

## De Gasperi and federal institutions of Europe

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In this paper, the author examines the role of Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi and his creation of the European federalist institutions. Specifically, this paper discusses his cultural development, his foreign policy decisions in the post WWII era, and Italy's push for an integrated Europe with regards to its support of article 38 of the European Defence Community treaty.

In questo saggio l'autrice esamina il ruolo svolto dal presidente del Consiglio, Alcide De Gasperi, sulla creazione di istituzioni europee federali. In particolare approfondisce la formazione culturale dello statista italiano, le sue scelte di politica estera nella difficile situazione del dopoguerra, l'intervento dell'Italia per favorire l'integrazione europea, con riferimento alla proposta dell'art. 38 nell'ambito del trattato CED (Comunità Europea di Difesa).

**Key words:** History, institutional choices, Europe, De Gasperi.

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We think that a federal union made up of France, Italy, the Benelux countries and West Germany is better able to avoid any aggressive maneuver initiated by outside forces . [...] We are united by the need, and the understanding that there is no other salvation outside of this union. This is our European concept. But from this concept comes another hope, that of developing a federalist state, where at last in Europe the borders will become transparent and there will be freedom of movement across communities for people, products, and especially for jobs (De Gasperi, 1956, 485-6).

De Gasperi expressed his hope for the federalist development of the European Community when he spoke on April 26, 1953 at the Opera House in Rome. At that time the Italian government was engaged in negotiations for the EDC (European Defence Community) and for the implementation of Art. 38, a special wish of the Italian prime minister, which provided for the formation of a political European Commission with the task of moving the new political institutions towards a federal structure. How had De Gasperi come to these innovative proposals? Recently Piero Craveri, in a rich and detailed biography, has reconstructed the political formation of De Gasperi, his governmental activities and federalist project (Craveri, 2006). Daniela Preda has located the transition from Europeanism to federalism of the statesman from Trentino around 1947-48, identifying reasons for

the genesis in his supranational Catholic orientation and, above all, in his meeting with the lay milieu represented by the company of Sforza, Einaudi and La Malfa (Preda, 2004). Antonio Varsori has identified the highest point of De Gasperi's federalism in the formulation of art. 38, pointing out that this proposal was based more on policy action than on a theoretical assumption (Varsori, 2004). These contributions have provided a rich and innovative framework to historiography on the role played by De Gasperi during the process of European integration. In this essay I discuss the historical moment and the reasons that led him to formulate the creation of political institutions in a federal sense. For these reasons, I reconstruct De Gasperi's cultural formation, his Europeanist choices, his relations with federalist movements and the Italian intervention during the first phase of European integration, with particular reference to the proposal of art. 38 as part of the EDC Treaty.

### 1. The political training of De Gasperi

The Italian entry into the international community was a cornerstone of De Gasperi's commitment. As for his Europeanism, historiography has emphasized the Trentina experience, not taking into account the fact that there was nothing federalist in the institutions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His first parliamentary experience in this state structure, however, led De Gasperi to address the issue of coexistence between different nationalities and to find a solution in terms of autonomy with limits to the sovereignty of statehood. The young Trentino deputy followed this choice, which was not exactly a federalist one, after the annexation of Trentino by Italy. (Pombeni, 2007).

The Catholic formation of De Gasperi, since his early years, pushed him towards ecumenical and universal aspirations, with the consequent unity of nations within the same faith. Already, during the crisis that was to lead to the First World War, he felt the need for a supranational authority, but his political vision was widened in the years of Vatican exile and after his meeting with Cardinal Giovanni Battista Montini. As a contributor to "The Vatican illustration" and being responsible for "International Fortnights", he showed an ability to interpret the European crisis, institutional innovations and the new international scenarios. De Gasperi considered the coming to power of totalitarian regimes transient, and thought the return of social and political conflict and the resumption of catholic activity would be inevitable. In his view, while he had no precise proposals on European unity, there was a need for international bodies not only of permanent arbitration but also equipped with supranational powers, as a function of the common interest, and above all for motives of peace.

In this period, De Gasperi studied the literature on political and economic transformations in Europe, which would later support the political thought of the authors of the manifesto of Ventotene and Europeanism between the wars. Among these works, the best known were the stories of Europe by Christopher Dawson, Herbert Fisher and Benedetto Croce. In particular, the future statesman, dedicating a long critical review to the work of Croce, asserted the role of the Catholic movement in the progress of freedom (Craveri, 2009). The question referred to reflections on the future of Europe after the eventual fall of the totalitarian regimes. Among Catholics at that time the view prevailed according to which the old continent, with its common cultural and historical heritage, was linked to the Christian tradition. De Gasperi, taking note of the ongoing crisis, identified, in the "Catholic solution", a bulwark of European civilization against communist barbarism and racist paganism. For this reason he developed a conviction, which had little in common with the acquisition of a national myth, which tried to balance nationalism with a perspective of "international community" as an extreme offshoot of the inheritance of medieval Christian organicism (Formigoni, 2009).

