

Zeitschrift: Schweizer Monatshefte : Zeitschrift für Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur
Herausgeber: Gesellschaft Schweizer Monatshefte
Band: 47 (1967-1968)
Heft: 1

Artikel: Churchill's personality and Europe : first Winston Churchill Memorial Lecture, given in the University of Zürich, 24th January 1967
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-161974>

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Churchill's Personality and Europe

*First Winston Churchill Memorial Lecture, given in the University of Zürich,
24th January 1967*

LORD BUTLER OF SAFFRON WALDEN

Churchill's Vision of Europe

It was here in Zürich in September 1946 that Winston Churchill gave a speech the repercussions of which were felt a long way beyond the boundaries of Switzerland and Europe. His speech then gave new heart to a Europe devastated by a second Thirty Years War. In 1966, in the midst of a busy and prosperous continent, it is hard to imagine the destruction which followed the Second World War. I like to remember a phrase from Churchill's speech in Fulton, Missouri, when he said he wished to give «his true and faithful counsel in these anxious and baffling times». He there drew three important conclusions which we would do well to remember today: first, that there should be a close association between Britain and the United States preventing «any quivering, precarious balance of power to offer its temptations to impatience or adventure»; second, that the atom bomb should remain in American hands; and third, «that the safety of the world requires a new unity in Europe from which no nation should be permanently outcast». Here in Zürich Churchill talked about «wide areas where a vast quivering mass of tormented, hungry, careworn and bewildered human beings gape at the ruins of their cities and homes, and scan the dark horizons for the approach of some new peril, tyranny or terror». He went on: «I wish to speak to you today about the tragedy of Europe. This noble continent comprising on the whole the fairest and the most cultivated regions of the earth, enjoying a temperate and equable climate, is the home of all the great parent races of the western world. It is the fountain of Christian faith and Christian ethics. It is the origin of most of the culture, arts, philosophy and science, both of ancient and modern times. If Europe were once united in the sharing of its common inheritance, there would be no limit to the happiness, to the prosperity and glory which its three or four hundred million people would enjoy.» The physical destruction of this continent was shattering; «comprising», as Churchill said, «on the whole the fairest and the most cultivated regions of the earth», it had been reduced to a condition where communications were pitiful, where railway networks had been destroyed, traffic and transport dislocated, industrial and

agricultural production were negligible, hundreds of thousands of homes destroyed, the population static and ageing, where neither food, nor fuel, nor clothing were to be had. Yet the more serious threat to Europe was the destruction of the morale and the spirit of its peoples. Churchill was setting out, at Zürich, as he had done at The Hague in May and at Metz in July, 1946, to recreate the psychological climate which was vital if the physical losses were to be overcome. His speech here in Zürich was both a climax and a beginning, where he appealed for reconciliation with Germany and the building of a United States of Europe. The sovereign remedy he said was the re-creation of the European family, which he foresaw would make Europe as free and as happy as Switzerland. He went on: «I am now going to say something that will astonish you. The first step in the re-creation of the European family must be a partnership between France and Germany. In this way only can France recover the moral leadership of Europe. There can be no revival of Europe without a spiritually great France and a spiritually great Germany. The structure of the United States of Europe, if well and truly built, will be such as to make the material strength of a single state less important. Small nations will count as much as large ones and gain their honour by their contribution to the common cause.» «Be one people» was his theme (as it had been the elder Pitt's). There was no more fitting place than Switzerland for Churchill to make his appeal, for tolerance and magnanimity, to accept Germany into the European family, for vision and statesmanship to keep Europe free from the perils from outside. To preserve her freedom, Switzerland for centuries had preserved her unity. Europe must do the same.

In the Europe of 1946, unity must be achieved to restore the moral and physical well-being of a shattered continent. For this vision of a United States of Europe, Churchill paid tribute to two men, Count Coudenhove-Kalergi and Aristide Briand, both tireless and courageous workers for a New Europe. For the fulfilment of this dream, he was not however concerned with practical negotiations, but worked rather in the realm of attitudes of mind. He himself said at a United Europe meeting at the Albert Hall in March, 1947, «We are not acting in the field of force, but in the domain of opinion. It is not for us at this stage to demand, to define or describe the structure of constitutions. We ourselves are content in the first instance to present the idea of a United Europe as a moral, cultural and spiritual conception to which all can rally». He was anxious to «lay the foundation, to create the atmosphere», for inside the broad framework of his vision, the details of how this Europe was to be set up were very unclear. His conception of Europe was not economic, but rather historical and political.

I well remember an occasion when I was asked to visit Chequers and to help him with the script of a broadcast. This will give me an opportunity of giving a personal picture of the man at that time.

