

Resolution by the Action Committee for the United States of Europe on the progress made towards the establishment of a Common Market and Euratom (19–20 September 1956)

Caption: On 19 and 20 September 1956, the Action Committee for the United States of Europe (ACUSE) meets in Paris and adopts a resolution on the progress made towards the peaceful development of atomic energy and towards the establishment of a Common Market.

Source: Statements and declarations of the Action Committee for the United States of Europe : 1955-67. London: Chatham House; PEP, 1969. 111 p. (European series ; 9). p. 16-21.

Copyright: (c) The Royal Institute of International Affairs

URL:

http://www.cvce.eu/obj/resolution_by_the_action_committee_for_the_united_states_of_europe_on_the_progress_made_towards_the_establishment_of_a_common_market_and_euratom_19_20_september_1956-en-05cefa9c-3e0b-4d29-8d5a-7801ba71a2d1.html



Last updated: 05/11/2015

Resolution from the Action Committee for a United States of Europe on the progress made in the establishment of a Common Market and Euratom (19–20 September 1956)

Introduction

Meeting for the third time,¹ in Paris on 19 and 20 September, the Action Committee for the United States of Europe has examined the progress made since its first meeting on 17 and 18 January 1956 in connection with the peaceful development of atomic energy and the establishment of a European Common Market.

1. As had been agreed, the Parliamentary members of the Committee submitted to the Belgian, French, German, Italian, Luxembourg, and Netherlands Parliaments the Declaration adopted on 18 January, thus apprising them of the action to be undertaken to ensure the peaceful development of atomic energy.

2. The Committee notes that the votes of the German Bundestag, the Belgian Chamber of Representatives, the Second Chamber of the Estates-General of the Netherlands, the Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies, and the French National Assembly and Council of the Republic all confirmed the points considered essential in the Declaration of 18 January. It has examined the effects of the decision of the French Parliament on the Euratom Treaty, notably with regard to the control, ownership, and use of fissile materials. The Committee believes that even under these conditions it will still be possible to ensure complete control of the use of all fissile materials, in accordance with its Declaration of 18 January. It notes that, in the French view, control by Euratom, and its right of ownership of fissile materials, should cover also those materials eventually intended for military ends.

The Committee has reminded the Foreign Ministers of the importance which it attaches to associating workers and employers with the working of Euratom, notably in a Consultative Committee.

3. In Venice, on 20 May last, the Foreign Ministers decided to go on from the work accomplished by the experts since July 1955 and to proceed to the working-out of Treaties for Euratom and the Common Market. The Conference which opened in Brussels on 26 June under the presidency of Monsieur P-H. Spaak has begun to work out these Treaties.

The Committee has adopted the following Resolution, which it has decided to lay before the Governments taking part in the Brussels Conference.

Resolution

I

1. The events of the summer have revealed that only a United Europe can make its voice heard, and be respected, in the world of today.

We demand that our Governments do all that lies in their power to hasten the conclusion of the Treaty for the European Common Market, and the completion of the studies undertaken in OEEC for the inclusion of this Common Market in a free trade area comprising the United Kingdom and the other members of OEEC.

But the most grave and urgent problem for our countries is that of facing their growing deficit in power supplies — a deficit which exposes them to dangerous threats to peace.

Our countries must unite to solve this problem. Its solution is only a step, but a step which must be decisive, towards the realization of a European Common Market.

II

2. The power supplies of Western Europe determine the progress or decadence of our countries.

The United States of America and the Soviet Union themselves produce the power that they need. Western Europe has become the only great industrial region of the world that does not produce the power necessary to its development. Its life, in the near future, might be paralysed by the cutting-off of its oil imports from the Middle East.

Today, if part of those imports were lacking it would be possible to replace them. Tomorrow, if nothing is done to ensure the rapid development of atomic energy in Europe, this will no longer be possible in view of our growing needs.

3. Our countries import the equivalent of 70 million metric tons of coal per year more than the production of all French coal mines put together. In ten years' time, they will have to obtain from outside the equivalent of 125 million tons - the production of a second Ruhr. In twenty years' time, they will have to obtain more than 200 million tons — about as much as the production of all German, French, Belgian, Italian, and Dutch coal mines put together.

These prospects are even more serious when one considers not only the countries of the European Coal and Steel Community, but the whole of Western Europe, including Great Britain. Today, Western Europe imports a fifth of the power it uses. In ten years' time, imports will have to supply one-third of its needs. The greater part of these imports consists of Middle Eastern oil.

