

'Diversionary manoeuvre by Moscow against European unification' from Il nuovo Corriere della Sera (17 March 1957)


Caption: On 17 March 1957, the Italian daily newspaper Il nuovo Corriere della Sera leads with Moscow's attempts to scupper the plans for European unification devised by the Member States of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

Source: Il nuovo Corriere della Sera. 17.03.1957, n° 66; anno 82. Milano: Corriere della Sera. "Manovra diversiva di Mosca contro l'unificazione europea", auteur:Roberti, Vero , p. 1.

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Diversionsary manoeuvre by Moscow against European unification

The Kremlin proposes a pan-European conference for economic and nuclear cooperation to counter Euratom and the Common Market

From our own correspondent

Moscow 16 March, evening.

The Soviet Government has harshly criticised the plans for Euratom and the Common Market in a statement delivered this morning to the Embassies of Western nations.

An indirect effect of the new policy document may well be that the Soviet Government will hasten the realisation of Euratom and the Common Market: that is the conclusion to be drawn from a study of the statement.

Every time any initiative aimed at unifying the countries of Western Europe — the countries of the free world — appears on the horizon of international politics, the Soviet Government, conveniently forgetting the ‘socialist camp’ over which Russia has established itself as the leading State, makes every effort to bring about its failure, and unleashes an intimidatory propaganda campaign in which it is actively joined by the Communist Party and other similar or associated parties in the West.

The USSR fears that it will increasingly be a prisoner of the isolation in which it has ultimately found itself as a result of its foreign policy, spurred on by an ideology that the peoples of Western Europe have shown they do not wish to accept: the events in Poland and Hungary are proof enough.

In this new document the Soviet Government again points the finger directly at West Germany, fearing that it will re-arm, and seeks to play both on a long-standing French ‘weakness’ and, for the first time, on a particular aspect of the Italian economic situation.

In its preamble the statement stresses that the plans for establishing Euratom and the Common Market ‘provide for measures the application of which will have dangerous consequences for the peoples of Europe’. It reiterates its proposal for cooperation in the field of economics, and for the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes on a ‘pan-European basis’ in order to end the division of Europe into opposing military groupings: ‘That division was the will of the policy of the Western powers.’ This assessment should be sufficient to understand the true purpose of Moscow’s ‘anti-Europeanism’.

‘First and foremost,’ the statement reads, ‘it is noteworthy that all the participating countries in Euratom and the Common Market are members of the NATO military bloc. It is clear that all Euratom and Common Market activities will be subject to the goals of the Atlantic Alliance, whose aggressive nature is public knowledge.’

The statement says that bringing Euratom and the Common Market into being would inevitably lead to a further increase in tension in Europe and would therefore put further obstacles in the way of German unification, since the Federal Republic under Bonn would be heavily involved in the Western powers’ closed system of military blocs.

‘It should be noted,’ the document goes on, ‘that certain circles in the United States that actively and warmly support the establishment of Euratom are trying to bring about a rapid rebirth of German militarism and to make arrangements at the earliest opportunity to supply the West German army with all the most modern weapons, including atomic weapons.’ Euratom, it alleges, reflects secret aggressive plans.

After rejecting the idea that Euratom could be a way of both controlling the production of atomic energy by the Federal Republic of Germany and at the same time reducing the economic dependence of Western Europe on the United States, the Soviet Government lashes out at the Common Market.

As regards resolving issues of economic cooperation between the countries of Europe and cooperation in the field of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, the Soviet Union draws the attention of the Governments concerned to its proposal of April 1956 to establish a body responsible for atomic energy within the UN Economic Commission for Europe. That proposal is included on the agenda for the next session of the Economic Commission for Europe, which will open in Geneva on 26 April next.

Under that initiative, the USSR would become the prime mover in a conference of European countries, which would include participation by the United States, to examine the issue of establishing a pan-European body for the use of atomic energy, while keeping sight of the idea that such an organisation may become a regional body of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

In that way, the Soviet Government probably hopes to drown the plans for Euratom in the emptiness of the superfluous Economic Commission for Europe. To fan the vain ambitions of the Geneva Committee's bureaucrats, the Soviet Government is proposing the establishment of an Institute for Scientific Research and Nuclear Physics, also on a pan-European basis, and cooperation in the establishment of undertakings producing atomic energy for industrial purposes.

With regard to the issue of pan-European economic cooperation, the Soviet Government again draws the attention of the Governments concerned to the proposal it presented to the Economic Commission for Europe in April 1956: a pan-European agreement providing for the establishment of more favourable conditions for the development of inter-European businesses, and cooperation in the transport sector and in experimental production techniques. The USSR is today proposing to add the study of new issues to this year-old project, relating to cooperation in the construction of hydroelectric plants, in the fuel sector and in the field of reciprocal economic aid.

In conclusion, Europeanism is a new ideology and the only one that can stand up to the plans of Communism. That is why the Soviet Government has officially declared war on Euratom and the Common Market today.

Vero Roberti