At the beginning of the thirties, political journalism began to go beyond traditional conceptions of equilibriums based on the assumptions of power politics. The need began to be felt for the rule of law in international relations, and for new bodies for conflict resolution to avoid the end of Europe. This new Europeanism was nourished by the analysis of contemporary economists, who proposed a free trade policy and the overcoming of national thinking, on the models of the American tradition and

the British Commonwealth. In his productions of this period, De Gasperi argued that economic progress was primarily related to free trade, pointing out that already, in 1926, Sturzo had argued for the value of freedom in economic relations.

European culture experienced a strong revival in the proposals of the Holy See during the Second World War. The main concern of Pius XII was the barrier that, with the fall of fascism, should have been constructed in the old continent against the advance of communism. With his mistrust towards the Anglo-Saxon world, the pontiff looked especially to the old continent, to Italy, as well as to France and Germany, to guarantee the independence of the Holy See. The Vatican attitude, which supported theological, uncompromising and anti-modern positions, justified talk of a residue of Neo-Guelphism as a long-term cultural current, opposed to the "secular" character of the European integration process. De Gasperi was not unaware of this debate, but his liberal Catholicism did not forget the fact that political democracy had to be enriched with more vital elements, such as social activity and economic freedom. With other enlightened catholic spirits, he understood Europeanism as a way to connect the Italian nation with the great historical currents of civilization and European democracy, as a synthesis of tradition and a new sense of post-national membership. This system emerged from the first documents on the founding of the Christian Democrats (DC). The pro-European choice of De Gasperi, naturally, matured under the urgency of events (Telò, 1996).

## 2. De Gasperi and the European choice

At the end of World War II, European states lost their economic and political centrality and the very idea of the nation state was in crisis. If Europe wanted to have a role in the world system, new forms of union appeared essential, but immediately strictly national objectives prevailed. Italy did not escape this trend. De Gasperi, who had been foreign minister since the second Bonomi government, whilst he showed particular sensibility to issues of international cooperation, devoted himself mainly to the defence of national interests and the conclusion of a peace treaty that did not assume punitive connotations against Italy.

Between the end of 1946 and the first months of 1947, the attention of European governments, as well as on the question of peace, was focused on the imminent rupture between East and West, and the consequences of this crisis for the balances of the international system. After the failure of the Moscow Conference of the four victorious powers (March-April 1947), organized to resolve the future of Germany, the Truman administration was convinced that the Soviet Union did not want a shared solution on the post-war European order. He began to fear that Stalin, taking advantage of the economic crisis and the strong presence of communist parties, intended to take control of the old continent. From here the origins of the Marshall Plan can be traced, which focused on American aid for reconstruction in Europe and to improve its economic conditions.

In this context should be collocated several fairly familiar episodes: De Gasperi's journey to Washington, the Socialist's split in Palazzo Barberini, the nomination of the Republican Carlo Sforza at the head of the Foreign Ministry, the signing of the peace treaty and the exit from government of the PCI and the PSI (Galante, 1980). De Gasperi was able to clearly identify the trends of an international system that entailed close European and Atlantic cooperation with the participation of Italy on an equal footing with other states. At the same time, he felt the desperate need for economic aid for reconstruction, and meanwhile prepared to fight with the left parties (socialists and communists), in view of the first parliamentary elections that would be held in April 1948 (Romero, 1994). These choices sanctioned the Italian presence in the western camp.

Immediately after the election, which sanctioned the DC's victory, the first rumours on the creation of the Western alliance with the involvement of the USA, Canada and some European countries began to leak out. Faced with the danger of a marginalization of Italy, the Italian government

immediately tried to fit into this process by leveraging the relationship of its friendship with France. De Gasperi, naturally, was aware of the resistances present in public opinion, in the left parties and in the DC itself for Italian involvement in a military alliance. In the international context marked by the Cold War, the formation of a political-military alliance represented, however, the pillar of the western system. After the presidential elections of November 1948 and the unexpected victory of Harry Truman, the Italian ambassador in the USA, Tarchiani, invited De Gasperi and Sforza to quickly take a position in favour of the Atlantic Alliance (Varsori, 1985).

In December, the Italian government made an attempt to understand the American attitude towards Italian entry into the Atlantic Pact. At the same time, in Cannes, Sforza met Robert Schuman, who suggested that his interlocutor should lose no time in presenting Italian candidature for the North Atlantic Treaty. The French stance stemmed from distrust of a possible Anglo-Saxon hegemony within the new military alliance, which could have too "maritime" and Atlantic a character, to the detriment of the European continent and the Mediterranean. The inclusion of Italy would balance the alliance towards the south. In early January 1949, De Gasperi and Sforza, having acquired these new elements, sent Tarchiani a memorandum in which they revealed interest for Italian participation in the initiative. Meanwhile, the geographical extension of the Atlantic Pact had become one of the nodes of the controversial negotiations: on the one hand, France pointed to an extension of the "Mediterranean" aspect of the agreement; on the other, Britain was willing to accept Norway in the alliance, which would have allowed for the defence of the North Sea. Britain still posed two conditions: firstly, Italy was not to participate in the final phase of negotiations, merely to accept the text of the treaty; secondly, Italian entry was not to lead to the reopening of litigation on her former colonies.