Now Chequers is a house bequeathed by the late Lord Lee. It is filled with pictures, some of doubtful attribution. I remember viewing these with Dr. Ade-

nauer, who standing before the main masterpiece in the Hall said in a convinced voice, «Das ist nicht ein Rembrandt».

When I arrived Churchill was standing on a table examining an immense picture of a lion caught in a mesh of rope which a small mouse was gnawing in order to let the lion escape. Churchill was busily painting the mouse with heavy black paint since as he said it was the «liberator of Europe». It is true that the lion in the form of the E.E.C. is now free, but the country whose immortal leader liberated the animal is kept out.

The rest of my visit on that occasion was devoted to studying the text of the then Mr. Churchill's remarks. He was dissatisfied that there was not sufficient spiritual content and sent me to bed at 1 a. m. with instructions to draft some «spiritual» paragraphs. I saw him at 9 a.m. having had very little sleep, but he dismissed my efforts saying his cat could do more for the war effort than your humble servant. Such was the gaiety of dealing at close quarters with greatness.

He did not foresee the formation of the European Economic Community, and he was not instrumental in the early work. But he was responsible at Zürich for creating an enthusiasm and an optimism without which the movement towards European unification would not have started when it did. The creation of this oasis of hope, and quiet, rather grim optimism in a desert of post-war destruction, the idea of a European family, was not only a historical vision justified for its ends. In 1946, it was a political necessity.

Facing the Russian Threat

In March, at Fulton, Missouri, Churchill had already talked about the Iron Curtain being drawn from the Baltic to the Adriatic. His fears were substantiated when in May of the same year General Clay announced in a period of increasing American-Russian tension that reparations from the American to the Russian zones of Germany would cease. In the context of the Cold War, when Stalin was pursuing the traditional objectives of Czarist foreign policy by absorbing as much of Eastern Europe as he could, the unification of Western Europe was vital, to stop Russian expansion. Later on, when the threat from Soviet Russia was considerably modified, Churchill's enthusiasm for the United States of Europe was to diminish; but by then one of the main objectives had been reached. The European-American Alliance was achieving its purpose. America in 1946 was beginning to realise the need for a solid, prosperous Europe to halt the penetration of Soviet Communism; her position demanded more and more the establishment of a healthy buffer zone, just as much as Europe required financial aid to rebuild her shattered industries and homes. When Churchill painted the scene of a Europe reborn, he envisaged in his vague magnificent way a close partnership between this Europe, the Commonwealth, and the United States. He leaned heavily on the

interest and sympathy expressed by President Truman, and they had already established a close understanding. Only ten days before Churchill spoke here in Zürich, the American Secretary of State, Byrnes, had announced in Stuttgart that Germany must be given a chance to export goods in order to import enough to make her economy self-sustaining. Germany was part of Europe, and the recovery in Europe and particularly in the states adjoining Germany would be slow indeed if Germany with her great resources of iron and coal was turned into a poorhouse. A united Europe was needed though not only to be an able auxiliary of the United States to counter the growing threat from Soviet Communism, but also as a means to prevent the disintegration of non-Communist elements within the European countries. If the division of Germany and the growing antipathy towards Soviet Russia was at the root of Europe's security problem, the insecurity of the government in France and the strength of the French Communist party was also cause for great anxiety. The need was generally recognised to bring France into the orbit of influence of Britain and America. France at this time, with the Communists in the Coalition Government, was anxious to show its independence from the Anglo-Saxons, and it was not until early in 1947 that the Communists were forced out of the government, and 1948, before France showed herself willing to throw in her lot with America and Britain. In 1946, French resentment perhaps was strongest against the British, who were occupying the Ruhr and preventing coal supplies, badly needed in Germany, from being transported to France as part of the war reparations. For France as well as for England, the problem was slowly but inexorably presenting itself — the problem which was to underlie all aspects of Anglo-French foreign policy throughout the 1950's — how to retain the psychological disposition and accept the obligations of a world power without having the means to carry them out. For France in 1946, this question was more evident than it was in England.

France had been occupied for four years; most of her Empire abroad had either been occupied by the enemy or taken over by puppet governments; for those who continued to fight against Hitler there was only a government in exile to serve as a rallying point; and this government under de Gaulle did not receive official recognition until October 1944 when the struggle had almost been won. For Englishmen, although parts of the Empire had been occupied, the mother country remained a corner stone of the Allied struggle and provided throughout the War a banner under which the Empire and Commonwealth could and did fight. We emerged from the War a strong cohesive unit proud of our isolation, conscious of the difference which separated us from France whose body politic had disintegrated. Our Empire had held together; we were therefore all the more incapable of seeing how quickly developments were going to deprive us of some of those elements which we had always had to exert a dominating influence in world affairs. We were not to understand how our Empire which had held together during the war was to change its character once the war had been won.

