

## *Dealing with Europe:* the dream of the wisemen

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hether Charles de Gaulle was an adversary or partisan of European union still remains a considerable unsettled question.

The division of Europe into nations brought on two wars and the political decline of Europe. The future of our continent will be commensurate with its unity; the merit of the statesmen of this century thus will be judged by their contribution to this cause. But does de Gaulle in his own way, fall into the ranks of a European party with the wish of grouping together the Nations of our continent as the United States of Europe? Jacques Delors, is a member.

The idea would provoke a shiver in some of the General's disciples. But let us imagine the trial in progress. The prosecutor, accusing de Gaulle of having done disservice to the European cause, reads down his list: fought in 1950 against the Schuman plan, by which the European edifice would have been constructed (he declared that the success of the project was a personal failure); committed again the same error between 1951 and 1954 against the European Defence Community (the rejection of which was for him a victory); put forth a shattering veto to British membership and lead a constant low-key battle against the "supranational" power of Brussels, imposing unanimity for all decisions, thus voiding the of meaning a precise clause of the Treaty of Rome.

In defence, counsel is not without its own arguments. The Common Market was supposed to enter into application on Jan. 1, 1959. Without de Gaulle and his reforms, would France have been able to respect its engagements and

implement the customs union, the common external tariff, the agricultural policy and its financial regulation? The constitution of an European economic space was made possible by de Gaulle. Similarly, how is it possible not to see in the European Council—established by Giscard d'Estaing and which Mitterrand wishes to reinforce—an extension of the plan for political union (called the *Fouchet plan*) which France proposed in 1962?

Precisely on this occasion, retorts the accuser, did not the General want to sabotage European construction? Holding Britain to the side, speaking of defence without America threatening to diminish the status of the existing communities, de Gaulle knowingly did provoke the failure. According to the principal witness for the prosecution, Michel Debré, the General's sole objective was "a France with hands untied". He wanted to eliminate the European alternative, and then by relying on the independent nuclear force (*force de frappe*) and benefitting from detente, to carry on along solitary course.

Yet, replies the defence counsel, the witness is suspect. He was never known for his clairvoyance. Did he not actually believe long ago that the General wanted to keep Algeria under French rule? Furthermore, did he not on another occasion, before rejoining the neo-nationalist camp, author a "Project for the Union of European States" (Nagel, 1950) in which he drew from the Constitution of the United States of America and from the purest form of federalism?

Moving on to the texts of the General himself, on July 17, 1961, de Gaulle wrote in preparation for his meeting with Konrad Adenauer: Europe must constitute "a political entity distinct from the others" and have its personality "from the stand-point of defence...which is always at the base of political power". Also necessary for Europe was one single "command structure, one strategic plan and its very own means", because it "forms a strategic whole; the terrain for a single and same battle".

A ruse? Please, be serious! Nothing could have been clearer. De Gaulle was seeking this union first between France and Germany, then with Italy and Benelux, later with Great Britain. They might have made a tactical blunder, but certainly did not wish the failure of Plan Fouchet. On the contrary, he made to Adenauer and to the Italians all the concessions they desired. Jean Monnet—is there a better judge than the "inspirer of European unity"?—was wildly in

favour of the project. It was the Netherlands that refused, with this country's extreme fear of a continental policy, the obscure attraction for maritime powers, and equal distrust of both French and Germans. In this affair, de Gaulle and Adenauer behaved as true Europeans, and Luns, as a partisan of the nationalist cause. Thus came the withdrawal on a bilateral Franco-German treaty, which later ended in disillusionment.

Now let us leave the court room, where the trial inevitably will end up short. After 1962, the political path was shut. The only thing to do was to perfect the Common Market and to keep the British waiting until the arrival of Pompidou. Yet continuing an active reading of de Gaulle, we find constant and well-fashioned European thinking, although more historical than that of Monnet, which is a extension of Briand's ideas, and part of a peace seeking, legalistic, transnational and universal economic prospective. De Gaulle for his part dreamed of Europe as a bigger nation, itself composed of nations armed to go through an iron age, to confront a world filled with threats and always torn by conflict.

In the third volume of his *Mémoires* written in 1957, de Gaulle writes: "Make this organisation one of the three planetary powers." Better yet: "Europe, by confederation of its nations, can and must be for the well-being of its people, the greatest political, economic, military and cultural power that ever existed".

But can a new power be created from disparate national entities? Yes, because these nations have the same identity. In the twilight of his life, de Gaulle noted: "I have always felt that which the nations populating Europe have in common. All from the same white race, the same Christian origins, the same way of life, tied together from always by the innumerable relationships of thought, art, science, politics and trade; it is only within their nature that they come to form a whole, having at the core of the world this character and organisation." Which? The *Europe des patries*? These are not his words. A confederation? The term, which is not a weak one, returns constantly but not exclusively. June 22, 1951, de Gaulle affirmed: "We are for the European federation." Federation, or confederation, in any case it was a question of union among states that delegate (I quote and stress) to a common organism "*a part of their sovereignty in strategic, economic and cultural matters*" (Feb. 25, 1953).