In the American capital, the government of Rome accepted these conditions, and participated in the official ceremony of the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty (4 April 1949). Despite fierce opposition and doubts that existed within the Democratic left, De Gasperi was able to competently guide the ratification of the Treaty of Washington through Parliament. As for the European framework, participation in the Atlantic Pact made Italy a full member of the western system. Its involvement in any project for the construction of Europe now became almost automatic, as was demonstrated, in those same months, by Italian participation in the establishment of the first body of European political cooperation, the Council of Europe.

Did these decisions fall into the stereotype according to which De Gasperi was a "tool of American imperialism"? Certainly, the "choice of civilization" against communism helped to cement the majority block against the opposition of the left. The alliance with the US, however, did not impose a state of stasis, and did not prevent European countries from playing an active role in the new international and European institutions. With the thesis of the subordination of Europeanism to Americanism, the divergence of the two lines and the original European interpretation of De Gasperi are not represented. Even before bipolarism, De Gasperi had shared the anti-fascist and anti-nationalist ideal of a Europe of peace and supranational democracy. His skill was to know how to unite his Catholic upbringing with western Europeanism, understood as a coalition of democracies that shared the principles of freedom and of the free market. In this vision, the Atlantic constraint was corrected with a strong Europeanism, understood in the economic-political and not only military sense. With his contribution, De Gasperi positioned himself among the reformers, giving Italy a role in the first steps of European construction (Teldò, 1996).

### 3. De Gasperi and European movements

The first federalist maturation of De Gasperi can be seen in his speech of November 20, 1948, given in Brussels on the occasion of the *Grandes Conférences catholiques*. Praising Belgian democracy and the American system with its multiple control institutions and with its division of sovereignty, he criticized a centralized system that could easily turn into tyranny. He then spoke of the problems left

over from the war and the need to ensure political freedom, peace and social justice in the future. For the first time, to carry out this program, he spoke of overcoming the national state and the need for new European institutions to be the new frontiers of the post-war world. In this regard, he stated that Italy was ready to impose self-limitations of sovereignty and to cooperate with the other European peoples "abandoning the selfishness of outdated traditions" (De Gasperi, 1979, 71).

This represented a clear turning point in Italian foreign policy. De Gasperi came to these new proposals thanks to the stimuli and initiatives of the federalist movements that had established relations with the Italian political world, especially with the centrist coalition parties. What were De Gasperi's relations with leading federalist movements in Italy? Since the end of the forties, he had reserved special attention to the initiatives of the European movements that tried to give answers to the challenges of the political and institutional post-war period. A new European order, in fact, could not be achieved solely through the intervention of bureaucratic, diplomatic, economic and military circles, that for their tradition continued to settle on the defence of national interests.

Against these movements, De Gasperi moved on two levels: collaboration and actions of support. Since 1946, he had welcomed the proposal of Count Coudenhove-Kalergi to form, in the Assemblies of European states, groups favourable to a "European Union Federation in the UN." On May 29, 1947, the Italian Parliamentary Committee for the European Union was born, which collected the membership of one hundred members from all parties except the PCI. On June 2, 1947, Coudenhove-Kalergi invited a delegation of the Italian Committee to attend a meeting of parliamentarians from European states that were considered "democratic", which was to be held at Gstaad on 4 and 5 July. At this meeting the establishment of the European Parliamentary Union (UPE) was decided, and articulated in national committees independent of any extra-parliamentary organization.

At the first official congress of the UPE, held in Gstaad from 6 to 10 September 1947, a *Déclaration de solidarité européenne* was approved, with which all Europeans were invited to achieve the United States of Europe through the convening of a Constituent European Assembly either to be elected by the national parliaments or by universal suffrage. In this regard, the UPE proposed to create pressure groups within their respective national assemblies. The Italian Committee adhered strongly to the proposals and, in January 1948, passed a motion, approved by the international treaties' Commission and also welcomed by the Italian government, in favour of the creation of a United States of Europe. This was the latest initiative of the Committee before the general election of April 18, 1948. After the election, the Parliamentary Committee for the European Union, re-established as the Italian Parliamentary Group, was stabilized within the centre area, becoming the organ of communication between the government majority and the most influential European movements (Preda, 1999).

In September of 1948, in Interlaken, the second congress of UPE took place, during which were drafted the statute of UPE and an Action Plan. The Statute stated that the European Parliamentary Union's purpose was the implementation of the European Federation formed by all the countries of the old continent. The Plan explicitly stated that the convening of an Assembly was to be the necessary starting point for the constitution of a federation. At the conclusion of the work, the Congress urged delegations to push their governments in that direction. Finally, it insisted on the convening of a Constituent Assembly by the end of March 1949. In Interlaken, the UPE normalized its federalist and constitutionalist position.

