco-German relationship acting as a driving force in the European unification process is discussed by Klaus J. Citron and Sam Rozemund in an extremely competent and frank way without taboos. In a similar way Christoph Bertram pleads for a relaxation in the distorted self-assessment of the neighbouring countries.

Furthermore the volume deals with the "Eurobarometer", the communication structures of the German-Dutch corps in Münster, trade union cooperation and the economic partnership and currency association in the stable core-area of North-West Europe. The historian Maarten C. Brands, director of the Institute for German Studies in Amsterdam, presents in

his elucidatory and blunt contribution the path of trial and tribulation to the Amsterdam Summit and gives reasons for the termination of the “Euro-maximalism”.

The questions concerning future organisation and development had therefore to be addressed to the politicians whose answers were drawn from a round-table talk in the Dutch embassy on 27th November 1996, a common declaration by the two foreign ministers, Kinkel and van Mierlo, about the common foreign policy of the European Union from November, 22nd 1996, and from the addresses held by President Herzog and Queen Beatrix on the occasion of the Karlsprize-award in Aachen on 16th May 1996.

Ending with a small critical comment I would like to point out that culture, technology, scientific cooperation and tourism are missing in this interesting combination of high-class articles. Are these not important European questions either?

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**Wilfried LOTH, William WALLACE, Wolfgang WESSELS (Hrsg.). – Walter Hallstein. *Der vergessene Europäer?*** Bonn, Europa Union Verlag, Europäische Schriften des Instituts für Europäische Politik, Band 73. 1995, 312 p. – ISBN 3-7713-0499-7. – 49,80 DM.

Walter Hallstein (1901-1982) hat als der erste Präsident der EWG-Kommission in den Jahren 1958-67 in der Geschichte der Europäischen Integration bisher nicht die Würdigung gefunden, die ihm zukommt. Obwohl er maßgebend an der Entstehung der Römischen Verträge beteiligt war und dann ihre Grundlegung in die Realität das ganze erste Jahrzehnt lang steuerte, ist sein Bild neben „Gründervätern“ wie Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Spinelli, Spaak, ganz zu schweigen von Adenauer oder De Gasperi, kaum sichtbar geblieben. Einen Biographen hat er bis heute nicht gefunden. Dies mag mit seiner Persönlichkeit und ihrem wenig ausgeprägten Charisma zusammenhängen, auch mit dem sich auf den ersten Blick als „erfolglos“ darstellenden, weil erzwungenen Ende seiner Brüsseler Amtszeit nach der verlorenen Kraftprobe mit de Gaulle über den Ausbau der europäischen Institutionen 1965/66. Hallsteins Bedeutung für das europäische Integrationswerk entspricht dieses halbe Vergessen aber gewiß nicht.

Der hier anzuzeigende Band ist das Ergebnis eines ersten Bemühens von Wissenschaftlern und Zeitzeugen, die Lebensleistung Walter Hallsteins in Erinnerung zu rufen. In 15 Beiträgen, die aus zwei Tagungen im Institut für Europäische Politik in Bonn im Januar 1992 und September 1993 hervorgegangen sind, werden wesentliche Aspekte der politischen Biographie Walter Hallsteins thematisiert, und zwar nicht nur die Jahre als Kommissionspräsident, sondern auch die vorhergehende Zeit im Auswärtigen Amt 1950-57 und die letzte Periode seines Wirkens nach 1968.

Die ersten fünf Beiträge behandeln die Zeit des Staatssekretärs Hallstein, der in den Jahren 1950-55 unter Adenauers persönlicher Leitung, dann bis 1957 unter Außenminister Heinrich von Brentano die Geschäfte der deutschen Außenpolitik führte. Lothar Lahn, zeitweise persönlicher Referent Hallsteins, berichtet über dessen entscheidende Rolle beim Aufbau des Auswärtigen Dienstes und als Berater des Bundeskanzlers bei der juristischen Ausgestaltung der Westintegration. Joachim Jaenicke, der 1956 Pressesprecher des Auswärtigen Amtes wurde, erlebte Hallstein hier als überragende Autorität und als bewegende Kraft bei der Gestaltung der deutschen Außenpolitik. Dabei zeigte sich immer deutlicher, wie der damalige Leiter der Politischen Abteilung des Auswärtigen Amtes Wilhelm Grewe berichtet, daß Hallstein seine Kraft eigentlich mehr und mehr dem Problemkreis der europäischen Einigung widmete und die Entwicklung der deutschlandpolitischen Fragen seinen engeren Mitarbeitern überließ, immer im Rahmen der Zielsetzung „eines vereinigten Deutschland, das in ein integriertes Europa eingebunden und das in der Atlantischen Allianz mit den Vereinigten Staaten verbündet sein sollte“ (S. 77). Hanns Jürgen Küsters (Bonn) beleuchtet sodann auf der Grundlage

gründlicher Quellenforschung die zentrale Rolle Hallsteins für die deutsche Europapolitik von der Konferenz von Messina 1955 bis zur Unterzeichnung der Römischen Verträge im März 1957. Frank Bärenbrinker (Essen) sucht anhand der Reden Hallsteins dessen damalige Vorstellungen über Ziele und Wege der Europäischen Integration auf den Punkt zu bringen.