Then again, quite apart from the political desirability to elevate the countries of Europe from poverty and despair, pure economics demanded that Germany be made self-sufficient. British occupation of her zone in Germany put a terrible financial burden on Great Britain; this needless expense underlay the fusion so quickly after the war of the British and American zones.

Britain and Europe 1946—1961

These are some of the conditions which marked the period at the time Churchill painted this magnificent scene of a new European renaissance. It was a speech which fired the imagination and gave renewed hope to millions; it must be seen now why Britain bit by bit failed to live up to Churchill's speech, why she slowly resigned her leadership in Europe, and how today, twenty years later, we have come to realise that we must bridge the twenty-odd miles that separate us from the continent, and be one with countries with which we have so much in common. In his recently published memoirs Mr. Macmillan blames himself for not having brought Britain closer to the E.E.C. talks at an early date. But he has little more reason for self-reproach than, for example, Eden or myself or especially Churchill.

While there is no doubt that Churchill in 1946 laid the foundation and created the atmosphere which led to ever increasing co-operation with Europe, there were two circumstances connected with Churchill, the one with him as a man, the second with his political status, which were to belie the impression which he gave at Zürich. Churchill was in opposition, and he was to remain in opposition for a further five years. He fervently believed in the dream of a United States of Europe as politically and historically inevitable, and not only inevitable but vital to Europe's freedom. But being in opposition, he did not have the means to put his ideals into practice; neither would he have had the means because the weight of the Conservative Party was not behind him. Moreover Churchill had no very clear idea of what he meant or intended; he was not interested in the difference between confederation and federation. Churchill's domestic qualities as a statesman derived from our classic bent in the nineteenth century and from his association with the Asquith Cabinet in the early part of this century. While he had a distinguished time as President of the Board of Trade, his expertise had always been strategy and the art and history of war. When, after a lifetime of Liberalism, he returned to the Conservative fold, Baldwin made him Chancellor of the Exchequer. There for several years he treated each Budget as a great strategic operation. To this day his writings and his speeches do not clarify the significance of either being on the Gold Standard or off it. Before he retired he hardly had the opportunity to comment on the Six or the E.E.C., incidentally he would have been utterly lost in an all-night sitting in Brussels on the fascinating subject of pigmeat! Of course his great genius and acuity of perception prompted him to

speak on economic affairs during his period as Leader of the Opposition from 1945—1951 and as Prime Minister up to 1955. During the latter period I was Chancellor of the Exchequer and helped, to use Churchill's words, «to set the people free». He did not interfere in my day-to-day administration, but one day he gave me a very shrewd and humorous piece of advice. He said, «You know, old boy, that you can cook your Budget, but you cannot cook the balance of payments». And this indeed still remains the abiding problem of the British economy. Furthermore Churchill was never in his life Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs — his outlook on the international scene was more sweeping and spacious than that of a specialist on Foreign Affairs, because Churchill combined so many offices and interests with experiences drawn from a widely varied early life. His political and military sense imbued him with an uncanny sense of balance of power, hence the magnificent appeal for a United States of Europe. The Zürich Speech has fine language in it but for language let us look at one of his greatest and his nearly last debating speech in the House of Commons in March 1955, after his eightieth year, when he held a packed house in silence while he expounded his appreciation of the world situation which had determined the Government to press forward with the manufacture of the hydrogen bomb and the means of its delivery. In its deterrent power he founded his hopes for peace. «It might be well», he said, «that by a process of sublime irony, we have reached a stage in this story when safety will be the sturdy child of terror and survival the twin brother of annihilation.» So much for language and imagination, but constitutional dogma at a European level he did not command. One of the results of his speech here at Zürich was the impression that Britain was ready in some way to abandon Crown and Commonwealth in favour perhaps of a Presidential United States of Europe. Later in 1951 Britain rejected any possible weakening of her sovereignty. In 1946 this was not important; but later on, when the movement towards unification began to gain momentum, Britain played an active but largely symbolic role. Churchill's notion of the overlapping circles would have prohibited any definite commitment to Europe. We had our commitment to the United States, and very close ties with the Commonwealth. These two circles overlapped with the third forming Britain and Europe; but this third remained for a long time less important than the other two. Consequently the British never intended fulfilling the practical consequences of the opinions which Churchill was expressing.