De Gasperi, through his closest collaborators (Enzo Giacchero and Lodovico Benvenuti), maintained a *de facto* solidarity with this European movement. The same attitude can be seen with reference to the European Federalist Movement, whose most influential exponent was Altiero Spinelli. We now have an extensive bibliography on this character and the movement. Here it should be noted that, at the congress in Milan in February 1948, Rossi and Spinelli having become part of the leadership, managed to pass a political motion based on a pro-western third-force for the creation of a federal Europe, able to pursue an independent policy in the face of every other power, and to build the

third world power necessary to maintain peace. When Spinelli became secretary, he tried to involve some Christian Democrats in the movement. In this framework should be placed the collaboration between the MFE and the UPE of Enzo Giaccherо.

De Gasperi, through the commitment of Vittorino Veronese, supported the initiatives of Catholics, and had the strong support of the Holy See. Bringing the protagonists together was Monsignor Montini, very close to Pope Pius XII who, being favourable to the European integration process, wanted to go quickly and wondered "if it was not already too late" (Preda, 2004, 376). Since 1947 De Gasperi had been representative of Catholics in the European Movement and the following year he agreed to become honorary president. While failing to monitor the movement's activities, he continued to call for unity and support their initiatives. In July 1950, at the Social Conference of the ME, De Gasperi dwelt in his speech on social justice and democracy, insisting on the theme of "unity" and calling all people, rich and poor, to make sacrifices for it " (De Gasperi, 1979, 93).

The most important commitment of this period concerned the choice of the Italian delegation in the Council of Europe. In the summer of 1949, not surprisingly, the House of Representatives and then the Senate indicated the names of Christian Democrats who were closer to the federalist positions (Benvenuti, Giaccherо, Montini, Campilli, Parri, Ruini and La Malfa). On 1 August 1949 Spinelli, true to his role as a prompter, sent a reminder to this Italian delegation of the Council of Europe, in which he suggested the convening of a Constituent Assembly, to prepare a draft European Constitution for submission for the approval of the States (Morelli, 1992).

In the bodies of the Council of Europe, Italian delegates showed a particular commitment to the implementation of the objectives advanced by Spinelli in his pro memoriam. In the Commission for General Affairs, the Italians Giaccherо and La Malfa supported the document presented by the Greek Gregorios Cassimatis, which recommended to the Council of Ministers the establishment of a European political authority with real powers, and a special commission with the task of drawing up a first integration project. Particularly interesting was the motion, conceived by Ruini and supported by all the Italian delegates, which included the transformation of the assembly from consultative to parliamentary, strengthening the Committee of Ministers to lay the foundations of a European policy in the field of foreign affairs, of economy and social security. It also urged the Assembly to adopt a European legal charter for the protection of fundamental freedoms and the creation of a project for the establishment of a common market, which was to cover the entire OEEC area (Palayret, 1995).

Many of these points, proposed by the Italian delegates, were welcomed in the report prepared by Mollet and presented in September 1949. In the same month, in Venice, the III Congress of the UPE was held, which evaluated with satisfaction the work of the Consultative Assembly and urged its members to push through the proposals of the Mollet report by the Member States of the Council of Europe. In late October 1949 began the campaign for the Covenant of European Federal Union. The initiative, sponsored officially by the MFE and the UEF, developed through a petition in favour of a European Pact. This paper presented an organic constitutional project with a European scope, with supranational authority and the following powers: foreign policy, defence, legal protection of equality and fundamental freedoms, economic policy.

The campaign for the Covenant obtained the support of almost all European associations, except for the English. In November 1950, De Gasperi intervened in a demonstration of the same movement, affixing his signature to the petition calling for "a pact of European union." On this occasion, as well as expressing the common feeling for the process of European unification, he affirmed the need to shy away from abstract prospects and to face up to obstacles and difficulties. The task of the movement, according to the statesman, was not to insist "on the achievement, as an immediate aim, of ideals judged and proved unattainable for the moment" (De Gasperi, 1979, 98). It was during the summer of 1950, in the assembly of the Council of Europe where the first resistance appeared, in the veto of some countries, at the opening of discussions for a Pact for Federal Union and the transformation of this

organism into the Constituent Assembly. In any case, European integration was now taking a different path from that of the Council of Europe, the path indicated by Schuman and Monnet on May 9, 1950.

#### 4. Italy and the first Community Initiatives

During the 1950s a new push to European construction developed, outside the intergovernmental scheme typical of the OEEC and the Council of Europe. The protagonist was France. In the early stages, the European choice had been dictated by the events of the Cold War, the American foreign policy and British interests. This initiative derived from the discomfort of the Parisian authorities, who had not yet solved the problem of the Franco-German relationship, one of the nodes of French foreign policy. The issue had become central to the creation, in May 1949, of the Federal German Republic, which proposed once again the question of control of the Ruhr, the coal area necessary for the German and French industrial apparatus.

In the first months of 1950, French managers, faced with these prospects, sought a solution. They began to see European integration as a useful tool for economic reconstruction through stable relations between France and Germany. Jean Monnet helped to develop the idea, acting in his capacity as overseer of the Commission's plan for the modernization of French industry. He advanced the idea of pooling the coal and steel industries of the two countries, through the creation of a European community. Thanks to the partial renunciation of sovereignty, the new body would handle these areas with broad powers, able to direct European heavy industry and to regulate the coal and steel market. The supranational authority contained, in embryo, a future federal government. For the functionalist Monnet, unlike the federalist Spinelli, the federation would be realized at the end of a long and gradual economic integration, starting from "below", and not from "above" with the drafting of a Constitution and the creation of a Parliament.

