



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Chair of History of Italian Foreign Policy

**The Italian Foreign Policy: From the failure of the EDC to the birth of
the WEU**

Supervisor

Antonio Varsori

Candidate

Gaia Proietti

Matr. 645722

Co-Supervisor

Federico Niglia

Academic Year 2021/2022

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Introduction

Ever since the launch of the Marshall Plan, Italy declared itself in favour of the process of European construction. This approach was a response to both ideal justifications and specific national objectives. The ruling political class identified itself with the ideal of European unification and simultaneously believed that Italy could be able to regain a prestigious international position within the framework of the bodies that would have been established, overcoming the trauma of fascism, the lost war, and the peace treaty. Since, moreover, the process of integration was being promoted by the United States, a constructive attitude on the Italian side would have strengthened the relationship between Rome and Washington. In the period between 1947 and 1949 European integration found expression in forms of intergovernmental cooperation, such as the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), the political-military alliance of the Brussels Pact and the Council of Europe¹.

In May 1950, the French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman, inspired by Jean Monnet, launched the idea of an integrated community in the coal and steel production sectors with a supranational character. Italy immediately joined the initiative. The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), in operation since 1952, was created as a result of the Schuman Plan, which is regarded as the true start of the integration process. Italian involvement in this initiative was influenced by economic and social motivations: the defence of the steel industry nation, represented in particular by IRI's FINSIDER, the hope in the opening of labour markets to Italian emigration and the tendency to reject the protectionist tradition in favour of the country's inclusion in a broader market. 1950 also represented a turning point in the Cold War because the outbreak of the Korean War made it a priority for the United States and Great Britain the goal of the rearmament of the Federal Republic of Germany and its inclusion in the Atlantic defence apparatus².

However, the French government rejected this prospect and considered coping with the existing situation by launching a project aimed at the creation of an integrated European army; this initiative, again inspired by Monnet, was made public in October 1950 by the French Prime Minister, René Pleven, after whom it was named, and would have quickly developed into the prospect of the creation of a European Defence Community (hereinafter EDC), on the model of

¹ | Documenti sulla Politica Internazionale dell'Italia (DPII), Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE», a cura di Francesco Lefebvre, D'Ovidio e Antonio Varsori, Roma, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Roma 2021.

² Ibid.

the constituent ECSC. The Italian reaction to the "militarization" of the Cold War had expressed itself in the support for the West's rearmament perspective through the "Military Assistance Program" (MAP). As for the Pleven Plan, Italy decided to join the negotiations promoted by France and launched in February 1951. Nevertheless, the Italian involvement in the negotiations mainly derived from its willingness to maintain good relations with France although it did not have great trust in the project itself³.

The real change occurred in the spring of 1951 when Washington became the strongest supporter of the EDC, which, moreover, was part of the American policy of achieving full integration Europe. The "Rapport intérimaire" approved by the "six" in the summer of 1951 presaged the possible creation of the EDC. Despite the prospect seemed to conflict with Italian interests for several reasons, the Italian authorities realized that it was impossible to oppose the creation of the EDC without risking of calling into question the relationship with the United States and the image of Italy as a nation committed to the integration process. These contradictions were resolved by De Gasperi who proposed to transform the EDC into the premise of a new phase of political integration with a federal character; this gave rise to the hypothesis of providing in the future EDC treaty a mechanism that should have almost automatically led to the birth of a European Political Community (EPC). The European commitment by De Gasperi, which was in a federalist sense, found a positive response from the representatives of the other nations involved in the Paris negotiations, particularly in Schuman and the German Chancellor Adenauer⁴.

Thanks to the Italian initiative, the founding treaty of the EDC, signed in May 1952, provided in Article 38 that, once the realization of the EDC would have been achieved, negotiations for the birth of the CPE would be initiated. In the fall of that year De Gasperi obtained from the European partners that, without waiting for the entry into force of the Community, the appropriately enlarged Common Assembly of the ECSC - the so-called "Ad Hoc Assembly" - could begin the work intended for the drafting of the EPC treaty. Between late 1952 and early 1953, Degasperi's project came to face a series of obstacles, both on the national and international level. From the international point of view, in November 1952 the Republicans won the US presidential election; the new Eisenhower administration confirmed the implementation of the EDC as a fundamental goal of American foreign policy; however, the approach became much more assertive towards the European allies, who were pushed to achieve the ratification of the Treaty of Paris rapidly.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