He diverges from the Community scriptures by refusing all forms of a "supranational" commission. These technocratic organisms are foreign to him:



created before him, somewhat distant from him, they are composed of irresponsible delegates; their bureaucratic and collegiate nature makes them tend toward compromise and half-measures, whereas he dreamed of charismatic and legitimate, decisive and imperious leaders. The weakness, hesitations and semi-absence of Europe as a single actor in the Iraqi affair, while it is more dependent and nearer to the Middle East than the United States, illustrates how very much the Gaullist criticism (taken up by Mrs Thatcher), as to the risk of congenital impotence of communitary institutions in the historical and political order, bears meaning.

But it is not sufficient to make de Gaulle an unrelenting nationalist and Delors the only true European. This institutional difficulty reflects a substantial problem, that of the passage from ideals to action, of the exact nature to be given to the European leadership if it is to play a major political role, of the identification of and the legitimacy of those in charge. On this question, de Gaulle did not propose a solution. But very few Europeans have either, nor do they dare declare themselves partisan of a genuine political executive branch for Europe.

De Gaulle added: "Europe must be independent." This was a condition, of course, for the independence of France, for without Europe, Russia and Germany could reach understanding, and a less populous and weaker France would in such a turn of events have to expect everything from the Anglo-Saxons. United Europe, on the other hand, could progressively pass from United States military assistance to defending itself.

One could hold against de Gaulle his premature desire to put an end to European dependence on the United States, thus having uselessly worried our neighbours. But it remains, in the long term, that he judged correctly. A united and powerful Europe will be independent of the United States as well as of the Soviet Union (waiting, in the meantime, for when the latter, democratised, developed and reduced to Russia alone, becomes a European nation like the rest).

Of course, our countries having delegated a part of their sovereignty, will be tied to one another, but will be free as much by their internal regime as by the independence of the collective unit that they will have freely chosen to constitute. The fact that now a referendum is now desired in the European countries to seal this pact proves that this was precisely the project. Did he

think it possible? With what delays? Who will respond? Who does not feel the tension that de Gaulle himself felt between the two patriotisms, that of the nation and that of Europe? Who does not ask, with the example of Chateaubriand, "what would be of a universal society that was not any country in particular, that was neither French, nor English, nor German, nor Italian, nor Spanish"? De Gaulle knew, in any case, that the movement would resolve the contradictions, for as he wrote, "in marching toward the unity of Europe, we march in the direction of history".

### **The General speaks out: a choice of quotations**

#### **An era of concentration (April 21, 1944)**

*"We can expect to see the resurgence of a Europe that currently is oppressed and cannot speak, but which one day or the next will return. I have said that in this Europe, and on the interior of the world peace organisation of which we spoke earlier, it seemed desirable to us notably from an economic point of view, that a grouping be constituted in the West of Europe, whose main arteries would be the English Channel, the Mediterranean and the Rhine. Here it seems to me that an element of European organisation within the world organisation would present to all of us, and notably to the interested states, some undeniable advantages. I believe we are in an era of concentration".* (Press conference, Algiers)

#### **A planetary power (1945)**

*"Lead to the grouping together the countries which reach the Rhine, the Alps and the Pyrénées in the political, economic and strategic fields. Make this organisation one of the three planetary powers, and if necessary one day, the arbiter between the two Soviet and Anglo-Saxon camps. Since 1940, what I have been able to accomplish and say envisioned these possibilities. Now that France is standing, I will strive to attain them".* (Mémoire de guerre, Vol. III)

#### **Conjoining their policies (July 28, 1946)**

*"The old Europe which for so many centuries was the guide of the universe is now in a position to constitute at the heart of a world that tends to split into two the necessary element of compensation and comprehension. The nations of the ancient West, whose vital arteries are the North Sea, the Mediterranean*

*and the Rhine, geographically situated between the two new masses, resolved to preserve an independence which would be seriously jeopardised in the case of trouble, physically and morally close to the collective effort of the Russians as well as to the liberal impulse of the Americans, powerful overall by their own resources and by those of the vast territories tied to their destinies, launching far and wide their influence and activities—what a weight would they have if they succeeded in conjoining their policies in spite of all the grievances exchanged throughout the ages”! (Speech at Bar-le-Duc)*

### **Reformulating old Europe (July 9, 1947)**

*“It seemed, and it still seems to me, that first of all it is necessary to reformulate the old Europe, to remarking it in solidarity, notably with regard to its economic reconstruction and rebirth on which all else depends, to reformulate it with all those who, on one side, would and could loan themselves to the idea, and on the other side, who would remain faithful to this conception of the law of peoples and of individuals from whence came and on which rests our civilisation. It is in this manner and only in this manner that could be established an entity capable of containing a hegemony which all evidence shows will extend to the West in proportion to the stirrings and dispersion it finds there”. (Speech in front of members of the Anglo-American press)*