Churchill Holds on to His Ideas

Nevertheless, psychologically Churchill continued to exert an enormous influence, and he continued to propound his views on the union of the European countries. The Communist coup d'etat in Prague in February 1948 and the Berlin air-lift confirmed and strengthened Churchill's sense of the balance of power that Europe

— now only Western Europe — would have to be strong and united. He reconciled the establishment of a United States of Europe with the Charter of the United Nations, but he continued to move in the realm of ideals alone; namely the cause of liberty against tyranny and the steady advancement of the causes of the weak and the poor. At the Movement for European Unity Congress at The Hague in May 1948, he said: «It must be a positive force deriving its strength from our sense of common spiritual values. It is a dynamic expression of democratic faith based upon moral conceptions and inspired by a sense of mission.» These were abstract notions, but anything more practical was left to the future. He made a speech in November 1948 at the United Europe Exhibition at Dorland Hall in London, where he said, «There has recently been much public discussion about the constitutional form which a United Europe should take. There are those who advocate the immediate creation of a European Customs Union and a complete political federation. There are others who consider that close consultation between Governments is the most that can be hoped for and who regard any form of constitutional or organic union as utterly impracticable. Each of these views is partly right and partly wrong. To imagine that Europe today is ripe for either a political federation or a customs union would be wholly unrealistic. But who can say what may not be possible in the future». Later on he said, «My advice is not to attempt at this stage to define too precisely the exact constitutional form which will ultimately emerge». He added that «It may of course be argued that a purely deliberative Assembly (by which he meant the Council of Europe) without Executive power would develop into an irresponsible talking shop and that it would be better to leave the work of European unification to be achieved through intergovernmental negotiations. That is not true. The Assembly will perform an essential task and one which cannot be performed by governments, the task of creating a European public opinion in the sense of solidarity among the peoples of Europe». Here rose points of view which were to crop up over and over again in the next fifteen years under a series of different titles and slogans: unionists and constitutionalists; functionalists and federalists; intergovernmentalists and supranationalists; Europe of the Fatherlands or an integrated Europe; Europe des Etats or of the Community Institutions. The controversy is still very much alive today.

Council of Europe, European Army

Meanwhile, pushed and prodded by the United States, the movement towards European unification was acquiring a character extraneous to British thought and habit. We had signed the Brussels Treaty along with Belgium, France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, and along with Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Norway and Sweden, we established the Council of Europe. But neither the Committee

of Ministers nor the Consultative Assembly had executive powers. The Consultative Assembly could vote a text but it had to have a majority of two-thirds, which was almost impossible to raise. It is undoubtedly a unique forum for all shades of European democratic opinion, and has exerted a strong moral influence; but the absence of a single executive is the Council's major weakness. It has been a step in the right direction, and like the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation, accustomed diverse European countries to work together. No one in Great Britain however shared the background or the personal experiences of the three men who for many years played a vital role in the European movement. Konrad Adenauer, Alcide De Gasperi, and Robert Schuman had all been born in frontier districts; Adenauer from the Rhineland, Schuman from Lorraine where he had received a degree in German law; De Gasperi came from the Tyrol, and had been a deputy in Vienna while the Habsburg Empire was still in being. All three had experienced invasion and war on their own territories; furthermore all three were Roman Catholic, and none of them at this stage, unlike Jean Monnet, was anxious to see Britain in any European Community. Their concern was a union based on religious as much as political grounds. In Britain, with its strong Protestant inclinations, its legacy of successful co-operation during the war with the United States, its traditional and fruitful ties with the Commonwealth, its dependence on the navy and the open sea for its very survival, the strong Roman Catholic influence in a supranational framework was not regarded with great enthusiasm. It may seem anachronistic in the latter half of the Twentieth Century to be influenced by the religious overtones of what was in fact an Economic Union — The European Coal and Steel Community — but you may, since you live in a country where Calvin also lived, understand the inherent distaste for what there appeared a Roman Catholic inspired organisation. As I will explain later on, the last fifteen years in England have witnessed radical modifications in our political outlook; but in 1949 and 1950 and even later, a body which deprived individual nations of part of their decision-making powers was unacceptable to a country such as ours which had stood alone in the dark days of 1940. Side by side with Harold Macmillan in 1950 who remarked to the European Assembly at Strasbourg that we had not rejected the divine right of monarchy to be subjected to the divine right of European experts, Churchill was proposing to the House of Commons on 16th March 1950 the creation of a German contingent within a European army, and on August 11th in the Assembly at Strasbourg voted a resolution favourable to the immediate establishment of a European Army. This seemingly paradoxical policy can be explained by the fact that the European Army was pressed on to its allies by the United States at the outset of the Korean War in June, and if we gave it our support, it was only to fall in line with the Americans and not from any desire on our part to join — for our commitments were much wider. Of course our entire outlook was different — the French, Italians and those who in 1955 signed the agreement of Messina were prepared

to agree on the broad outlines, to clarify certain principles, to commit themselves to fundamental objectives, and then to thrash out the details. We preferred to start from the bottom, gradually to find agreement on each and every point. We did not frankly believe that in 1955 all the minor difficulties inherent in the Treaty could be ironed out. But as we were to find later on, where the political will exists there exists also a strong chance of success.