Meanwhile, the very approval of the agreement was encountering difficulties within the signatory countries, partly due to the propaganda of pacifist movements, such as the "partisans of peace." In France, in particular, the question, known as the "querelle de la EDC" ended up dividing not only the politicians, but also public opinion as a whole, creating a climate defined similar to the "Dreyfus affair." Moreover, following Stalin's death in March 1953, the period called "the first détente" started and this weakened, especially in France, the front in support of the EDC; moreover, at the Quai d'Orsay Schuman was replaced by Georges Bidault, by then sceptical of supranational integration, and, in particular, on the draft of the EPC, just while the work of the ad hoc Assembly was progressing. In Great Britain, too, Prime Minister Winston Churchill became a promoter of the dialogue with Moscow, what would make him go down in history as a "man of peace" after having been the country's wartime leader. As for Italy, De Gasperi continued to focus on the EPC, but had to face the propaganda of the social-communist left, which presented the EDC as the rebirth of the "Wehrmacht" and German militarism. In this context, the unresolved question of Trieste, perceived as an example of a weak and renunciatory foreign policy, "subservient" to American interests, did not contribute to strengthen those in favour of the EDC⁵. In addition, De Gasperi, faced with the growing difficulties of keeping the centrist formula alive, bet on a majoritarian electoral law - soon dubbed as "fraud law" by the oppositions - which, in the hopes of the Italian leader, could have guaranteed stable parliamentary majorities. In this climate characterized by strong controversy and with elections now just around the corner, De Gasperi felt unable to present the EDC treaty in Parliament, having begun, among other things, to suffer the first pressures from the new U.S. representative in Rome, Ambassador Clare Boothe Luce, whose goal was to push the Christian Democrat political class to a greater commitment to the struggle against the PCI⁶.

Starting from this period, this dissertation intends to provide an analysis of the historical path that led to the failure of the EDC and to the birth of the Western European Organization (hereinafter WEU); more precisely the first chapter deals with the Pella and Scelba governments and the increasing problems that were affecting the French ratification of the Treaty, in particular after the arrival of Mendès-France. Meanwhile Italy was adopting a "wait and see" attitude in terms of the ratification. The second chapter deals with the period immediately following the failure of the EDC, analysing the various perceptions of the actors involved and the arrival of the British initiative, namely the Eden Plan, strongly backed by the United States. The chapter

⁵ See also Fursdon D., *The European Defence Community. A History*, London, Mcmillan, 1980.

⁶ I Documenti sulla Politica Internazionale dell'Italia (DPII), Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE».

concludes with the appointment of the liberal Gaetano Martino as Foreign Minister and the London Conference. The third chapter starts with the Paris conference which determined, among other things, the birth of WEU. The chapter also provides a specific analysis of the question of the “pool of armaments”, and the Italian Neo-Atlantism. The fourth and final chapter examines the period immediately following, demonstrating how the integration on the military side was revealing ephemeral and a new front, the economic one, was beginning to be considered, leading progressively to the Messina Conference and the subsequent Treaties of Rome in 1957. All these events produced a considerable change in the image of Italy, which became an industrial nation thanks to the economic growth and finally stabilized its role as a middle-rank power, which acts and tries to impose it-self through other means such as economics and diplomacy. To provide the analysis of this historical period, which is often overlooked, this thesis uses secondary literature as well as primary sources. Regarding the latter, great use has been certainly made of innovative sources, namely the Diplomatic Documents on the International Politics of Italy; three volumes have been particularly considered: the volume on the failure of the EDC and the CPE: from the reunion of Baden-Baden to the Conference of Brussels (June, 25, 1953 – August 31, 1954), the volume on the London Conference and the WEU (September 1, 1954 – March 31, 1955) and the volume on the relaunch of Europe, from the Messina Conference to the Treaties of Rome (April 2, 1955-March 25, 1957). The second volume will be published shortly. This dissertation also uses historical documents of The Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS).

Chapter 1: The EDC: from the initial obstacles to the definitive failure

1.1 The starting process towards the ratification

When it came to the ratification of the EDC, several members among the ranks of Italian diplomacy began to show less confidence in the achievement of a successful outcome. However, these circumstances did not alter the attitude of Alcide De Gasperi, who manifested his confidence in the process in a meeting of Foreign Ministers in Rome in February 1953, during which he admitted that "the Italian Government faces a problem of times in relation to the next general elections", but, at the same time, he showed himself "ready to face such difficulties for the ratification of the EDC"⁷.

However, following the elections for the second Republican legislature, held on June 7-8, 1953, De Gasperi's position weakened even among the ranks of the Christian Democracy; the new government formed by the Trentino exponent remained in office for little more than a month, then was forced to resign. The task to form an executive was then entrusted by President Einaudi to Giuseppe Pella. During De Gasperi's brief tenure at the head of the government after the elections, the Christian Democrat statesman attempted to encourage the continuation of the process that should have led to genuine negotiations on the EPC on the basis of the work of the Ad Hoc Assembly. This aspiration clashed, however, with the ministerial crisis and with the coldness of the government in Paris, particularly the Foreign Minister, Bidault. The French government, on the other hand, doubted the presence of a parliamentary majority in favour of the EDC treaty and had embarked on a "wait-and-see" strategy in the hope that the development of relations with Moscow could make the rearmament of Germany unnecessary; it also increasingly tied the ratification of the EDC to the growing American support for the war that France was waging in Indochina against the forces of the Viet Minh, causing increasing irritation on the part of Washington towards Paris. The ambiguous French attitude was well understood by the Italian ambassador to the transalpine capital, Quaroni, who expressed scepticism about the fate of both the EDC and the EPC.