### **Two hundred-fifty million men (March 7, 1948)**

*“For us, first of all it is necessary that among the free states of Europe there is formed an economic, diplomatic and strategic group joining their production, their trade, their external actions and their means of defence. This ensemble, which could include 250 million men, considerable and often complementary resources, eminent intellectual, spiritual, moral and social values, completed overseas by territories attached or associated and laying down countless influence everywhere, would revive the chances for the Old World”. (Speech at Compiègne)*

### **A referendum in the European countries (Aug. 7, 1949)**

*“In order for European unity to become a living reality, and no longer an international subject of dissertation or a vain and costly collection of committees, it is necessary that it proceed directly from a great popular movement and from the expressed will of the masses of free Europe.*



*"The first act of its creation must be a referendum by universal suffrage, organised at the same time in all the interested countries and by which the people themselves will decide first of all to unite and will then give to a constituent organism made up of delegations from all nations, the mandate to organise the European Confederation.*

*"In this way the necessary processes will be set in motion, especially since the referendum will impose on the constituent organism the obligation to gain by a new popular consultation and in a fixed time the ratification of the confederal institutions. Furthermore, if, as everything allows one to hope, the people's response is favourable to unity, this act of democratic sovereignty, accomplished simultaneously for the first time in history and in very serious circumstances for all the free citizens of Europe, will manifest their solidarity in a manner both practical and solemn at the same time. Here may be a fact of immense significance". (Communiqué)*

#### **A confederation (Sept. 25, 1949)**

*"Thus for all those and to all those who will be able to express themselves from the Seine, the Thames, the Rhine, the Meuse, the Elbe, the Danube, the Tiber, the Ebre, the Tage, or on the shores of the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, the Baltic and the North Sea, to all those men and women who, in our separate peoples try to pick themselves up from their ruins, to overcome their grief, to master their worries, it will be the duty to respond, solemnly and all together, to the questions dictated by the lessons of the centuries, the necessities of the present, the hopes for the future. The unity of Europe, in its economy, its culture, its defence; a confederation of peoples with the duty of this unity; the reunion of an assembly having the mandate to throw down the primary bases and to subject them to the ratification by all, here is what the citizens of Europe should have to decide about. The very fact of this consultation, taking place at a moment when the great threats are rising, should have a capital significance". (Speech at Bordeaux)*

#### **Three questions (Nov.14, 1949)**

*"The organisation of Europe is an enormous, extremely difficult thing and which, in my understanding, implies an act of popular faith. The institutions of Europe must be born of Europeans, which is to say of a democratic manifestation by the universal suffrage of European citizens. Three questions*

*must be asked of these citizens: Would you like the unity of Europe to be accomplished, notably from the point of view of its economy, culture and defence? Would you like a confederative organ of the peoples of Europe to be constituted in order to manage this unity? In order to develop the European institutions would you like an assembly appointed?*

*"I am convinced that if one asked the people these three questions, one would gain two immense advantages.*

*"The first would be to create among the Europeans who suffer, who look at one another and who feel confused by the prospect that by putting together they would retrieve their grandeur, their security, their prosperity, a manifestation of popular will for union which would be quite substantial.*



*Little space for disagreement*



*"The second would be that one could see which peoples want it and which do not. Then one would know what to limit oneself to and where to begin.*

*"I have always said, I have always believed that it was necessary to construct Europe, that it was necessary to do so progressively in its economy, its culture, later in its defence and even, one day, in its politics. I have also always believed that for Europe to construct its unity in satisfactory conditions, it was necessary that it do so itself, away from any external pressure. I have always said and I have always believed that the basis of Europe, it was a direct agreement without intermediary, is between the French people and the German people."*  
(Press conference, Paris)

#### **Picking up on Charlemagne's enterprise (March 16, 1950)**

*"Why, after all, would the Rhine not one day be come a street where Europeans could meet each other and never again be a trench on the edges of which they must always fight? After all, I do not find, in effect, in the history of any people, of any coalition, any victory that matches the value of the victory of the Catalaunique Fields, where Attila was routed by the Franks, the Gauls, the Germans and even the Romans reunited.*

*"I see no reason, in effect, that if the German people and the French people get over their reciprocal grievances and the external intrigues, they cannot finish by joining together. If one does not limit oneself to seeing things coldly, one would be impressed by the prospect of what German and French valiance together could yield...There, without a doubt, would be an opportunity for common development which could transform free Europe and even give hope to the Europe which no longer is. In sum, this would pick up along modern bases, which is to say economic, social, strategic, cultural, the enterprise of Charlemagne."* (Press conference, Paris)

#### **Federation (July 10, 1950)**

*"In order that the West Germans can prepare their own defence without alarming free Europe, it is necessary first of all that a practical agreement be concluded between themselves and the French people. Next it is necessary that on the basis of this agreement, that the European Federation be organised, incorporating new Germany".* (Interview with UPI)