4. Such dependence results in insecurity and permanent risks of conflict. Between industrial and under-developed countries it hinders the collaboration which is indispensable for freeing the disinherited masses of the world from their misery. The possibility of bringing pressure to bear on Western Europe by means of Middle Eastern oil hinders the development of peaceful relations between Western Europe and Africa and Asia, as well as between East and West.

In this respect, the Suez crisis is a grave warning. Even if, as we hope, it is solved by peaceful means, this fundamental lack of balance, with its threat to peace, will remain: namely, the weakness and growing dependence of Western Europe as regards its supplies of power.

III

5. Not long ago, despite the new sources of oil and natural gas found in our own countries and in Africa — for whose development common action is needed — it seemed inevitable that the present situation must grow worse.

This is no longer so. Fortunately for us, the production of energy from the atom has become a practical possibility, as is shown by the achievements of Great Britain and by the even greater efforts of the United States and the Soviet Union.

6. Certainly, no single one of our countries has at its disposal resources on the scale of those employed by the United States and the Soviet Union. Even Great Britain, thanks to the efforts she has been making for the past ten years, has resources greater than ours.

But together, by developing and uniting their resources, our countries can produce atomic energy in time and in sufficient quantities to keep their oil and coal imports within reasonable limits. That is why Euratom, and a considerable development of national plans, are vital necessities for each of our countries.

The creation of Euratom is in fact indispensable for raising their standard of living, and for safeguarding their independence and the maintenance of peace. By pooling European resources and if we make the necessary effort — it will enable us to create within a few years a new source of energy on our own soil. At the same time, it will make possible the economic and social progress that our countries can achieve if they have the power supplies which are indispensable to a continuous expansion of their production. It will open to our atomic industries possibilities comparable to those of the United States and the Soviet Union, and it

will give our economic life the new techniques which, in the future, will determine not only the capacity for development of the different regions of the world but also the relations between them.

The declaration made by the President of the United States on 22 February 1956 putting 20 tons of uranium 235 at the disposal of the rest of the world in order to develop the peaceful uses of atomic energy, will — if we obtain a large enough share of the 20 tons — enable us to hasten the results of this pooling of our countries' efforts.

IV

7. Urgency, then, must dominate the Brussels negotiations. Therefore, the Action Committee for the United States of Europe demands of the Governments taking part in the Brussels Conference, and of the Parliaments of their countries, that they take the steps necessary for the Euratom Treaty to be submitted for ratification before the end of the year, and for Euratom to begin operating at the beginning of next year.

This is possible, owing to the amount of work accomplished in Brussels since July 1955 and through the adoption, as regards means of supply, ownership, and control of fissile materials, of those methods which have been tried out so successfully in the United Kingdom and in the United States.

It is impossible to foresee everything in a field as new as that of atomic energy. The Euratom Treaty must be simple. The institutions which it establishes must provide for participation by Governments and Parliaments and for the collaboration of workers' and employers' organizations and of consumers' representatives (among other things in the operation of the proposed commercial Agency as well as the common centre for the training of atomic specialists, and in the working-out of the security rules for nuclear installations).

The institutions must be able to take the necessary measures to face, in the light of experience, new situations within the framework of the Treaty's principles.

Since the cooperation of different countries will be necessary in various domains ranging from education to public health, Euratom must promote and assist all types of cooperation between the greatest possible number of European countries. The Committee considers that there is no incompatibility or mutual opposition between its efforts and those undertaken in OEEC to effect another type of cooperation.

8. Moreover, it is indispensable, in view of the urgency of the great effort to be made, that Parliaments, Governments, and public opinion should know — and know now, without waiting for the establishment of Euratom — what quantities of atomic energy can be produced in our countries in the immediate future, and by what means.

Therefore, the Action Committee for the United States of Europe demands of the Governments taking part in the Brussels Conference that, parallel with the negotiation of the treaty, the essentials of a programme of achievements should be established:

- (a) the production target that the countries constituting Euratom should set themselves;
- (b) the quickest possible rate at which nuclear power stations can be installed and put into service in these countries;
- (c) the means of starting this programme without delay, the total resources that will be required for its achievement, the common budget and common installations that will be necessary, and the part that could be played by British and American cooperation.

To this end, we propose that the Council of Foreign Ministers should apply the procedure of 'Wise Men' which has already been used to good effect in other circumstances, and should charge three eminent persons, in collaboration with the President of the Brussels Conference, to submit to them within two months a report in answer to these questions.

1. The Committee held its second meeting in July 1956. On this occasion, no Declaration was issued.