Fünf Beiträge beschäftigen sich sodann mit der EWG-Präsidentschaft Hallsteins. Sein damaliger Kommissionskollege Hans von der Groeben berichtet über den schwungvollen Start der Arbeit der EWG-Kommission im Jahr 1958, über den persönlichen Führungsstil Hallsteins, den Aufbau der neuen Verwaltung, die Grundlegung einer europäischen Politik. Hallsteins Brüsseler Kabinettschef Karl-Heinz Narjes wirft danach einiges Licht auf die Herausbildung des Institutionengefüges zwischen Kommission und Ministerrat, auf die Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, die lenkende Hand Hallsteins in den Fragen der Verwirklichung der Zollunion, der Entwicklung der Wirtschaftsunion, auch der Absteckung politischer Horizonte. Sodann zeichnet der Exekutivsekretär (seit der Fusion der Gemeinschaften 1967 Generalsekretär) der Kommission, Emile Noël, in einer sehr persönlichen und ausgewogenen Würdigung das Bild des Europäers der ersten Stunde und bezeugt die fundamentale Bedeutung des Wirkens Hallsteins für die Grundlegung des integrierten Europa, das allenfalls in Jacques de Delors eine ebenbürtige Nachfolge gefunden habe. In zwei weiteren Beiträgen wird sodann die Konfrontation zwischen Hallstein und de Gaulle thematisiert. Wilfried Loth (Essen) untersucht mit der Gründlichkeit des Historikers, wie Hallstein es darauf anlegte, mit Hilfe der den Römischen Verträgen angelegten „Sachlogik“ Frankreich zu Zugeständnissen an die Supranationalität zu zwingen. Hans Herbert Götz, in den 1960er Jahren Brüsseler Korrespondent der Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung (FAZ), berichtet, wie die „Krise des leeren Stuhls“, in der die europäische mit einer strikt nationalstaatlichen Konzeption zusammenstieß, sich ihm am Ort des Geschehens darstellte.

Als Hallstein zurückstecken mußte und Bundeskanzler Kiesinger der Forderung de Gaulles nach Ablösung des deutschen Kommissionspräsidenten nachgab, hat Hallstein noch einige Jahre als Präsident der Europäischen Bewegung gewirkt und war 1969-1972 Bundestagsabgeordneter. Sein damaliger persönlicher Referent Thomas Jansen berichtet darüber, auch über die in dieser Zeit anlaufende Arbeit an Hallsteins grundlegendem Werk „Der unvollendete Bundesstaat“, an dem Karl-Heinz Narjes und Hans Herbert Götz mitgearbeitet haben.

In drei Beiträgen wird weiter die Perzeption Hallsteins im Ausland thematisiert. William Wallace (Oxford) zeigt, daß Hallstein den Briten immer fremd geblieben ist und dies in den britischen Beitrittsbemühungen der frühen 1960er Jahre Spuren hinterlassen hat. Axel Herbst, 1960-68 zunächst Generaldirektor für auswärtige Beziehungen der Kommission, dann auch Stellvertretender Generalsekretär, ergänzt, daß Hallstein die Gemeinschaft durch einen Beitritt Englands nicht verwässert sehen wollte, daß andererseits aber eine sehr positive Beziehung zu den USA und namentlich zu Präsident Kennedy festzustellen sei. In Frankreich galt Hallstein, wie Jörg Monar (Bonn/Leicester) herausarbeitet, als eher spröder Technokrat, der mit der Frontstellung gegen de Gaulle auch den französischen Nationalstaat herausgefordert habe.

Abschließend beschäftigt sich Wolfgang Wessels (Köln) mit den theoretischen Konzeptionen Hallsteins, die er einem „doppelten Realitätstest“ von wissenschaftlichem Ertrag und politischer Relevanz unterzieht. In manchen Fragen, wie der Subsidiarität und der demokratischen Kontrolle der Gemeinschaft habe er Einsichten formuliert, die heute wie damals auf der Tagesordnung stünden. Unter integrationstheoretischen Gesichtspunkten sei es vielleicht zu weitgehend, Hallstein als „verkannten Cheftheoretiker“ oder gar als „Propheten“ wiederzubeleben, „aber der drohenden Vergessenheit ist Hallstein sicherlich zu entreißen“.

Insgesamt sind diese Annäherungen an die Persönlichkeit Hallsteins und seines Wirkens geeignet, den Weg für verstärkte wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zu bereiten. In zwei Vorworten heben Helmut Kohl und Jacques Delors die Bedeutung Hallsteins als eines „großen Europäers“ hervor, dessen zentrales Ziel die Schaffung der Vereinigten Staaten von



Europa als einer föderal strukturierten Rechtsgemeinschaft gewesen sei, und der Pionierarbeit geleistet habe, „indem er nicht nur den Ethos der Europa-Beamten von Anfang an in ihrer Haltung zwischen den Extremen eines pan-europäischen Idealismus und eines technokratischen Expertentums prägte und zu einer stabilisierenden, pragmatischen Solidarität führte. Vielmehr zeigte sein Wirken bereits zu Beginn der sechziger Jahre auch entscheidende Weitsicht bei wesentlichen Debatten um die Zukunft der Union bei der Zusammenarbeit der Mitgliedstaaten selbst in der Außen- und Verteidigungspolitik, die nunmehr mit dem Inkrafttreten des Vertrags von Maastricht verwirklicht wird“ (S. 11).

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**Gérard BOSSUAT.** – *Les fondateurs de l'Europe*. Collection «Sup Histoire», Paris, Editions Belin, 1994, 319 p. – ISBN 2-7011-1448-9. – 91,00 FF.

Gérard Bossuat legt auf knapp 300 Seiten einen Abriss der Geschichte der Europäischen Integration zwischen 1918 und 1993 vor, der sich in erster Linie an den Gründerpersönlichkeiten orientiert, zunächst den Vordenkern der Zwischenkriegszeit, dann den maßgebenden Akteuren nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg. Die Reihe der Gründer ist für ihn in dem zur Zukunft offenen Einigungsprozeß nicht abschließend fixiert: François Mitterrand, Helmut Kohl und Jacques Delors gehören für ihn ebenso dazu wie die frühe Generation der Aristide Briand und Coudenhove-Kalergi, und wie natürlich die „offiziellen“ Gründungsväter Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer, Alcide De Gasperi und andere.