So it was, in 1950, Churchill who advocated the establishment of a European Defence Community, and who accepted an amendment by Paul Reynaud that the army should be placed under a single European Minister of Defence, yet refused an invitation that he himself should fill the post, because neither he nor the political opinion of the country were willing to sacrifice any part of our national sovereignty.

When Churchill returned to power and it became clear that agreement could possibly, despite French reservations, be reached on the European Defence Community, Europeans waited to see how Churchill would react. But five weeks later on November 28th, it was clear that there were two opposing bodies of views within the Conservative Party. One held by Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe, who warmly supported the idea, the other held by Anthony Eden, the Foreign Minister, who declared that England could never enter the European Defence Community. In Vol. III of his memoirs, entitled «Full Circle», Sir Anthony Eden explains:

Soon after the end of the war, the United Kingdom's relations with Europe became an issue of foreign policy once again. Our attitude towards Europe and the «European idea» was in these years a constant target for criticism by our allies, who complained that our practice fell short of our precepts. It is true that we continuously encouraged closer co-operation and unity between the continental powers, but we did so from the reserve position that we would not accept a sovereign European authority, from which our Commonwealth ties precluded us. Others found this attitude patronizing and irritating.

Perhaps as a result of our island tradition, we have a different instinct and outlook on constitutional questions from our European neighbours. We have no written constitution and this is not due merely to obstinacy or to suspicion of legal form. It is because, as people, we like to proceed by trial and error. We prefer to see how a principle works in practice before we enshrine it, if we ever do so.

The federal movement in Europe has a long history. In 1946 Mr. Winston Churchill revived its prospects in a speech at Zürich, when he declared that «we must build a kind of United States of Europe» ...

I think that this speech may have been misunderstood at the time. It raised hopes that Great Britain would be willing to merge her forces with those of the European powers to an extent which Mr. Churchill certainly did not contemplate.»

For Britain still saw herself at this time as the principal ally of the United States, and she was unwilling to be bound to a system of regional defence in which she might lose her freedom of action. After the Treaty was rejected in the French National Assembly at the end of August 1954, Anthony Eden, making use of the Treaty of Brussels, found a solution whereby a new German army would be fitted in the framework of a new treaty guaranteed by the Americans

and the British. The Conference called in London in September ended in the Paris Agreements signed in October. British troops were committed to the Continent for a period of fifty years; through the Western European Union we were destined to co-operate very closely with other members of the Union. But the Union had one flaw which reflected the special position of the United Kingdom; at a time of acute financial crisis, troops could be withdrawn unilaterally. We were in Europe, but not part of it. The ratification of the Paris agreements and the detente with Russia helped to restore what was known in France as the «Relance européenne».

Just let us remind ourselves at this stage of the early progress of the E.E.C. In July 1955 at the conference of the six countries at Messina, a committee of experts was established to prepare a report on economic integration. The Ministers of the six countries reached agreement on the principles of a general common market. In October Jean Monnet, «the uncrowned king» of Europe, announced the creation of the Action Committee for the United States of Europe. The Committee established at Messina met first in Brussels presided over by Paul-Henri Spaak, and then in Venice in May 1956, and included some of the most brilliant economists in Europe, Robert Marjolin, Pierre Uri and Walter Hallstein. The British attitude at Brussels was unconsciously «Go and see what Tommy is doing and tell him to stop it». This Committee decided to open negotiations for the drafting of treaties creating the European Economic Community. At the same time Britain started moving towards the creation of a European Free Trade Area. In March 1957 was signed the Treaty of Rome which came into force January 1st, 1958. On January 1st, 1959, the first reductions of 10% in customs duties were realised followed by a second reduction in July 1960.

Britain Accepts Europe

In 1961 we decided to apply for membership. Jean Monnet was proved right; he had said in 1950 that «Les Anglais ne croient qu'au fait. Créez le fait européen et ils y croiront». For not since the English lost the last of their possessions in France five hundred years ago has she made such a radical modification of her relations with Europe. Apart from Churchill's magnificent gesture to France in 1940 — bold, romantic, sweeping and imaginative — only a few seers and prophets could see the possible formation of a United States of Europe. Five years of war and a very close alliance, personal alliance, with the United States and with Roosevelt in particular, prompted him however to reply to de Gaulle at the end of the war: «Quand je serai obligé de choisir entre vous et Roosevelt, sachez-le, je choisirai toujours Roosevelt. Quand je serai obligé de choisir entre l'Europe et le grand large, sachez-le, je choisirai toujours le grand large.» Five years of difficult co-operation with General de Gaulle had turned him away but when

here in Zürich in 1946 he offered Germany the hand of reconciliation and challenged the western world to a blessed act of oblivion, he knew, as few men did, that we were destined to increased co-operation with Europe, or we would succumb to the threat from Soviet Russia.