The Monnet Plan soon found the support of Foreign Minister Schuman, advocate of Franco-German reconciliation, who presented it to the Council of Ministers on the morning of May 9, 1950, after gaining the consent of the German Chancellor Adenauer. In the afternoon of the same day, in an urgent press conference, the French Foreign Minister read the historic declaration, destined to change the fate of Europe with the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (CZECH). The Shuman project, addressed mainly to Germany, was also open to other countries' contributions, such as those of Belgium and Luxembourg, who possessed important industries in the coal and steel sectors. It was also appropriate to include the project in the wider process of European integration, which had the full support of the Truman administration.

On 9 May 1950, Schuman gave Quaroni, the Italian ambassador in Paris, advance information about the plan that would be presented on the same day. The first reaction of the diplomat was not favourable, because it deviated from the ongoing negotiations on the Customs Union between Italy and France. The birth of a special relationship between Paris and Bonn would also put Italy in a position of marginality (Ranieri, 1992). The Italian government, reassured by Schuman about the intention of France to involve other countries, showed that their membership was dictated primarily by political considerations: the opportunity not to be excluded from an important negotiation and confirmation of the important role of Italy within Europe. In the negotiations, which began in June 1950, the Italian delegation was led by Paolo Emilio Taviani, leading member of the DC and close to De Gasperi.

During the negotiation, the central issue was that of the bodies responsible for management. The French delegation, in particular the leader Monnet, was aiming at the birth of an institution - the future High Authority - equipped with broad powers, finding support over this objective from the German delegation, led by Walter Hallstein, a close associate of Adenauer. Representatives of the small countries, however, feared that it could become a situation of hegemony on the part of the two major nations. Italy, aware of its weakness in the economic and political spheres, shared this position. On the

initiative of the Italian delegation, it was decided that the powers of the High Authority would be balanced by the presence of other organs, in particular by a Council of Ministers and a Court of Justice (Neri Gualtesi, 2004).

The economic skills of the future organization represented the central aspect of the negotiations. The Italian delegation obtained the concession of a transitional period before the full integration of its steel industry in the common market. It also tried to bring into the negotiations the issue of migration, but the European partners were cautious on this point, limiting the request to the two industries and skilled labour. To facilitate Italian involvement in the Schuman Plan, the favourable attitude of the State steel industry (Finsider) was helpful, as its representative Oscar Sinigaglia welcomed the opening of markets, the logic of competition, and the modernization of Italian industry, for which the support of the Marshall Plan could be counted on (Ranieri, 1996). After initial resistance, even private industrial groups accepted Italian involvement in CZECH. Strong interest was manifested by the trade unions and, in particular, the Catholic trade union CISL, influenced by the DC, which gave open support to European integration, not only for idealistic reasons but also because of the opportunities it gave to improve the living conditions of workers and for the solution of the migratory phenomenon (Ciampani, 2004).

Participation in negotiations and interventions of the Italian delegation testified to the high degree of Europeanism of the political class, which proved able to exert a decisive push towards a federal integration, that is, towards a Europe conceived not only as a free trade area but also as a political and economic union. Italian membership enabled the French proposal to be given more breathing space. Ambassador Roberto Ducci, one of the most pro-European diplomats, commented as follows on these events: "Adhering to the Shuman proposal, De Gasperi did not just make Italy European when many in his party wanted it Mediterranean. It was the Italian presence which made "European" an initiative that would otherwise have remained "Rhenish"»(Ducci, 2007). These references make De Gasperi's initiative at the time of the EDC project presentation even more interesting.

##### 5. The Ced: De Gasperi and art. 38

The French authorities, with the Schuman Plan, had placed their country at the head of the European integration process, keeping under control the economic revival of the German Federal Republic. The "little Europe", organised by CZECH, did not solve the essential post-war problem that consisted of German rearmament. An unexpected event on the international scene made this urgent. In June 25, 1950, in the Far East, the war in Korea broke out, which opened a period of tension between East and West in Europe. The US administration, believing a military conflict with the Soviet Union which, since 1949, had been in possession of nuclear weapons, to be imminent, proceeded to launch a political weapon with the involvement of its European allies (Varsori, 2009).

France, faced with the real need for military strengthening, tried to use a functionalist approach for the formation of a European army. The project, prepared by Monnet and his collaborators at the end of October 1950, was advanced publicly by the French Prime Minister René Pleven, and thus took the name of the Pleven plan. It involved the creation of a European army, supplemented by German contingents and added to an institutional structure designed according to the model of the CZECH. The proposal, addressed primarily to the German government, also involved the European countries of the CZECH. In February 1951, the foreign ministers of France and Germany, along with their colleagues from Italy, Belgium and Luxembourg, met in Paris to begin negotiations on the EDC.

After the initial perplexities, the US government convinced itself that the European army would strengthen the defensive system, allowing them to rely on a different sharing of the burden for the security of the old continent. In the summer of 1951, the conference on the EDC was able to present an



intermediate report, which listed the purposes and principles of the future institution: integration of national armies under the control of organs with limited sovereignty, structured according to the Schuman model, close cooperation with NATO and new defensive military structures.