Mit diesem personenorientierten Ansatz will Bossuat der Beobachtung Rechnung tragen, daß die europäische Einigung in erster Linie Ergebnis und Verdienst des politischen Willens einzelner führender Persönlichkeiten in den beteiligten Staaten war und ist, weniger des bewußten Strebens ihrer Völker: „Les peuples ne sont pas encore capables de traduire leur espérance d'unité dans un projet politique fédérateur parce qu'ils n'ont pas encore l'Europe dans le coeur et dans l'esprit“ (S. 295). Dies bedeutet nicht, daß die handelnden Personen nicht abhängig wären von historischen Kontexten, politischen Strömungen, nicht zuletzt der Zuarbeit wichtiger Helfer: „Grands événements mondiaux, opinions publiques, mouvements économiques, choix religieux, intérêts économiques et financiers, influences extérieures, dépendance de l'Europe, exercent des pressions complexes sur ces hommes [...]. Les 'heros' et fondateurs de l'Europe sont en permanence interactifs avec le substrat socio-politique et national de chaque pays européen“ (S. 7).

Aus solchem Vorverständnis legt Bossuat eine Darstellung vor, die knapp und kraftvoll die wichtigsten Stationen der Geschichte der Europäischen Integration zusammenbündelt. Bemerkenswert ist dabei, daß der Zeit vor 1950 ein ungewöhnlich großer Raum gewidmet wird: Fast genau die Hälfte (6 von 12 Kapiteln) des Umfangs wird von der üblicherweise als „Vorgeschichte“ bezeichneten Zeit der beiden Weltkriege eingenommen: den zwanziger Jahren mit seinen Nachkriegsverwerfungen, der Paneuropa-Bewegung, den deutsch-französischen Verständigungsbemühungen der Locarno-Ära, den Bestrebungen Loucheurs und Mayrischs um die Schaffung von Kartellen in einem wirtschaftlichen Großraum, schließlich dem ersten Regierungsvorschlag in Gestalt des Europa-Plans Briands; dann den dreißiger Jahren mit dem Niedergang des Europagedankens im Zeichen von Weltwirtschaftskrise und überbordendem Nationalismus, schließlich den Vierzigern mit den verschiedenen Formen europäischer Neubesinnung im Zweiten Weltkrieg, dem „Frühling“ der Europäischen Bewegung in den Jahren nach 1945 mit dem Haager Kongreß 1948, der vom Marshall-Plan initiierten OEEC, dem Brüsseler Pakt, schließlich der Gründung des Europarats 1949. Angesichts des

bisherigen Fehlens einer brauchbaren Gesamtschau dieser Inkubationszeit der Europäischen Einigung zwischen 1920 und 1950 ist die ausführliche und relativ vollständige Überschau der Vorgänge in diesem Zeitraum ein Pluspunkt des Bandes. Ergänzungsbedürftig sind hier eigentlich nur die Andeutungen, die Bossuat zu den europapolitischen Bestrebungen im Ost-europa der Zwischenkriegszeit macht.

Die zweite Hälfte der Darstellung schildert die „supranationale“ Hauptphase der europäischen Einigung, sie setzt mit dem Schuman-Plan 1950 ein und endet, über die Zäsuren 1954/55, 1957/58, 1969, 1974 und 1986, mit dem Inkrafttreten des Maastricht-Vertrages 1993. Dem Anliegen des Bandes entsprechend sind die 1950er Jahre relativ breit dargestellt, die 1960er Jahre, vor allem aber die Zeit ab 1974 durchleuchtet Bossuat dann mit sehr viel raumgreifenderen Schritten. Schwerpunkte bilden die gescheiterten Bemühungen um die Schaffung einer militärischen und politischen Identität Europas im Zeichen von EVG und EPG, die Krise der Gemeinschaft im Jahrzehnt de Gaulles, auch die europapolitische Dimension der Präsidentschaft Pompidous. Bossuat sieht nach 1950 Grundkräfte weiterwirken, die schon in der Zwischenkriegszeit erkennbar waren: das allseitige Zögern, nationale Interessen zugunsten des Projekts Europa preiszugeben; die impulsgebende, wenngleich letztlich nicht ausschlaggebende Bedeutung des Ökonomischen; die Schlüsselrolle des deutsch-französischen Verhältnisses, die britische Halbherzigkeit, die europäische Karte zu spielen; die transatlantische Dimension der europäischen Einigung; und immer wieder: die maßgebende Rolle führender Persönlichkeiten und vor allem des eigentlichen Helden Bossuats: Jean Monnet. Die gegenwärtigen und künftigen „fondateurs“ sieht er zusätzlich mit neuen Themenstellungen konfrontiert: der europäischen Identitätsfindung, dem demokratischen Defizit, dem Subsidiaritätsprinzip, der Osterweiterung mit der notwendigen Bestimmung der Ostgrenzen Europas.

Eine Besonderheit des Buches liegt darin, daß der Text mit einer Fülle von am Rand laufenden und eingeschobenen Zusatzinformationen angereichert wird, die zum Teil integriert sind, zum Teil etwas angeklebt wirken: Kurzbiographien der verschiedenen Akteure, Begriffsklärungen, chronologische Abrisse, Organigramme, kartographische Abbildungen, statistische Übersichten, auch Schlüsseldokumente im Wortlaut. Diese informelle Erweiterung ist gewiß nützlich und entspricht dem Bedürfnis, einen komprimierten Text durch konkrete Anschauungshilfen lebendiger und leichter eingängig zu machen. Andererseits stiftet die typographische Darbietung doch Unruhe bei der Lektüre und mag von manchem Leser als störend empfunden werden. Im Anhang werden eine Zeittafel, bibliographische Hinweise und ein Register geboten.

Kritisch anzumerken ist, daß Bossuat nicht immer der Gefahr entgeht, francozentrische Interpretationen der Geschichte der Europäischen Integration darzubieten und gelegentlich die Beteiligung der anderen Mitgliedstaaten, etwa Deutschlands, zu verzeichnen oder sogar unkorrekt wiederzugeben. Der Hinweis auf einige der Ungenauigkeiten muß hier genügen: Adenauer war 1950 keineswegs ein Gegner der deutschen Wiederbewaffnung (S. 170), daher 1954 auch gegen ein Scheitern der EVG (S. 187); Hallstein war 1955 nicht erst seit kurzem, sondern schon seit fünf Jahren Staatssekretär, und Außenminister ist er formell nie gewesen (S. 194); ob Jean Monnet die deutsche Präambel zum Elysee-Vertrag verfaßt hat, ist umstritten (S. 235); Helmut Kohl war 1988 gewiß nicht der Hauptinitiator des Projekts der Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion (S. 273), usw.

