

## 'A draft European Constitution', from La Libre Belgique (9 January 1953)

**Caption:** On 9 January 1953, the daily newspaper La Libre Belgique outlines the work carried out by the Ad Hoc Assembly instructed by the governments of the Six in September 1952 to draw up the draft statute of a European political authority.

**Source:** La Libre Belgique. 09.01.1953. Bruxelles: Société d'édition des journaux du Patriote. "Le projet de Constitution européenne".

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**Last updated:** 05/07/2016

## **Ad Hoc Assembly meeting in Strasbourg**

### **A draft European Constitution**

#### **The main difficulty still lies in the setting up of executive bodies**

On Wednesday morning in Strasbourg, the Ad Hoc, or 'preconstituent', Assembly received rapporteurs for the Subcommittees of its Constitutional Affairs Committee. The Assembly will have to reach a decision on the first draft of the treaty, which the Committee has been drawing up since last September, with a view to setting up a European Political Community.

In a brief statement, Mr von Brentano (German), Chairman of the Constitutional Affairs Committee, called on delegates to vote in favour of the draft European Constitution, saying that 'it is the best way of progressing towards a real united Europe.'

The Belgian Senator, Fernand Dehousse, rapporteur for the Political Institutions Subcommittee, then presented to the Ad Hoc Assembly the conclusions that the Subcommittee had drawn.

Pursuant to the decision taken on 10 September 1952 in Luxembourg by the Foreign Ministers of the six countries of the Coal and Steel Community, the Ad Hoc, or 'preconstituent', Assembly has the task of devising a draft treaty establishing a Political Community by 10 March this year.

Mr Dehousse stated that, prompted by the directives issued by the six Foreign Ministers, the Subcommittee has based its work on Article 38 of the Treaty establishing a European Defence Community which provides for the creation a bicameral system.

[...]

#### **Six issues on which the Ad Hoc Committee is requested to take a position**

These are the six issues on which Mr von Brentano has asked the Ad Hoc Assembly to take a stance as a guideline for the work of the Constitutional Affairs Committee:

- '(1) Integration of the Coal and Steel Community and the Defence Community;
- (2) Powers and responsibilities, specifically allocated and restrictively interpreted. Allocation of responsibilities with regard to foreign policy, and economic powers;
- (3) Political institutions. Election and composition of the People's Chamber, nature and composition of the Senate. Structure of the Executive Body. System of appointment and accountability to the Parliament of the European Executive Council. Powers and voting system of the National Ministers Council;
- (4) Jurisdictional institutions, notably assignment of Community jurisdiction to the Court of the Coal and Steel and Defence Communities;
- (5) Cooperation and the principle thereof;

Liaison with the Council of Europe, in particular regarding the principle of both internal and external liaison with this body.'

[...]