The Italian authorities did not view favourably the establishment of the EDC because of the consequent strengthening of France and Germany, and because it shifted resources from the work of reconstruction to that of rearmament. De Gasperi, unable to change his policy in favour of European integration, found a solution with the inclusion in the Treaty of the EDC art. 38, which gave its Parliamentary Assembly, once created, the task of studying an institutional "federal" or "confederal" structure, based on the principle of separation of powers and characterized by a bicameral system of representation.

On De Gasperi's proposal, scholars have advanced different interpretations. Some have identified a stratagem whereby the Italian government would try to strengthen national positions and avoid the undesirable consequences arising from the formation of the EDC (Lorenzini, 2005). Others have recognized the ultimate expression of the federalist choice acquired during his long career (Craveri, 2006). Most likely, the French proposal of the EDC brought the federalist beliefs of the Trentino statesman to maturity; he now saw the defence of Italian interests through more forms of European integration, with intergovernmental agreements focused on sectorial cooperation (Piston, 1979). This view emerged more sharply after the summer of 1951, when De Gasperi, after the resignation of Sforza, assumed direct responsibility for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

At the time of presentation of the new government, De Gasperi argued for the federalist line. To push him, with conviction and determination, towards this approach, was the international situation. The experience of the past war and the new Cold War drove him to take the opportunity to move towards European political integration. He thought that, failing that tension, everything would become more difficult. The experience of the Marshall Plan had shown that the route was useful only for the strengthening of the national economy. The downsizing of the sovereignty of national states and the implementation of a proper European policy were different matters. In his famous speech in Strasbourg on December 10, 1951, he stated, in fact, that "the European ideal was not yet well established" (De Gasperi, 1979, 121). Based on this awareness, the prime minister, who now held the position of Foreign Minister, intensified his support to the initiatives of the European movements.

In this period the federalist movement, while remaining an elite phenomenon in Italy, had more influence than that exercised in other European nations. In the spring of 1951, Altiero Spinelli, won a central role in the federalist movement, becoming one of the main promoters of the project for a European Constituent (Graglia, 2008). The developments in the negotiations on the EDC led him to publish a strongly federalist memorandum. In the document, distancing himself from the intermediate report, Spinelli criticized the creation of a military force without the limitation of national sovereignty. This approach would not lead to an integrated army, but to a mere juxtaposition of military contingents under the direction of their original countries. According to Spinelli, the presence of a supranational political authority would be necessary, in the form of a European federal state, to be applied to the guidance of the unified military forces (Spinelli, 1989)

De Gasperi received the document in the summer of 1951. In October 1951 he advanced, by sending a memorandum to the five partners, the idea of combining the EDC with the creation of a European Political Community. For Paris and Bonn, of course, this proposal was not central to the negotiations. These two countries, however, were favourable thanks to the attitude of Schuman and Adenauer, who were aware of the US support for the Italian plan. So, on December 11, 1951 at the proposal of De Gasperi, the six heads of government of the "little Europe" decided to include in the text of the CED treaty the famous art. 38, which would have given to the future Assembly of the Commonwealth of Defence a mandate to study the formation of a democratic body, with supranational powers, including control over an integrated European army (Preda, 1994). This initiative of Italy

immediately met with the support of the federalist movement and the Belgian Paul-Henri Spaak who, after resigning from the presidency of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, had assumed the role of President of the MEF, shifting the ideological axis of the organization in a federalist direction. At the initiative of Spinelli and Paul-Henri Spaak, a Committee for the Study on the European Constitution (CECE) was created (Demoulin, 1999). Many authoritative representatives participated in the life of this body, established in March 1952, including the Belgian socialist Ferdinand Dehousse and the liberal German Max Becker.

In late September 1952, the CECE published a series of resolutions that were to be the basis for a future European Federal Constitution. The main point was: the "indissoluble" Community aimed at the common welfare of the people, in a system of external security of the Member States, at the preservation of constitutional democracy and fundamental freedoms. Relying on Article 38 of the EDC Treaty, it sought a political community of a bicameral parliamentary nature, with a Chamber of Deputies, elected by universal suffrage and a Senate appointed by the national parliament. The collegial executive, elected by the European Parliament and accountable to it, would assume the government of the Community, under the supervision of a president.

In the wake of these initiatives, De Gasperi renewed pressure on the European partners and, in September 1952, obtained the launch of the design study for the CPE without waiting for ratification of the Treaty on the EDC. The leaders of "little Europe" decided to entrust this task to the Common Assembly of the CZECH, which was transformed into an ad hoc Assembly, which would have to establish forms of collaboration with the CECE (Preda, 1996). The most active Italian personality in the process of elaboration of the project was the Democrat Lodovico Benvenuti, who had assumed prestigious roles within the Italian Parliamentary Group for the European Union, the European Parliamentary Union (UPE), the International Committee of coordination of movements for European unity (CIME) and the European Federalist Movement (MFE) (Preda, 1999).