By 1961, the British Government had come round enthusiastically to the prospect of committing the country to the European Economic Community. The extent of this psychological revolution can be seen by statements made during 1961 and 1962 by the then Lord Privy Seal, Edward Heath, charged with negotiating our entry into the Common Market. To the Western European Union in April 1962, he gave the unequivocal view of the British Government:

«We are looking forward to joining you as soon as possible in constructing a Europe united politically as well as economically. We are thinking in terms of an enlarged Community whose members have accepted the same obligations and on whose shoulders will fall the main burden of the constitution, while not forgetting other European countries who are unable to join us. We see the existing communities continuing and expanding their work but knit together with the new political structure in a coherent and effective whole. This new Europe will be a great power, standing not alone, but as an equal partner in the Atlantic Alliance, retaining its traditional ties overseas and fully conscious of its growing obligations towards the right of the free world.»

In other words, we shared completely the aims and objectives of the Treaty of Rome, we accepted the obligation of a common European defence system, while at the same time recognising our obligations to the North Atlantic Treaty, and our anxiety that the new community should not be introvert and self-centred. I can tell you that this acceptance was a great turning-point in our history; we were fully conscious of the magnitude of our decision, and we were not basing our action on any narrow or short-term view. We were anxious, and still are, to become wholeheartedly and actively engaged in building this new Europe. We were well aware that as a country whose power had declined considerably through two world wars, that the pooling of our resources was, and is, the best guarantee for our recovery and that of the whole of Western Europe. But in January 1963, the five nations of the Community succumbed to the self-centred determination of one man and vetoed the introduction of Britain. How poor a reward this was for the vision of Churchill in inspiring the European idea and for fostering and caring for a Free France during the darkest days of the French collapse. How long the five nations will tolerate this situation I do not know.

The New Situation

It is true that in the last four years the situation has been significantly modified. A new political mood is emerging. There are much closer ties between east and west Europe; Russian preoccupations with China have made the former less of

a military threat. British commercial and political links with Eastern Europe are increasing. It is possible that those who up to now have been reluctant for political reasons to think of joining the Common Market may find in Austria's negotiations a valid precedent for their own future relationship with the Community. On the other hand, the setting within the E.E.C. has changed fairly radically in the last four years. It is ironical that at a time when public opinion in Britain has swung very heavily in favour of membership of the Community, very real doubts should appear among the Six as to the nature of the Europe that is evolving. There is no clear idea of how the Community can evolve politically; there is a strange reluctance to go beyond the level of economic co-operation between national governments; there is a sense of uneasiness at France's reassertion of purely national rights; there seems to be fundamental disagreement about what constitutes a «European» nation. Is a country only European according to the degree with which it resists the United States' encroachment? On the other hand, we know from experience that even our greatest friends in Europe will not jeopardise the existence of the Common Market for the sake of our entry. I sincerely hope that France will not attempt to veto a future British application to the Common Market. For Britain is ready to accept the rules which the Community has imposed upon itself. We are prepared to demonstrate that not only are we geographically close to Europe, but that we are entirely in it. We may upset de Gaulle's avowed intention of being arbiter between the Soviet and Anglo-Saxon camps; on the other hand he will undoubtedly derive satisfaction from detaching Great Britain from her so-called special relationship with the United States — although as Dean Acheson bluntly remarked, that role was «about played out» some time ago. But all the same it must be realised that there are at the present time members of the Community who depend to a greater extent than Great Britain on American military support, and whose active and whole-hearted membership of the Community is never doubted. What we must learn is that collectively we could provide the element of balance which de Gaulle so much desires. You will remember that a great feature of Churchill's Zürich speech was a desire that France and Germany should come together. They are the two most important nations in the present Community, and I do not believe that they can come together or that any progress can be made with any supranational structure unless Britain enters the Common Market. I would say that her entry is essential, because she can bring to it her stability, and her long parliamentary experience, and for the smaller countries she would constitute an undoubted element of stability. I hope you will not feel tempted to contradict me if I am so bold as to say that Britain has a name for tolerance and honesty, despite the sad episode of the unilateral increase two years ago of 15% on our import duties and our vacillations over the Eldo project. For if the dynamism and enthusiasm created by Churchill have largely been replaced by an extremely hard-headed realism, which has compelled any progress towards further integration to be made with extreme wariness, especially on the