### **Incorporating Spain (Jan. 7, 1951)**

*"Whatever opinion one may have, for example, of the regime that rules Spain, this proud and valiant people whose territory is one of the essential holds of the West, must be without further delay incorporated into the ensemble".*  
(Speech at Nîmes)

### **A single system of command (Jan. 7, 1951)**

*"If for a coalition it is necessary to institute among the states—by delegation of all, a single system in the upper echelons of the command—the principle which dominates everything it is that an army fights for its country, under the authority of its government and under the orders of its leaders. None, I say none, of these which Europe must supply could possibly be built or used otherwise".* (Speech at Nîmes)

### **For a European federation (June 22, 1951)**

*"We are for the European Federation. This is to say we are for an agreement which binds among them in a positive manner on positive subjects, notably the economy, defence, culture and the states of Europe that want it".* (Press conference, Paris)

### **Confederation (Dec. 21, 1951)**

*"How to make Europe? What must it be? You know on this subject what is the position of he who speaks to you. For years I have thought, along with many others, that the European community must be a Confederation. Yes, a confederation of States constituting among them a common confederal leadership, to which each delegates a part of its sovereignty. This, in particular, in economic matters, in defence matters and in cultural matters.*

*"There is much to be done. There is the Confederation of Europe that must be done, where each nation, including Germany, will have its strengths, but by means of precise and formal conditions and obligations. Each will bring its patriotism and its military virtues so that if it is necessary, by misfortune, they will be employed in common on the fields of battle. But no one will have pretensions of hegemony".* (Press conference, Paris)

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**Global defence (Oct. 12, 1952)**

*"We will not cease to affirm: 'In order to construct Europe—and it must be done, for it is the supreme chance for peace, perhaps one day, alas! that the world is at war—it is necessary to take European realities as they are, which is to say national, to unite these nations in a confederation, France here playing an eminent role thanks, notably, to the French union. Successively, once this confederation will have been built starting from the will expressed by the peoples, it will be necessary to confer to its competence the matters which should and must be devolved: certain branches of the economy, global defence, the dependencies of Europe on the sea and overseas and the agriculture of Europe at least for a good part of its production". (Speech at Neuilly-sur-Seine)*

**Delegation of sovereignty (Feb. 25, 1953)**

*"Let us start by making an alliance of the free states of Europe. This alliance, let us organise it. Leadership is needed: this will be the council of the heads of government reunited in an organic and periodic manner. This leadership must have a means of functioning and execution. This will be a Joint Chiefs of Staff combined, with a possibly Commissariat, but a Commissariat that will not have the audacity to declare itself sovereign. In this way the plans will be defined, the means provided, the command tasks divided. In this way all the services that must be will be fused together: infrastructure, communications, supplies and arms production.*



*“On the basis of this alliance, a confederation must be constructed, that is to say a common organism to which the diverse states, without losing their body, their soul or their image, delegate a part of their sovereignty in strategic, economic and cultural matters.*

*“But to this confederation a popular and democratic base must be given. It is the people who will have to create it. Once again they must be asked. The first step must be a vast referendum, simultaneously organised in all the interested countries. There in addition, there will be a great force pushing those who want the community and a powerful affirmation vis-à-vis the totalitarian states beyond the iron curtain.*

*“My opinion is that the confederal institutions must compromise: a Council of Prime Ministers; an Assembly elected by universal suffrage and another one representing the regional, economic, intellectual and moral realities of the participating states; finally, a Court, whose members, for life, will be chosen among the magistrates”.*

### **The direction of history (Feb. 25, 1953)**

*“In this way the peoples of Europe will begin to live in regular and organised co-operation. Time and events will then do the rest. I very much believe that this will be so because, save for catastrophe, in marching toward the unity of Europe, we march in the direction of history”.* (Press conference, Paris)

### **Russia, white nation of Europe (Nov. 10, 1959)**

*“Without a doubt Russia, endowed with a colossal power and knowing that the West possesses one of the same order, admits that a conflict from whichever side it comes, would culminate in general annihilation and that war being impossible, peace is a necessity. Without a doubt, the communist regime carried out in Russia for the past 42 years and opposed to the free world in all of its ideology, loses its strength under the profound push of its people toward that which man wishes by nature: a better life and liberty. Without a doubt, this same regime which Russia has used to govern by proxy and by force the territory of its neighbours in Europe, recognises that although it rules Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Yugoslavia, Prussia and Saxony, it has not acquired them and that there is no doubt that if the populations of these countries could freely express themselves, they would*

*reject it with an enormous majority. Without a doubt Soviet Russia, while having aided the installation of communism in China, esteems that nothing can keep it from being Russia, white nation of Europe, conqueror of a part of Asia and, in sum, very well endowed with land, mines, factories and riches, in the face of a yellow multitude, that of China, innumerable and miserable, indestructible and ambitious, building by trial and error an unmeasurable power and looking around at the expanses where it will have to reach one day". (Press conference, Paris)*