Solche Ungenauigkeiten sind ärgerlich und mindern den Wert eines Buches, das insgesamt seine Meriten hat. Bossuat legt ein Kompendium vor, das inhaltlich mehr bietet als der Titel verspricht, das für den französischen Leser eine rasche Einstiegsmöglichkeit in die Geschichte der Europäischen Integration bietet, und das als überwiegend doch zuverlässiges Referenzwerk seinen Platz finden wird.

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**Thomas JANSEN.** – *Die Entstehung einer Europäischen Partei – Vorgeschichte, Gründung und Entwicklung der EVP.* Bonn, Europa Union Verlag, 1996, 351 p. – ISBN 3-7713-0526-8.

Bei der Arbeit von Thomas Jansen handelt es sich um die erste Monographie über die Entstehung und Entwicklung einer Europäischen Partei. Dabei hat Jansen seine ganze Erfahrung, welche er unter anderem als Generalsekretär der Europäischen Volkspartei (EVP) von 1983 bis 1994 gesammelt hat, in sein Werk eingebracht und somit erhält man eine interessante und informative Darstellung über dieses Thema. Insofern hebt sich das Buch von den vorhergehenden Erscheinungen über die transnationale europäische Parteienbildung in der Wissenschaft und in der politischen Publizistik ab.

Das Buch gliedert sich in fünf Kapitel und einen umfassenden Anhang mit Dokumenten. Jansen schildert zuerst den politikwissenschaftlich-historischen Rahmen für die Entstehung von Europäischen Parteien insgesamt und gewährt einen guten Einblick in die Entstehung des gesamten europäischen Parteiensystems. Dieser Einstieg verdeutlicht den Zusammenhang zwischen der fortschreitenden Integration in Europa und der Entstehung der europäischen Parteienlandschaft. Darüber hinaus wird der Einfluß der ersten Direktwahl des Europäischen Parlamentes im Jahre 1979 auf die Entstehung von Parteienbünde und -formationen – die EVP selbst ist 1976 entstanden – im Vorfeld dieser Wahl deutlich. Als Ergebnis für diese Entwicklung ist schließlich Artikel 138 a in den Vertrag zur Gründung der Europäischen Gemeinschaft (EGV) als verfassungsrechtliche Grundlage für die Europäischen Parteien aufgenommen worden. Hierin werden diese „als Faktoren der Integration“ in der Europäischen Union anerkannt und bekommen die Aufgabe zugewiesen, „ein europäisches Bewußtsein herauszubilden“ und den „politischen Willen der Bürger der Union zum Ausdruck zu bringen“.

Danach konzentriert sich Jansen auf die EVP. Mit großer Detailkenntnis legt er die Zusammenarbeit Christlicher Demokraten in Europa und die Gründung sowie die Entwicklung der EVP dar. Dabei hat er die Darstellung der politischen Vorgänge und Ereignisse einerseits und die der Programmarbeit andererseits angemessen gewichtet und es ist leicht nachzuvollziehen, welche Probleme, Einflüsse und Interessen die Entwicklung der EVP begleitet haben. Interessant beschrieben ist insbesondere die Auseinandersetzung mit der Frage, was es bedeutet, eine christlich-demokratische Partei zu sein und worin der Unterschied zwischen den christlich-demokratischen Parteien Kontinentaleuropas und den konservativen Parteien Großbritanniens und Skandinaviens, wo es keine christlich-demokratisch orientierten Parteien gibt, liegt. Ergebnis dieser Auseinandersetzung ist, daß sich diese konservativen Parteien letztlich an den gleichen Werten orientieren und dieselben Wählerschichten vertreten. Deswegen konnten sie in die EVP-Fraktion im Europäischen Parlament und zum Teil auch in die EVP-Partei aufgenommen werden.

In dem persönlichen Nachwort seines Werkes stellt Jansen abschließend unter anderem fest, daß sich die Europäische Union nur dann erfolgreich im Interesse ihrer einzelnen Mitgliedsländer entwickeln kann, wenn sie politisch mit Leben erfüllt wird. Diese Aufgabe kommt gerade den politischen Parteien zu. Deswegen fordert Jansen auch aufbauend auf Artikel 138 a des EGV die Verabschiedung des Europäischen Parteien-Statuts, welches den Europäischen Parteien und deren Tätigkeit einen rechtlichen Rahmen und ihnen damit auch die Möglichkeit gibt, ihre Arbeit angemessen zu finanzieren.

Die europäischen Sozialdemokraten, Liberalen und auch die Grünen sind in ihrer Entwicklung, inneren Ordnung und Arbeitsweise vergleichbar mit der EVP. Insofern gibt das Werk von Jansen nicht nur einen sehr interessanten Einblick in die EVP selbst, sondern ebenso in die Europäischen Parteien insgesamt als politische Kräfte der Europäischen Union. Trotz seiner eigenen Nähe zu den Geschehnissen, insbesondere aus seiner Zeit als Generalsekretär der EVP, hat sich der Autor um Sachlichkeit bemüht, aber auch gleichzeitig mit sehr viel Engagement die entsprechenden Vorgänge geschildert. Insofern profitiert die-

ses Buch von der Erfahrung des Autors. Das Werk ist logisch gegliedert, verständlich und ansprechend geschrieben. Auch wenn in den zwei Jahren nach Erscheinung dieses Buches in der EVP einige Weiterentwicklungen zu verzeichnen sind, bleibt es gerade wegen seiner wissenschaftlich fundierten Arbeit für den politisch Interessierten empfehlenswert.