part of the Commission, it is still true that the political stability afforded by Britain's membership is vital to the future well-being of Europe. The effort to create an «indissoluble union» between France and Germany has so far proved unsuccessful. Neither is willing to be subjected to the other. France fears she might be dominated by Germany and Germany refuses from the military point of view to place herself under the sole protection of France. Italy by herself cannot provide the link which Britain could provide. Of course it is impossible to describe the extent to which France and Germany accept this truth. I think Federal Germany would wish to see Britain come in. What of course is a sine qua non is the existence in Britain of the political will to join. She is now highly conscious of Europe; she has become increasingly aware that her trade and other contacts have been increasing with Europe and decreasing with the Commonwealth and that this trend will continue. I attended with Mr. Macmillan the Commonwealth Conference of 1962 when we attempted to give the lead to the Commonwealth about entry into Europe. Since then it is clear that the Commonwealth has moved a long way towards accepting this idea. Australia is already trading widely all over the world. Some countries such as Nigeria have already negotiated special association agreements with the Common Market. Others are likely to follow, for these special agreements are not confined to the African continent: they include New Caledonia and French settlements in Oceania and the Antarctic territories. It would not be creating a precedent for arrangements to be made for Commonwealth countries. It is true that if we enter Europe it may well be necessary to make special arrangements for New Zealand. New Zealand's exports consist almost entirely of mutton and butter, and of these the percentage to Britain in 1964 was 53.5 or just over half. This as you will recognise is far too large an amount for New Zealand to be able to absorb the loss overnight. Her unique position, I think, is recognised. There has been a marked change in Commonwealth thought since 1962. The Commonwealth of today is no longer a restricted self-contained economic unit. Her trade is wide-ranging and is especially close — despite high tariffs — to Europe. What matters most to the overseas countries is that Britain should be economically strong, and I believe that Britain and Europe would be the stronger if we became an unequivocal and active member of the European Community. Of course, there must be a suitable transition period while our economy becomes adjusted to that of our neighbours. We shall have to adjust our agricultural policy to a levy system and we shall have to be satisfied how the proceeds of the agricultural levies are distributed, and we shall have to get the approval of our EFTA partners.

I am glad to say that on both sides of the House of Commons there is a desire to take the first possible opportunity to enter Europe. I have already indicated to you the attitude of the Conservative Government after 1961 and now. The Labour Government was formed in 1964, and I can tell you that there is an increasingly wide consensus of opinion in favour of our joining the Community.

You will have followed Mr. Wilson's tour and his speeches. However further clarification is necessary about the political implications of the Treaty of Rome.

Professor Hallstein has described «the three-stage rocket of economics, politics and defence» that countries progress from one to the other. At the December meeting of EFTA countries we claimed that the Treaty of Rome carried with it no obligation in the field of politics and defence. Yet the Prime Minister said in his statement to the House of Commons on 10th November 1966: «The Government would be prepared to accept the Treaty of Rome subject to the necessary adjustments consequent on the accession of a new member». His Foreign Secretary in the same debate maintained «The Treaty does not involve the establishment of any supra-national authority dealing with matters of defence and foreign policy». And this view was echoed by his Minister of State with «The acceptance of the Treaty of Rome . . . does not involve a commitment to a political confederation or political organisation of any kind».

Our attitude towards the Community must be bold and realistic. We must accept the political implications of the Treaty of Rome. Last month, when being presented with the Robert Schuman Prize at Bonn University, Jean Monnet said, Europe is «pressed for time. Political unification . . . is indispensable for the organisation of lasting peace . . .» in particular, the «inhuman division of the German people» is still unsolved.

I trust that the present Government will take a bold and imaginative stance; we must not feel that because we were rejected in 1963, we can only preserve our self-esteem by obtaining exactly what terms we want, that talks should precede talks, that negotiations should be held on what will be negotiated in a particular order of importance. It must be remembered, and this is one of the great weaknesses of l'Europe des Etats, that a Europe which does not achieve political unification, a Europe formed of coalitions of different states is doomed to the weaknesses which characterised the League of Nations.