**Dream of the wisemen and ambition of the powerful (May 31, 1960)**

*"Contribute to the building of Western Europe into political, economic, cultural and human grouping, organised for action, progress, defence, that is to what France wants to apply itself. Already, the Federal Republic, Italy, Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg co-operate with her directly in several domains. In particular, the Common Market of the Six will enter, on Dec.31, into its practical realisation. Without a doubt, the participants surely do not want this institution to harm the other countries of Europe, and one can count on accommodation being made for their interests. Also without a doubt, it is necessary that the nations associated do not cease to be themselves and that the path followed be one of organised co-operation between states, in waiting to create perhaps a great Confederation. France as far as it is concerned, has recognised the necessity of this Western Europe, which was long ago the dream of wisemen and ambition of the powerful and which appears today as the indispensable condition for world stability". (Televised address, Paris)*

**Becoming the greatest power (Dec. 31, 1960)**

*"We will indeed do, in 1960, that which we must do. Help in building Europe, which, in confederating its nations, can and must become, for the good of man, the greatest political, economic, military and cultural power that ever existed. To help this Europe drawn together and America its daughter to reorganise their alliance in view of better defending the free world and of acting in common on the entire earth. To help acquire freedom for those peoples who aspire to it, especially those who live under the totalitarian fist. To help those to whom progress has been denied, and allow them to partake in their share. To help the West and East to come around to detente and disarmament". (Televised address)*

### February 1961: first step? (circa 1968-1969)

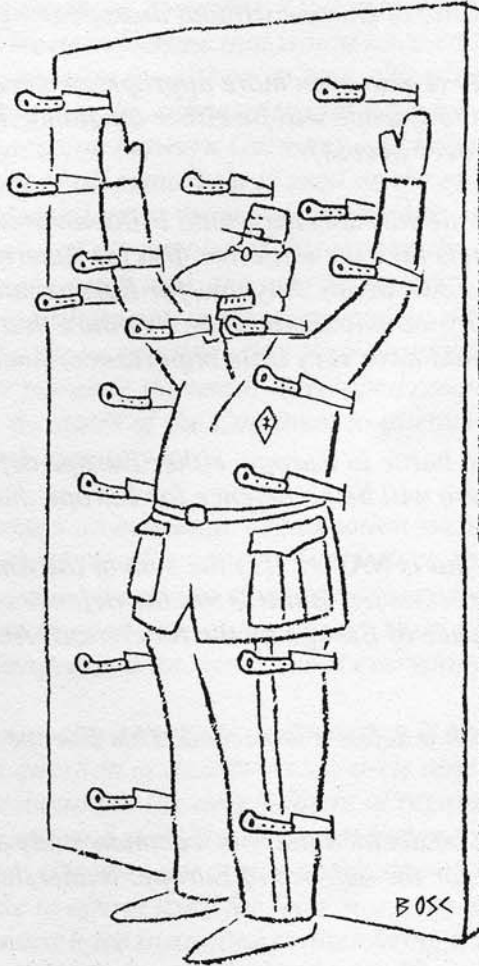
*"In February 1961, in the salon de l'Horloge at the Quai d'Orsay, I preside over the meeting of the Presidents of the Council or Prime Ministers, the Foreign Affairs ministers, the high officers and ambassadors of Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and France. The discussion is animated, because the second thoughts are scorching. To tell the truth, these all go back to America and England. To my formal proposition to organise immediately the political cooperation of the Six, Adenauer gives his full approval. Werner does just as much. Fanfani comes through with some reserve. Eyskens and Spaak at first are not opposed. But Luns expresses, not without affront, all sorts of reticence. Seeing this, Spaak adopts the same attitude. It is clear that the Netherlands and Belgium, little powers always on guard vis-à-vis the "big ones" of the Continent, coastal countries of the North Sea, traditionally protected by the British navy now relying by the Americans, do not adjust well to a system that does not include the Anglo-Saxons. But it is no less evident that if the Westerners of the Old World remain subordinate to the New, then Europe will never be European and never again will it be able to pull together its two halves. And yet, the impression that prevails at the conclusion of the meeting, is that Europe has taken its first steps, that all the participants took great interest and felt great satisfaction in finding themselves deliberating together, so much so that now we must try to go further". (Mémoires d'Espoir: le renouveau, 1958-1962)*

### Notes on the subject of Europe (July 17, 1961)

*We speak of the unity of Europe. We say we want it.*

*There can be no unity of Europe unless Europe constitutes a political entity distinct from the other entities. A personality. But there can be no political personality for Europe if Europe does not have its personality in the field of defence. Defence is always the basis of political power. When one does not want to defend "oneself", or one is either conquered, or protected by others. In any case, one loses one's political personality, one has no policy. If we prefer this state of things, it is completely useless to pretend that we are "making" Europe. For on the contrary, we are keeping it from being made. We are taking away all its chances, until perhaps a new war will have to persuade the Europeans who will have survived.*