*Hans-Gert Pöttering, MdEP  
Stellvertretender Vorsitzender der Fraktion der Europäischen Volkspartei  
– Christliche Demokraten – im Europäischen Parlament*

## Notices – Informations – Mitteilungen

### Conference

#### *L'Europe, ses marges et les autres*

As part of the broader international research project coordinated by René Girault and Robert Frank, which deals with the question of *Identités et conscience européennes au XX siècle*, a Conference on *L'Europe, ses marges et les autres* has taken place in Assisi (Italy) on January 1998. It has been organised by Prof. Luciano Tosi, of the History Department of the University of Perugia, Prof. Marta Petricioli and Prof. Antonio Varsori of the International History Department of the University of Florence.

The Conference has been the result of long research started in 1991 by a study group chaired by Marta Petricioli, Antonio Varsori and Geoffrey Warner, which dealt with the role played by seas in shaping a European identity. In this context a Conference took place in Florence in 1993; on this occasion the organisers felt the need to broaden the scope of the study group. In November 1993 a general Conference was held in Paris, which saw the participation of the various research groups. It came to the conclusion that if on one hand the role played by the seas from an economic, psychological, cultural and historical point of view was of much relevance to identify the European borders, on the other hand it would be a positive choice to analyse other borders than the continental ones. Furthermore the need was perceived to focus the group's attention on more contemporary phenomena and to rely on contributions from other disciplines, such as sociology, anthropology, etc.

The scope of this study group being so broad, the Assisi Conference was divided in six different sessions. Prof. Robert Frank, of the Institut Pierre Renouvin of the Sorbonne University, as supervisor of the main research project, took part in the Conference making an opening speech.

The first session, chaired by Luciano Tosi, dealt with the role played by European communities in non-European countries. Dr. Andrea Gabellini (University of Padova) gave a paper on the attitudes, the mentality and the life of the Roman Catholic community in Palestine; Dr. Floresca Karanasou (University of Edinburgh) analysed the role played by the Greek community in Egypt during the last century and Dr. Angelo Iacovella (University of Rome) highlighted the activity developed by the Italian masonic Lodge, called East of Salonika, toward the Ottoman Empire. The second session, chaired by Marta Petricioli, dealt with the attitudes and the reactions of foreign travellers toward Europe during the last century. Prof. Derek Hopwood (M.E.C. Oxford) examined the sexual customs of Arab travellers in Europe; Prof. Paul Starkey (University of Durham) described Egyptian travellers' impressions and images of the European life-style in the XIXth century and Dr. Maria Medici (University of Bologna) analysed some cases of Tunisian intellectuals who travelled around Europe during the last century.

The third session, chaired by Giorgio Petracchi, dealt with the relevant issue of the relationship between Russia and Europe. Prof. Procopis Papastratis (University of Athens) described the policy worked out by Russia towards the Balkans between the two World Wars; Prof. Giulia Lami (University of Milan) dealt with the relationship between the Russian Empire and Europe during the XXth century, raising the main issue whether Russia may be considered as a part of Europe; Dr. Cinzia Franchi (University of Rome) focussed on the relationship between Russia and Hungary; Prof. Kszysztof Strzaszka (University of Cracow) examined the Russian image in Poland; Prof. Armando Pitassio (University of Perugia) analysed the Russian perception in the Balkans since the XVIIth century and Dr.

Giuseppe Croce (Vatican Secret Archives) faced the main issue, whether the orthodox religion can be considered as an Eastern border of Europe.

The fourth session, chaired by Antonio Varsori, tackled another main issue: the relationship between Europe and the United States during the different phases of the Cold War. In this context, Prof. Federico Romero (University of Bologna) analysed the United States' attempt to americanize the European countries after the II World War, showing the limits and the achievements of this phenomenon in Italy; Dr. Maria Eleonora Guasconi (University of Florence) singled out the Italian trade unions' case during the '50s, wondering if the U.S. effort reached its goal of americanizing the Italian labor organisations; Dr. Beatrice Heuser (King's College London) examined the American influence in the establishment of a common defence system in Great Britain, France and Germany, and Dr. Massimiliano Guderzo (University of Florence) dealt with the different roles played by the Mediterranean and the European integration issues in the policy worked out by the Johnson administration in 1963 and 1964.

The fifth session, chaired by Elisabetta Vezzosi, analysed some aspects of European emigration towards the American continent, as well as Australia, in the XXth century. Prof. Fraser Ottanelli (University of South Florida) examined the Italian political radicalism in the United States during the '20s and the '30s; Dr. Marco Mugnaini (University of Florence) enlightened the attitudes of European immigrants towards the countries of both Northern and Southern America, as well as the reactions of U.S. public opinion towards European immigrants. Some particular cases were singled out: Prof. Bruno Ramirez (University of Montreal) dealt with the question of Canadian multiculturalism and national identity; Prof. Angelo Trento (University of Bologna) described the history of the Italian community in Brazil, singling out the case of an Italian newspaper entitled "Fanfulla"; Prof. Fausto Rosoli (CSER Roma) wondered if emigrants have a European consciousness and Prof. Richard Bosworth (University of Western Australia) dealt with the problem of Australian identity.

The last session, chaired by Ottavia Schmidt, focussed on the question of European reaction to non-European immigration. Dr. Renzo Rastrelli (University of Florence) analysed the reactions of some European countries' public opinion to Chinese immigration; Dr. Valerie Amiraux (IUE) examined the role played by the Turkish community in Germany; Prof. Joergen Nielsen (University of Manchester) dealt with the question of Islamic organisations in Great Britain; Prof. Remy Leveau (University of Berlin) gave a paper on the Arab-French intellectuals and Prof. Ottavia Schmidt (University of Trieste) described how Italy faces the question of immigrants from Morocco.

In his conclusions, Antonio Varsori stressed the difficulties in singling out the main characters of a European identity, although the relationship between European and non-European realities is most helpful in achieving the main goal of the whole research project. Last but not least Professor Varsori argued that the main character of the European identity lies in the various aspects of Europe's history, such as her philosophical thought, the Christian experience, the Enlightenment as well as the French Revolution and the economic development.

