

'Spaak wants to revive political union in Europe' from Communauté Européenne (October 1964)

Caption: In 1964, an article published by Communauté européenne sets out various proposals put forward by Paul-Henri Spaak to give fresh impetus to political Europe.

Source: Communauté européenne. Bulletin mensuel d'information. dir. de publ. Fontaine, François ; RRéd. Chef Chastenet, Antoine. Octobre 1964, n° 10; 8e année. Paris: Service d'Information des Communautés Européennes. "M. Spaak veut relancer l'Europe politique", p. 4.

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Spaak wants to revive political union in Europe

In order to release Europe from its current stalemate in the area of political unification, Paul-Henri Spaak, Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, has drafted a number of proposals to revive the European political agenda.

Mr Spaak's ideas may be summed up in four points:

- some form of political cooperation between the countries of the Common Market is needed. Such cooperation cannot be brought about by the existing institutions, because the Treaty of Rome does not address such matters;
- it might be appropriate to revive certain features of the Fouchet Plan on political union on which the Six might reach agreement;
- we should draw on our experience of the European Economic Community and create a political body for the Community, along the lines of the Common Market Executive Commission, comprising three eminent European figures, three 'Wise Men', appointed by the Six but acting completely independently of national governments. This body would be responsible for implementing the plan;
- the experimental stage would last three years. It would not compromise the future of Europe, but could provide the basis for a treaty if it were to prove successful.

The United Kingdom would be welcome to participate, but should such participation not be forthcoming, the six Member States should go ahead.

The Belgian Minister's proposals have met with a mixed reception: the response of the Dutch Socialists and the British Labour Party was negative, whilst the Italians expressed reservations; Maurice Schumann, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the French National Assembly, welcomed the proposals, and the Germans, whose Government is considering the extent to which these proposals could be put into practice, showed interest.