*Prejudices are weapons*

*Europe must find its personality in its own defence. What does this mean?*

*This means that it needs leadership, a plan and means that are its own. Certainly it is natural, and in the world context it is necessary that it have allies as well, that is to say that it unites its defence with that of other countries which also want to defend themselves from the same adversary, but who in order to do so also have their own leadership, plan and means. In fact, the Americans.*

*Thirdly, this defence personality is even more appropriate if Europe is forming a whole strategy. It is the terrain of a single and same battle. America can lose the battle of Europe without disappearing. Europe cannot.*

*This defence personality is also even more appropriate because the battle that will bring America to Europe will be either an atomic battle or merely an accessory battle/battle over access?*

*Now it is not certain at all the America would bring an atomic war to Europe, unless the Soviets take the initiative. But for America, to take this initiative is to decide its own death. Anyhow, for Europe, atomic battle is in any case death. In this hypothetical situation, I venture that the personality and unity of Europe would have very little importance, since Europe would just disappear.*

*But if there is no atomic battle in Europe, either Europe defends its own territory "itself", or there will be no defence for Europe that holds.*

*Well, there is NATO. What is NATO? It is the sum of the Americans, the Europeans and some accessories. But it is not the defence of Europe by Europe. It is the defence of Europe by the Americans. Another NATO is needed.*

*First of all a Europe with a defence is needed. This Europe must be allied with America.*

*Lastly, I propose that it be decided that our common study organ put its foot on propositions for the defence of Europe: leadership, plan of action and means.*

**I never spoke of "Europe des patries" (May 15, 1962)**

*"Incidentally, since I have the opportunity, I would like for you to observe, Messrs journalists—and you may be surprised—that I have never, as far as I know, in any of my declarations spoken of "Europe des patries", even if everyone still insists that I have. It is not, of course, that I renounce my own fatherland much the opposite, I am even more attached to it than ever and I do not believe that Europe could have any living reality if it did not include France". (Press conference, Paris)*

**Political constitution (May 15, 1962)**

*“In a world where everything comes back to the threat of a general conflict, the idea of a united Western Europe that would have enough strength, enough means and enough cohesion to exist on its own, this idea appears quite naturally. Even more so as the animosities that have for centuries torn Europe, in particular the opposition between Germany and France, have at present ceased. And here first of all some light is shed on the characteristic which one could call the complementarity—from the geographic, strategic, economic and cultural point of view—of the peoples of this part of the old continent, Western Europe. And then at the same time, the overall capacity that they represent in power, production, creativity and trade, compared to the general activity of the universe. Finally, the possibilities that their ensemble could offer to the two billion men that populate the under-developed countries. Here are the facts that bring the six states of the Continent to attempt to establish particular ties among themselves.*

*“In this way there exists an economic organisation such that, little by little, the customs barriers between the Six vanish. Which does entice their efforts, while progressively their respective productions are adjusted, regulated so that the Common Market can in good time either absorb them itself or trade them abroad. It is something, it is a lot, but it is not everything.*

*“In the eyes of France, this economic construction is not sufficient. Western Europe—whether a question of its actions vis-à-vis other peoples or its own defence, or its contribution to the development of regions in need, or its duty of international detente and stability—Western Europe must constitute itself politically. Moreover, if it does not arrive at this, the economic community itself will not be able to affirm itself for long, nor even maintain itself. Put otherwise, Europe must have institutions which bring it to forming a political ensemble as it already is in the economic order”.* (Press conference, Paris)

**An all-embracing organisation (July 3, 1962)**

*“While modern times reduce distances, enlarge economies, concentrate activities and the same immediate threat weighs on their liberty and their security, France and Germany are discovering their complementarity in territory, work and genius. They measure which total the conjunction of their capacities would add up to. They understand that there is not the least chance*



*for Western Europe—and even less—for the old continent unite, if they remain apart. They recognise, on the contrary, that their union makes possible a European organisation embracing politics, economy, culture and defence; including with them Italy, Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg; making others wish, notably England, to join them one day; bringing to the free world and to the Atlantic alliance a considerable reinforcement” (Toast to Konrad Adenauer, Chancellor of the FRG)*

### **To the Brussels Commission (July 30, 1962)**

*Mr. President,*

*I have well received and studied your letter of July 24 concerning political Europe.*

*It seemed to me that compared to your former positions, two substantial changes were formulated. First of all, you renounce “for the moment a Federal Europe and even the supranational conception”. Furthermore, you admit that if England, and following her, diverse other countries one day come to join the Six, the development of European political union, whatever may be its modalities, would be extremely compromised. On these two points I feel very close to your manner of seeing.*

*On the other hand and in order to find a compromise between certain themes of yesterday and the realities of today, you propose that there be constituted with regard to the states an “independent” commission that would elaborate the common policy and that would be in this domain that the equivalent of which, in our eyes, the Brussels Commission is in the economic domain. I must say that this idea is not close to my own.*