## 6. De Gasperi and the draft Statute of the CPE

In September 1952, the government of the Six had entrusted the task of preparing a CPE of the CZECH Assembly, defined as a Commission ad hoc and composed of 78 members appointed by the national parliaments. The Presidency was entrusted to Heinrich von Brentano, while it gave Benvenuti the vice presidency. The Commission divided into four subcommittees, the Italian deputy became speaker of the third, that of the Attributions, in charge of indicating the competencies of the future Community institution. Between 12 and 15 November, 1952 the first phase of work took place. In a speech, Benvenuti proposed a revision of the Treaty of the EDC, highlighting the impotence of the Community to raise taxes directly, to recruit members of the Forces of the European defence and to oppose the removal of national quotas by the member States. The progress of work of the Subcommittee on Attributions oscillated between the unconditional acceptance of a minimalist solution that tended to entrust the limited political powers to CZECH and CED, and a more advanced federalist solution, based on the principle of implied power that, starting from the coal-steel and defence collaboration, allowed for a gradual extension of Community competence. Between the two principles the first was to have the best, although some concessions were made on the extension of the powers of the Community.

In mid-December 1952, the Constitutional Commission compared the reports of the subcommittees, dissolving the major nodes. This led to the development of a final report, presented to the ad hoc Assembly meeting in Strasbourg in early January 1953. The draft statute was approved, on March 10, unanimously except for five abstentions. It was an impressive text, with a preamble and 117 articles divided into six sections: the European Community (Articles 1-8), institutions (Articles 9-54), functions (Articles 55-89), the association (Articles 90-93), the transitional provisions (Articles 94-99), general provisions (Articles 100-117) and two protocols (Protocol on the Privileges and

Immunities of the Community and that on the links with the Council of Europe) (Assembly ad hoc, 1953).

In the explanatory memorandum to the Statute, von Brentano argued that the European Political Community was neither a confederation nor a federation, identifying the novelty in the fact that the project was at once an international treaty and a constitution. Compared to CZECH, the new Community saw the role of Parliament and the democratic traits greatly increased. With the election by universal suffrage, the lower house strengthened its legitimacy. Federal aspects were counterbalanced by the presence of the Council of Ministers, a body of protection of national sovereignty. Community competences were entrusted to five institutions: Parliament, the European Executive Council, the Council of National Ministers, the Court, the Economic and the Social Council.

Parliament consisted of two chambers: a House of Peoples, directly elected every five years, and a Senate made up of representatives of national parliaments. European deputies voted individually, without being subject to any binding mandate. The President of the Executive Council, elected by the Senate, appointed the other members (no more than two of the same nationality). He had to resign with the entire Council if censured by the House of Peoples with a three-fifths majority vote of no confidence, or by that of the Senate. The Executive Council exercised governmental functions provided by the High Authority for the Commissioner by the respective treaties, and all government functions provided by the Statute and the laws of the Community. He could make decisions (compulsory), make recommendations (mandatory as to the purpose, but not the means to pursue it) or issue opinions (non-binding).

The Council of Ministers had the objective of harmonizing the action of the European Executive Council and that of the individual Member State governments. It was formed by their representatives (one for each state) who, in turn, for a period of three months, exercised the presidency. It gave its assent by qualified majority or, in the most important cases, unanimously for all the acts of the High Authority and the Commissariat envisaged in the treaties of CZECH and CED. The Court, composed of 15 members for a term of nine years, ensured compliance with the law in the Statute, the EU laws and implementing regulations. It could also be invested with functions of arbitration.

To the Community institutions were transferred the powers of the CZECH and the EDC during a transitional period of two years or more. In terms of international relations, this organism could make treaties and international agreements or accede to the limits of the powers conferred on it. It could send and receive ambassadors, and ensure coordination of the foreign policy of the Member States. In terms of finances, the Assembly decided to give the Community power to tax the citizens and the Member States, to buy and sell real estate and other assets, and to borrow (after approval by Parliament). States' contributions were set, unanimously, by the Council of Ministers. The Community budget, proposed by the Executive Council, was voted annually by Parliament. The draft statute also included the start of the process of economic integration in those sectors that, in a few years, would become the centrepiece of the Community. From the year following the entry into force of the Statute, the Community could progressively achieve a common market based on the free movement of goods, capital and people. For the first five years, measures had to be decided by a unanimous vote by the Council of Ministers and be approved by Parliament.

The Community then had the power to assist Member States, at their request or on its own initiative, to ensure respect for democratic freedoms. They could form their own administrative apparatus, independent of those of the Member States. The Articles further stipulated provisions concerning treaties or association agreements that the Community could conclude with third countries in order to establish close cooperation in certain areas. A regular conference was established, which brought together the members of the Executive Council, the Council of Ministers and the representatives of the Associated States. Europe was on the threshold of Union. With dedication and

commitment, the members of the ad hoc had sought the best solutions to design the institutional shape according to art. 38. It was now up to the governments and national parliaments to cross that threshold. With great acumen Spinelli noted in his diary: "This date will be insignificant and forgotten if the project is not ratified. It will be a date that will be remembered for ever if the Community is born" (Spinelli, 1989, 170).