You will no doubt remember how in the years of the Stalinist Cold War extra doors had to be built into the walls of a Conference room so that neither Stalin nor any of the Allied participants would lose face by being the last to go in. I do not consider that this type of behaviour where the Common Market is concerned is either worthy of Churchill or beneficial to the countries who practise it; the notion of a United States of Europe was conceived through a combination of enthusiasm and dynamic idealism, together with an uncanny sense of world balance of power. There is no doubt that much of the inspired creative work which characterised the early years of the Common Market has vanished. If those concerned are sadder I hope they are wiser; for we would not be wise if our forthcoming contribution to the unity and prosperity of Europe was given grudgingly and in bad spirit. The Common Market, which already has a common agricultural policy, will develop a common monetary and fiscal policy. We must accept some of these limitations on our national sovereignty. I do not believe it

serves any purpose to remain one nation, maintaining a formal sovereignty but in fact being compelled to relinquish the realities of independence to a larger power. Europe united politically and economically, speaking as one, can exert the influence hitherto practised by individual nation states. But Britain must if possible join the Community before the Six have entered the final stage of economic integration.

There is no doubt too that we must and will settle our current balance of payments problems. We are always assured that there are those in Zürich who watch our balance of payments and how we put it right. It is therefore very interesting to see so many here! I hope that you are satisfied with the strong measures being taken by the present government to restore the economy.

I think sterling will have a chance to strengthen its position in Europe and in world trade if Britain enters the Community. We must look forward to the day when sterling will be working with the European currencies, and when these standing together will have a chance to play an equal role with the dollar. We must move towards the amalgamation of the European Investment Bank with the European Fund, at present an offshoot of the International Monetary Agreement. We must work towards the creation of a fund on the European scale to provide what the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund do in a wider sphere, that is to say, funds for development, and funds for the stability of various currencies. But we cannot create a fund except on an international basis. Only thus would emerge the degree of stability and harmony without which an International Monetary Order, no matter how many currencies are involved, cannot survive. Of course Britain will be anxious to ask for a suitable transition period while our economy becomes adjusted to that of our neighbours.

The problem of guarantees for our EFTA partners, of guarantees for British farmers and the Commonwealth was well on the way to being solved in January 1963 — given the political will, it should not be hard to find a solution.

We perfectly understand that though EFTA countries are willing to see Britain make fresh overtures to the Community, it must not be at the expense of prejudicing success of the Kennedy round negotiations which in theory will end around summer 1967. «Un tiens vaut mieux que deux tu l'auras.» We, like you, do not want to sacrifice a possible liberalisation of world trade for the uncertain hope of wider European economic integration, although I do not believe that tariff reductions from the Kennedy round will be more than 30 percent or 35 percent, which is considerably less than that hoped for by President Kennedy. Certain countries in EFTA such as yourselves, Sweden, Finland and Austria, possess a traditional status of neutrality. You are naturally very guarded as to the possible implications of renewed British negotiations with the Common Market. Britain should keep her EFTA partners completely informed as to each new step of any negotiations. It may be that the formula of association being sought by Austria will prove the most satisfactory solution for you as well. I fully agree with Dr.

Schaffner when at the meeting of EFTA countries in London last month he accepted Mr. Wilson's case for exploratory talks with the Six, but emphasised that far from being weak EFTA was very resilient.

I am convinced that Britain must in principle be willing to take the plunge; we must be courageous enough to join and to influence the development of the Community from the inside.

No matter what difficulties may lie ahead, I do believe that they will be given more sympathetic consideration by the Six, the more they are confident that Britain accepts without reservation the unwritten political content of the Treaty of Rome.

Churchill

I have been looking back over the Churchill era and I would like to conclude with some references to the last acts in Churchill's life.

He had opportunity to speak once more, as he had so often done before, of the grand design of a United Europe. This was in the spring of 1956 when he went to Aachen to receive the Charlemagne Prize for services to Europe. The view he expressed in his speech that Russia must play a part in the alliance that would guarantee the peace of Europe and perhaps ease the way to the reunification of Germany was coolly received in Bonn. But the fact that Churchill should have been awarded the Charlemagne Prize only ten years after the war bears witness to the rapid change of scene in Europe during that decade.

In the Election of 1959 he was returned as Member for Woodford for the last time, and, three years later announced his intention to retire from Parliament after 62 years as an M. P.

On 28th July, 1964, the House of Commons accorded him the rare honour of passing a motion «putting on record its unbounded admiration and gratitude for his services to Parliament, to the Nation, and to the World . . .» and the motion was brought to him by the Party leaders at his home at Hyde Park Gate. He was 90 that year.

Perhaps the greatest of the honours which crowded upon him at the end of his life was that of Honorary Citizen of the United States of America, conferred upon him by proclamation at a ceremony at the White House on 9th April, 1963.

I should like to end my lecture by repeating the words of President Kennedy on that unique occasion:

«In the dark days and darker nights when England stood alone — and most men save Englishmen despaired of England's life — he mobilised the English language and sent it into battle. The incandescent quality of his words illuminated the courage of his countrymen . . . By adding his name to our rolls, we mean to honour him — but his acceptance honours us much more.»