*Without any doubt the Brussels Commission accomplishes a technical job of the highest value, that contributes very effectively in enlightening the six governments and without which, as you think, the realisation of the Common Market would be more than difficult. Yet I am not very sure that the personalities belonging to this Commission on the bequest of their respective governments can or want, for each one of them, to remove entirely the interests and worries of their own countries. In any case, I believe that I must underline that no decision relative to the Common Market has ever been taken nor a fortiori applied but by the six states.*

*But above all, it seems to me that, between the political responsibilities and the economic competencies there is such a difference in nature that I hardly see how a so-called "independent" commission could handle the former in the same way that an analogous commission does the latter.*



*Lasting bonds*

*It is one thing, when six states have decided to organise a Common market, to study and to propose the necessary rules and tariffs. But it is a completely different thing, in my opinion, to decide outside of them what must be their policy, their external action, their place in the universe and the conditions of their defence. In this domain, why and in the name of what,*

*could we institutionalise into the fact that the conceptions of an aeropage of a few persons, undoubtedly valuable but which would not hold any direct political responsibilities, could organically be opposed to those of the states, which are accountable for the destiny of the peoples?*

*Would it not be better if the political commission, with the duty of furnishing the six governments with the elements of their common decisions, were formed of their representatives, the latter having the quality and stability that would permit their objectivity but not expect to make the laws? This is what I think, for my part. (Letter to Paul-Henri Spaak, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Brussels)*

### **The future of the world depends on it (Feb. 19, 1964)**

*"Thus the Treaty of Rome which was a great hope, becomes a first success. But the construction of Europe cannot only consist in the regulation of its industry and agriculture. After the horrid tearing apart which was self-inflicted and in the presence of vast prospects which world evolution offers, the question asked of it before the entire universe is to know whether it will be capable or not of arranging itself into a coherent and active entity. Does not Europe itself want to select its own goals, its attitude, its pace in other words, its policy—the means for its defence and the practice of its alliances—in other words, its security—the contribution of its economy, its technology and its culture—in other words its aid—vis-à-vis the many countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia, that, under the penalty of fatal upheaval for the human species, have in their turn have access to our civilisation? One could think, and we think, that the future of the world depends on it". (Toast to M. Antonio Segni, President of the Italian Republic)*

### **A government for Europe (July 23, 1964)**

*"Policy is action, that is to say, a collection of decisions one takes, of things one does, of risks one assumes, the whole with the support of the people. The only ones with the capability and the responsibility necessary to conducting it can be therefore the governments of our nations. It is certainly not forbidden to imagine that one day all the peoples of our continent will make only one and that then their could be a Government of Europe, but it would be derisive to act as if this day had arrived". (Press conference, Paris)*



**To Strasbourg (Nov. 22, 1964)**

*“Whatever the dramas of other times, France pulls from its memory of the military action that was performed here 20 years ago, certainly not a motive for conceit, but a reasonable element of its self-confidence. Whatever the doubts of today, she hopes that now that the history of fighting over the Rhine has finally been written, the profound esteem and attraction mutually held by the European peoples that were in the past assembled by Rome, and by Charlemagne, and dispersed for so long by so many centrifugal illusions and foreign interventions, the awareness they must have of their collective value and solidarity, the ambitions of playing together a great role for all of men, will in the end push them to unite and to act. This hope, this will, this policy, which are our own, where could France better affirm them than in Strasbourg?”*  
(Speech in Strasbourg)

**The problem (Feb. 4, 1965)**

*“The German problem is, par excellence, the European problem. European—imagine!—since the coming of the Roman Empire, that is, since historical Europe ceased limiting itself to the Mediterranean basin to stretch up to the Rhine. European, because of the position of the Germans in the centre of our continent, between Gauls, Latins and Slavs. European because a long and hard history has filled it with fermentation and complications which have left, in all of the neighbours of this country in perpetual transformation, cruel resentments and multiple prejudices. European, because the German people is a great people, in economic activity as in the domain of thought, of science and of art, or in matters of military capacity, and which Europe sees as an essential part of itself. European, finally, because, Germany has always felt an anxiety, sometimes a fury, caused by its own uncertainty on the subject of its limits, its unity, its political regime, its international role,;an anxiety and a fury which make its destiny appear perpetually to the entire Continent all the more worrisome as it remains undetermined.* (Press conference, Paris)

**Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals (Feb. 4, 1965)**

*Such a reality requires that Russia evolves in such a fashion that it sees its future, no longer in the totalitarian restraint imposed on it and on others, but in the progress accomplished in common by free men and free peoples. It requires that the nations that it has transformed into its satellites can play their role in a*