Immediately after the approval of the draft Statute, De Gasperi invited the President of the Council in turn of CZECH, George Bidault, to begin immediate discussion within an intergovernmental conference. Full agreement emerged between the Trentino statesman and the MFE, which had proposed, at the first opportunity, that the project should be presented directly to national parliaments. De Gasperi could not ignore the fact that the project was a simple study, as provided for under art. 38, and that the fate of the CPE was related to ratification of the EDC Treaty. He asked, therefore, that the results of the ad hoc Commission should be analyzed in intergovernmental negotiations, before proceeding to the final draft taking into account the contributions of the various governments.

From 22 June to 1 July 1953, in Rome, after lengthy negotiations, a conference under the presidency of the same De Gasperi was arranged. The hopes placed in that meeting, however, soon proved illusory. In France, meanwhile, there was growing distrust at the limitation of the country's political and military sovereignty, engaged as it was in the burdensome and desperate control of Indochina. After the fall of the Plevin Government, which had been a promoter of the CED, during 1952 two executives alternated, which continued the policy of European integration, thanks to the presence of Robert Schuman at the Foreign Ministry. At the beginning of 1953, the government of the radical René Mayer, who had replaced Schuman with another member of the MRP, George Bidault, immediately showed itself cautious and unwilling to a firm commitment to the European cause. On 21 May 1953, however, the Mayer government went into crisis. Thus, the driving role played by the Italian presidency in the process that would lead to political integration of Europe was interrupted.

To open another fracture in the Community building under construction came the first signs of the crisis of centrism in Italy. From the autumn of 1952 to the spring of 1953, the Parliament's activities were almost wholly centred on electoral law. The so-called "fraudulent law" assigned a prize of majority to a party or coalition that had obtained at least 50.01 of the votes in the elections. The fight against this project by the opposition parties, both on the right and the left was very lively. The leadership of De Gasperi was also seriously questioned by the infighting between "currents" that were more and more organized and aggressive. Under these conditions, marked by the difficulties encountered by De Gasperi in his mediation efforts, the government thought it reasonable not to present the founding treaty of the EDC in Parliament, returning to it after the election. On April 5, 1953 the Chambers were dissolved. De Gasperi had to face this competition in physically and morally difficult conditions because of his incurable disease, renal sclerosis.

The electoral law, for which the Trentino statesman had paid so much in terms of popularity, proved vain, the centre parties having reached 49.85 votes. The instability of the centrist government had negative repercussions both in domestic policy and on the negotiations for the EDC Treaty. On June 25 1953, De Gasperi formed a new government, limiting its liability to the DC alone. During the debate in the Senate he made a strongly federalist speech, claiming that the construction of Europe would become a "third pillar between the two larger ones, and that at the decisive moment it would make the scale fall on the side of peace." Then he announced the next intergovernmental meeting, located at Baden, to examine the points that remained unsolved, in order to create "something different from America and Russia, something open, because the six are willing to accept other allies ready to build a European community" (De Gasperi, 1985, II, 1183). With a strong appeal for his federalist program, De Gasperi took his leave from the Italian Parliament. Defeated in the parliament, the government was forced to resign. It fell to Pella to gain confidence for an executive of "transition", which subordinated Italian international commitments to solving the problem of Trieste. Thus ended

De Gasperi's fruitful federalist season.

In the second half of 1953, the prospects for approval of the EDC had worsened. On July 27, with the signing of the armistice in Korea, the menacing image of the USSR began slowly to decline because of the death of Stalin. The French and Americans, who had initially supported the EDC, did not see the formation of a political Europe as a priority. Everything depended on the ratification of the EDC Treaty. France, one of the first movers, oriented itself towards the neo-Gaullist position, and rejected it with the vote of the *Assemblée nationale* on 30 August 1954. In the other European countries too, the Treaty met with outspoken resistance and strong opposition. The problem of European defence was resolved, at the proposal of the US, with the reactivation of Germany and its inclusion in the North Atlantic Treaty.

At the institutional level, the story of the EDC showed a preview of current issues. Italy played a leading role in the European integration process, suggesting the target of a federal constitution. The commitment of De Gasperi, in this direction, was decisive. At the end of his political experience, the Trentino statesman, taking stock of the past decade during the congress of the DC of March 1954, stated that "the political cooperation between the countries of the European continent was the indispensable prerequisite so that also international economic reports and social cooperation could be established, in the absence of which Italy could not hope to set about solving its fundamental problems" (Decisions, 1955, 33). Its federalism, then as now, was based on objective data: Italy could protect its national interests, within the Atlantic Pact, with the formation of a European integration policy and an institutional framework.

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## Де Гаспери и федеральные учреждения Европы

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В этой статье автор исследует роль премьер-министра Альчиде Де Гаспери в создании федеральных учреждений в Европе. В частности, исследуется его политика в области культуры, его внешнеполитические решения после Второй мировой войны, а также толчок Италии к объединению Европы в связи с его поддержкой 38-ой статьи договора ЕОС.

**Ключевые слова:** история, институциональный выбор, Европа, Де Гаспери.

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