*Maria Eleonora Guasconi*  
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## Abstracts – Résumés – Zusammenfassungen

Guido Thiemeyer

### Supranationalität als Novum in der Geschichte der Internationalen Politik der fünfziger Jahre

The article examines different motives for the creation of supranational European institutions in the 1950's. Why did supranationality as an innovation in international law emerge exactly in this period, and which were the motives why statesmen argued in favour of supranational institutions instead of intergovernmental cooperation? One reason lies in the fundamental change of the international states-system which since 1945 was dominated by two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet-Union. Their leading role was the result of their superior economic power. German and French political leaders as well as Paul-Henri Spaak, minister of foreign affairs in Belgium, aimed at a European world-power and tried to unify the Western European economic potential under the leadership of a common political institution. The importance of the economic potential as one of the factors attributed to a world-power, had constantly grown since the 19th century. If Western Europe wanted to play a role as a Third Power under the conditions of the international system in the 1950's, it had to unify its economic potential under a single political institution. There were, of course, also economic motives: The rapid development of communication-technology intensified international trade and forced national governments to attempt a closer cooperation. Above all, the Dutch government pleaded for a supranational integration of the Western European economies to regain the political freedom of action which had been lost through the internationalization of trade. Another important motive was propagated by the Dutch minister of agriculture, Sicco Mansholt, who wanted to delegate economic decisions to a supranational institution in order to restrict the detrimental influence exercised by interest-groups on the national level. Economic decisions should be taken by politically disinterested and independent experts without political interests to give back the efficiency to the free enterprise economy which had been lost by the democratic decision-making process. Last but not least remains the thesis of the "European Rescue of the Nation-State" already developed by Alan Milward in 1985: The Nation-State was financially overtaxed by the growing demands for social welfare of western societies. For that reason statesmen tried to delegate former national duties to a supranational institution.

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L'article analyse les origines de l'intégration supranationale européenne au cours des années 50. Pourquoi cette innovation dans le droit international apparaît-elle justement dans cette période et quels étaient les buts des hommes politiques qui s'engageaient en faveur des institutions supranationales? Il y avait d'abord le changement fondamental du système international dominé depuis 1945, grâce à leur puissance économique, par les Etats-Unis et l'URSS. Par ailleurs des hommes politiques allemands et français mais aussi le ministre des Affaires étrangères belge, Paul-Henri Spaak, aspiraient à faire de l'Europe une puissance mondiale sur la base d'un marché commun: l'importance de la puissance économique comme l'un des piliers essentiels d'une puissance mondiale n'a cessé de croître depuis le début du XXe siècle: si l'Europe voulait devenir une troisième force dans le système international des années 50, elle devait soumettre son potentiel économique à une autorité unique. Mais il y avait aussi des motifs politico-économiques: le développement rapide des moyens de communication entraînait le développement du commerce international qui renforçait l'interdépendance entre les Etats nationaux. Voilà pourquoi le gouvernement néerlandais préconisait l'intégration supranationale des économies européennes afin de regagner la part de liberté d'action politique perdue à cause de l'internationalisation des économies. Un autre argument en faveur de la supranationalité a été formulé par le ministre de l'Agriculture néerlandais, Sicco Mansholt: il voulait déléguer la politique économique à une autorité supranationale pour limiter l'influence nuisible (à ses yeux) des associations professionnelles dans le système parlementaire; les décisions économiques devaient être prises hors de la sphère politique, par des experts, pour redonner à l'économie de marché son efficacité entamée par le système parlementaire. Cet article confirme l'analyse de la supranationalité développée par Alan Milward dès 1985: les Etats nationaux étaient financièrement surmenés par les revendications de sécurité

sociale des sociétés ouest-européennes, de sorte qu'ils essayaient de déléguer certaines compétences nationales à une autorité supranationale.

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Der Aufsatz untersucht verschiedene Ursachen der europäischen supranationalen Integration in den fünfziger Jahren. Warum entstand die Supranationalität als völkerrechtliches Novum ausgerechnet in jener Zeit und welche Ziele verfolgten die europäischen Politiker, die für die supranationale Integration eintraten? Eine Ursache lag in dem fundamentalen Wandel des internationalen Staatensystems, das vor allem wegen ihrer überlegenen Wirtschaftskraft seit 1945 durch die beiden Supermächten USA und UdSSR beherrscht wurde. Deutsche und französische Politiker strebten gemeinsam mit dem belgischen Außenminister Paul-Henri Spaak eine europäische Weltmacht an, deren Voraussetzung ein gemeinsamer Wirtschaftsraum mit eigener politischer Führung war. Die Bedeutung der Wirtschaftskraft als ein Element jener Faktoren, die eine Groß- und Weltmacht auszeichneten, war seit dem 19. Jahrhundert beständig gewachsen. Wenn Westeuropa unter den weltpolitischen Verhältnissen der fünfziger Jahre die Rolle einer Dritten Kraft einnehmen wollte, mußte es sein ökonomisches Potential unter einer Führung vereinigen. Zudem gab es verschiedene wirtschafts- und handelspolitische Motive: Die rasante Entwicklung der Kommunikationstechnik führte zu einem internationalen Handel, der die Abhängigkeit zwischen den Wirtschaftsräumen verstärkte. Dies zwang die Nationalstaaten zu einer immer engeren Kooperation, wobei vor allem die niederländische Regierung für einen supranationalen Zusammenschluß der westeuropäischen Wirtschaftsräume plädierte, um die durch die Entgrenzung des Handels verlorenen politischen Handlungsspielräume zurückzugewinnen. Ein weiteres Motiv trieb den niederländischen Landwirtschaftsminister Mansholt: Er wollte wirtschaftspolitische Entscheidungen an die supranationale Ebene delegieren, um den im parlamentarischen System unvermeidlichen, für die Wirtschaftspolitik jedoch schädlichen Einfluß der Verbände einzuschränken. Wirtschaftspolitische Entscheidungen sollten fortan auf der entpolitisierten Ebene von Experten unabhängig von demokratischer Legitimation getroffen werden, um der Marktwirtschaft jene Effizienz zurückzugeben, die in beständigen, systembedingten politischen Auseinandersetzungen verloren gegangen war. Zu erwähnen ist schließlich noch die von Alan Milward bereits 1985 entwickelte und hier bestätigte These, derzufolge die europäischen Nationalstaaten durch den wachsenden Anspruch der Gesellschaft nach sozialer Sicherheit finanziell überfordert wurden und deswegen versuchten, ehemals nationale Aufgaben an eine supranationale Institution zu delegieren.