*renovated Europe. It requires that it be accepted, by Germany before anyone else, that the settlement it could be the object of would necessarily implicate an arrangement on its borders and its weapons agreed with all of its neighbours, those of the East as well as those of the West. It requires that the six states which, let us hope, are on the path of realising the economic community of Western Europe succeed in organising themselves in the political domain and in that of defence in order to render possible a new stability on our continent. It requires that Europe, mother of modern civilisation, establish itself from the Atlantic to the Urals in concordance and co-operation in view of the development of its immense resources and in a way as to play, jointly with America her daughter, the role that returns to her. (Press conference, Paris)*

### **Cathedral (June 11 or 12, 1965)**

*We Europeans are the builders of cathedrals. We have taken some time. We have succeeded.*

*We are beginning to construct the union of Western Europe. Ah! What a cathedral!*

*In our turn, we need some time. We need much effort. Let us hope that we will be able to complete this without needing a century, because in our era, the materials, the methods, the equipment have made much progress.*

*In any case, there is a foundation, this is the reconciliation between Germany and France. There are the pillars which constitute the Economic Community of the Six. There will be vaulting formed of arches and a roof which will be political co-operation. The pillars are built after the foundation is laid. The vaulting will be fixed when the pillars are in place.*

*When our cathedral is finished, we will keep it open to others. Who knows even if, with them, and when we will have decided to build, we will not construct one still greater and finer, the union of the whole of Europe? (Draft of an address made in Bonn)*

### **Geographic and economic logic (Dec. 14, 1965)**

*"Nothing is more logical, if it is logic that steers the world, nothing is more logical today than to build a European Common Market with the countries*

*that are neighbours among themselves: France, Germany, Italy, Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg, one day probably England, one day also Spain, and perhaps others; here is a geographical fact which has also become an economic fact because they are very near one another, because they are in immediate contact with each other, and then because they have the same economic order as one another, they are on the same level.*

*“Finally, because today competition is necessary: it is the stimulus indispensable to progress and, notably, economic progress. It would be absurd for a country to close itself in as it was done in other times, as we ourselves did behind other times, in duties and barriers”. (Televised interview)*

**Good sense! (March 10, 1966)**

***C. DE GAULLE:** I am going to give you the entirety of my thought on why we want to reclaim our sovereignty on our territory. We do so now. Germany will do so one day, as well. Countries like our own cannot live indefinitely in a system where they are not in control of themselves. In the long run, they lose confidence in themselves and governments cannot endure if these countries are not independent. It is why we back our freedom. We are for the alliance, it is necessary to keep it, and you and we must bring ourselves closer to the alliance. But we cannot accept, in France, an integration under American command.*

***K. ADENAUER** - I must express to you a desire, the desire that under the direction of France, that Europe create itself. It is my dearest desire. Only then, relations with the United States would be different. I hope that you remain as long as possible at the head of your country, because otherwise, I do not know what would happen to France. You must remain the head of Europe, and I do not say this in flattery; it is my deepest conviction.*

***C. DE GAULLE** - I thank the Chancellor. I am very touched by his words, but I do not delude myself. France exists, it is flourishing again. Germany as well. But France does not have the means to exercise the guidance of Europe. Europe is a combined affair between the French and the Germans together. It is good sense. Alone, we do not have the means to guide Europe. You don't either. But together we can do so. We must walk together hand in hand. That our economic interests are not necessarily the same does not constitute a fundamental obstacle.*



*There is the fact that you are cut in two by the Soviets. This is a particular case, but one day this must end. Free Europe will not be able to organise itself without a profound agreement between our two countries. You and I, we have tried to realise this thanks to a Franco-German friendship treaty. Since then, different tendencies have intervened, but it is still necessary to come back to this starting point, or to resign ourselves to the fact that Europe cannot be built. The essential condition of success, it is that our two countries be together. (Tête-à-tête between Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and General de Gaulle)*

### **Conform to their nature (circa 1970)**

*For myself, I have always, but today more than ever, been strongly aware of that which the nations populating Europe have in common. All from the same white race, the same Christian origins, the same way of life, tied together from always by the innumerable relationships of thought, art, science, politics and trade; it is only within their nature that they come to form a whole, having in the world its own characteristic and its organisation. It is by virtue of this destiny that Europe was ruled by the Roman emperors, that Charlemagne, Charles Quint and Napoleon, attempted to reunite it, assemble, and that Hitler pretended to impose his destructive domination. Yet how can it not be observed that not one of these federators obtained from the subdued countries that they renounce being themselves? On the contrary, arbitrary centralisation will always provoked, as a backlash, the virulence of nationalities. I believe therefore that at present, no more than in other eras, the union of Europe could not be the fusion of peoples, but it can and must be the result of their systematic rapprochement. Everything indeed pushes them in this direction in our time of massive trade, common enterprises, science and technology without frontiers, rapid communications and multiple travels. My policy thus aims at the institution of the concert of European states, so that the development among them of ties of all kinds enlarges their solidarity. Nothing keeps one from thinking that from that starting point, and above all if one day they were the target of the same threat, the evolution can culminate in their confederation. (Mémoires d'espoir, Volume I)*