**Christopher Lord**

**“With but not of”: Britain and the Schuman Plan, a Reinterpretation**

Previous analysis of British Government reactions to the Schuman Plan has focused on the reasons for rejecting full membership. This article suggests that British Governments of the early 1950s were equally eager to retain influence over the nascent Community, and this was for reasons that related to core assumptions of their domestic and foreign policies. However, the search for some kind of half-way house between exclusion and full participation was to prove elusive. On the one hand, this article provides some useful historical lessons about the difficulties of attempting to institutionalize a relationship with the European Communities short of full membership. On the other, it suggests that there has been a certain continuity in Britain's relations with the European Community: if governments after 1961 remained eager to limit their entanglement in the process of European integration, earlier governments seemed to be concerned to limit their exclusion.

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Les études consacrées aux réactions du gouvernement britannique face au Plan Schuman sont axées sur les raisons du refus britannique d'y adhérer à part entière. Cet article suggère que les gouvernements britanniques au début des années cinquante étaient désireux de garder une influence sur la Communauté naissante, aussi bien pour des raisons de politique intérieure qu'extérieure. Toutefois, la recherche d'une solution intermédiaire entre l'exclusion et la pleine participation s'avéra irréalisable. Cette con-

tribution fournit d'utiles réflexions sur les difficultés d'institutionnaliser une relation avec la Communauté européenne sans en faire pleinement partie. Par ailleurs, elle suggère qu'il y a eu une certaine continuité dans les relations de la Grande-Bretagne avec la Communauté européenne: si après 1961 les gouvernements tentaient de limiter leur engagement dans le processus d'intégration européenne, les gouvernements précédents semblaient surtout préoccupés par le souci de limiter leur exclusion.

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Vorangegangene Analysen, die sich mit den Reaktionen der britischen Regierung auf den Schuman Plan auseinandersetzten, haben sich mit den Ursachen für die Verweigerung einer vollen Anteilnahme beschäftigt. Dieser Beitrag zeigt, daß die britischen Regierungen der frühen fünfziger Jahre gleichsam darauf bedacht waren, einen gewissen Einfluß auf die junge Europäische Gemeinschaft zu bewahren und dies sowohl aus innenpolitischen, als auch aus außenpolitischen Überlegungen heraus. Jedoch erwies sich die Suche nach einem Mittelweg zwischen Ausschluß und voller Mitgliedschaft als erfolglos. Einerseits liefert dieser Beitrag einige wertvolle historische Schlußfolgerungen über die Schwierigkeiten der Institutionalisierung einer Zusammenarbeit mit der Europäischen Union, ohne volle Mitgliedschaft. Andererseits weist er auf eine gewisse Kontinuität in den Beziehungen Grobritanniens zur Europäischen Gemeinschaft hin: Während die Regierungen nach 1961 versuchten ihre Anteilnahme am europäischen Integrationsprozeß möglichst zu beschränken, schienen die vorangegangenen Regierungen eher darauf bedacht ihre Ausgrenzung zu beschränken.

**Francesca Fauri**  
**Italy and the Free Trade Area Negotiations 1956-58**

This article takes a closer look to the economic motives that made Italy shrink away from the Free Trade Area (FTA) proposal. The FTA proved problematic because it left the question of agriculture and external tariff unsolved, hurting both the farmers and the industrialists. On the contrary, the Common Market represented a sounder choice. Italy's interests seemed much better served within the EEC. There was no point in accepting a less favourable project. The impossibility to reconcile British and Italian standpoints on agriculture and on the external tariff, the more favourable consideration given to Italian interests by the Treaty of Rome, and Italy's growing trade links with the Six during the 1950s, all three factors explain why the Italian Government was relieved by the French decision to keep the EEC outside any free trade area.

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Cette contribution examine de plus près les raisons économiques qui ont poussé l'Italie à s'éloigner de la proposition d'une zone de libre-échange. La zone de libre-échange s'avéra problématique parce qu'elle n'offrait pas de solution, ni pour l'agriculture, ni pour la question des tarifs extérieurs, lézant ainsi les intérêts des paysans et de l'industrie. Le Marché commun par contre constituait un choix plus prometteur. La CEE semblait mieux prendre en compte les intérêts de l'Italie. Il n'y avait pas de raison pour accepter un plan moins favorable. L'impossibilité de mettre d'accord les points de vue britanniques et italiens sur la politique agricole et sur les tarifs extérieurs, la plus grande attention accordée par le Traité de Rome aux intérêts italiens et le développement des liens économiques de l'Italie avec les Six au cours des années cinquante expliquent le soulagement du gouvernement italien suite à la décision des Français de maintenir la CEE en dehors de toute zone de libre-échange.

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In diesem Beitrag werden die wirtschaftlichen Gründe näher untersucht, aufgrund derer Italien sich vom Vorschlag einer Freihandelszone distanzierte. Die Freihandelszone erwies sich als problematisch, da die Fragen der Agrarpolitik und der Außentarife ungelöst blieben, und die EFTA somit weder den Bauern, noch der Industrie entgegenkam. Der Gemeinsame Markt hingegen stellte eine vielversprechendere Alternative dar. Den Interessen Italiens schien innerhalb der EWG mehr Rechnung getragen



zu werden. Es hatte keinen Sinn an einem weniger vorteilhaften Plan teilzunehmen. Die Unvereinbarkeit der britischen und italienischen Standpunkte bezüglich der Agrarpolitik und der Außertarife, die Tatsache, dass den italienischen Interessen in den Römischen Verträgen mehr Rechnung getragen wurde und die steigenden wirtschaftlichen Kontakte Italiens zu den Sechs in den fünfziger Jahren erklären die Erleichterung der italienischen Regierung als Frankreich entschied, die EWG von jeglicher Freihandelszone fernzuhalten.

**Frances Lynch**  
**A Tax for Europe: the Introduction of Value-Added Tax in France**

Few governments change their fiscal systems outside periods of national emergency. Yet in 1954-55 the French government replaced its existing turnover taxes with a new system of value-added tax. VAT was subsequently to be adopted by the European Community as the common form of indirect taxation in all member states. This article examines the financial, economic, political and international reasons behind the French decision.

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Peu de gouvernements changent leur système fiscal en dehors de périodes de crises nationales. Pourtant en 1954-55, le gouvernement français remplace son système d'impôts sur le chiffre d'affaires par un nouveau système de taxes à la valeur ajoutée. La TVA a été adoptée par la suite par la Communauté européenne comme mode de taxation indirecte dans tous les Etats membres. La présente étude examine les raisons financières, économiques, politiques et internationales à l'origine de la décision prise par les Français.

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Kaum eine Regierung wechselt ihr Steuersystem außerhalb Perioden nationalen Notstands. Und doch ersetzte die französische Regierung 1954-55 ihre bestehende Umsatzsteuer durch ein neues System der Mehrwertsteuer. Die Mehrwertsteuer wurde in der Folgezeit von der Europäischen Gemeinschaft als gängige Form der indirekten Besteuerung in allen Mitgliedstaaten eingeführt. Dieser Beitrag untersucht die finanziellen, wirtschaftlichen, politischen und internationalen Ursachen, die zu dieser Entscheidung Frankreichs geführt haben.

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Michèle Knodt

# Tiefenwirkung europäischer Politik

## Eigensinn oder Anpassung regionalen Regierens?

The Maastricht era's futuristic vision of a Europe of the Regions is fading. On the agenda is the debate on the Regions' role and prospects in Union Europe. Through the eyes of regional protagonists this study – the first to do so – gives us a hit and miss comparative view of the regions' readiness for Europe. Ms Knodt compares the challenges facing two German Lands, Baden Württemberg and Lower Saxony and how they cope. What does it come to? In view of the stickiness (in the mud?) of regional politics style and the vastly different resources in the hands of the regions, what we see in the Europe of the Regions is persistent disparities, few clear winners and a host of losers.

The study comes up - a special goody - with first-time empirically fine-honed answers to questions about regional government in the Union. It is also a magnificent open sesame to study of Europe's multi-layer system from a regional vantage point. At Mannheim University and the Mannheim Centre for European Social Research - the latter boasting the abbreviated title MZES - Ms Knodt is a science person.

■ in German

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# Gemeinsames Verfassungsrecht in der Europäischen Union

Die Frage nach gemeinsamem Verfassungsrecht in der Europäischen Union stellt sich aus unterschiedlichen Sichtwinkeln: auf der Ebene der Mitgliedstaaten horizontal rechtsvergleichend unter dem Gesichtspunkt übereinstimmender Ausprägungen und Wurzeln der nationalen Verfassungssysteme; auf der Ebene der Europäischen Union vertikal gemeinschaftsrechtlich und unionsrechtlich unter dem Gesichtspunkt von Übereinstimmungen des europäischen Primärrechts zu den nationalen Verfassungsordnungen und von Wechselwirkungen zwischen beiden Ebenen.

Die Thematik wird in diesem Tagungsband auf drei Themengebieten erschlossen: der Frage nach den Grundlagen eines gemeineuropäischen Verfassungsdenkens und Verfassungsrechts, derjenigen nach einzelnen möglichen gemeineuropäischen Verfassungsprinzipien z.B. Wettbewerbsverfaßte Marktwirtschaft, Begründung und Ausübung von Hoheitsgewalt, gerichtliche Kontrolle von Legislative und Exekutive) und derjenigen nach den Perspektiven gemeineuropäischer Verfassungsprinzipien (u.a. Verfassungsentwicklung der Union im Verhältnis zu mitgliedstaatlichen Verfassungsentwicklungen).

Das Werk richtet sich an alle am Europarecht und am nationalen und vergleichenden Verfassungsrecht Interessierte.

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Andreas Beierwaltes (Hrsg.)

# Lernen für das neue Europa

## **Bildung zwischen Wertevermittlung und High-Tech**

Die Diskussion um eine inhaltliche und strukturelle Reform der Bildung in Europa hat nach den großen Umbruchprozessen in Mittel- und Osteuropa an Dynamik gewonnen. Doch noch ist die Frage unentschieden, ob Europa zu einem Bildungskonsens finden kann, der aus den Erschütterungen des 20. Jahrhunderts hinausführt und zugleich eine tragfähige Grundlage für die Herausforderungen des 21. Jahrhunderts bietet.

Erstmals geben hochrangige Politiker aus den mittel- und osteuropäischen Staaten einen Bericht über die Reformanstrengungen der Transformationsländer. Renommierte Wissenschaftler verschiedener Disziplinen stellen im Anschluß daran die Frage nach den inhaltlichen Herausforderungen für eine gesamteuropäische Bildung: Welche Rolle wird wertorientierte Bildung in einem technisch hochentwickelten Europa spielen können?

Das Werk wendet sich an bildungs- und europapolitisch Interessierte in Praxis und Wissenschaft und bezieht erstmals die Erfahrungen und Anregungen der mittel- und osteuropäischen Länder umfassend in die Überlegungen für einen europäischen Bildungskonsens ein.

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