⁷ A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d'Europa. L'Italia e l'integrazione europea dal 1946 ad oggi*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubettino, 2010, pp. 108-109; "il Governo italiano ha di fronte a sé un problema di tempi in relazione alle prossime elezioni politiche", ma si mostrava "pronto ad affrontare tali difficoltà per la ratifica della CED". On this subject, see also Piero Craveri, *De Gasperi*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2006.

As far as the Pella Government was concerned, despite being characterized by a composition which was totally Christian Democrat, this new Italian executive was considered as a transitional Government within which the President of the Council also covered the interim of Foreign Affairs. Since the beginning, Pella appeared to embrace a nationalist foreign policy; indeed, he concentrated more on the position and relations of Rome in the context of the Balkans (primarily on the discussions concerning the Free Territory of Trieste while adopting an harsh contraposition towards Yugoslavia), putting the issues related to the European integration in the background and using the question of the ratification of the EDC as an instrument to advance the resolution of the issue of Trieste⁸. In this context, it is certain that the reduction of the influence exercised by De Gasperi (although being appointed as Secretary of the Christian Democracy) represented a difficult step in view of the procedure of ratification of the EDC, which continued with different developments and outcomes within the other five States signatories to the Treaty.

Concerning the situation within the Federal Republic of Germany, it must be noted that the overwhelming success achieved by Adenauer at the elections of 1953 made the climate more serene and this certainly favoured the advancement of the integration with the ratification of the Treaty, carried out by the Bundestag. In this regard, the United States Observer to the Interim Committee of the European Defence Community, Bruce, wrote to the United States Department of State that “Adenauer’s magnificent victory should enable us to create situation forcing French Government to present EDC for ratification this fall⁹”. He then stressed the necessity to begin immediately to help resolve those remaining conditions that the French Government had explicitly or implicitly established to the ratification of the EDC treaty. Several points emerged: firstly, on Saar problem, he invited the Chancellor to negotiate at Laniel/Bidault level as soon as possible, recognizing however, that French-German agreement on Saar could be very difficult if Quai d’Orsay officials, rather than Cabinet Ministers, were responsible for negotiations and also if they persisted in “their efforts to base treaty for European political community on coalition rather than on supranational approach¹⁰”; secondly, he recognized that special provisions for support costs for French forces in Germany within the framework of the EDC could represent time-consuming negotiation. Thus, the German EDC delegation should have demonstrated itself to be likely to make concrete

⁸ A. Varsori, *Dalla rinascita al declino; Storia internazionale dell'Italia repubblicana*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2022, pp. 168-169.

⁹ Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Western European Security, Volume V, Part I, 740.5/9-853: Telegram from the the United States Observer to the Interim Committee of the European Defence Community, Bruce, wrote to the United States Department of State.

¹⁰ Ibid.

proposals giving French forces a status for nine months along lines of that foreseen for French in contractual agreements. Moreover, an understanding on related problem of support costs for British and United States forces for a period of nine months after implementation of EDC treaty should have been reached before the EDC treaty could be ratified; thirdly, the German EDC delegation should have submitted immediately concrete proposals to the EDC interim committee on organization and procedures granting efficient receipt of end-item aid destined for EDC forces of German origin from the first day the EDC treaty would have gone into effect; fourthly, he recognized that draft bilateral agreement between United States and EDC on end-item assistance was substantially completed. However, he considered it more appropriate to delay final agreement until the United States would have obtained concrete proposal from EDC interim committee on how end-item assistance, particularly that destined for forces of German origin, was to be handled during immediate period after ratification; as a fifth point, he also stressed that an understanding on conditions of protocol for the Great Britain association with the EDC had been substantially reached but still needed to be drafted in its final form. Before the protocol was actually signed, it was also necessary to take final position on the question related to make duration of NATO treaty identical with that of EDC. Especially after the British support for immediate ratification of the EDC treaty had been firmly established, Bruce underlined the importance to explore means of bringing the combined influence to bear on early resolution of questions which could represent an obstacle to the ratification or implementation of EDC treaty; he also recognized that failure in negotiations to create the EPC could jeopardize prospects of French ratification. Nevertheless, it was inadvisable to press for any concrete agreement on the EPC “until unequivocal support of French Cabinet for a treaty based on a strong executive with supranational powers had been brought to bear on Quai d’Orsay officials conducting negotiations¹¹”; finally, major obstruction to ratification continuously stressed by French should have been removed by the agreement of the United States to provide additional help to French in the war in Indochina. According to Bruce, it could be possible, in those negotiations, to obtain a definite commitment from the French Government (possibly expressed in a written instrument separate from the Indochina statement) that they would have proceeded with the vote on the ratification in the fall. Indeed, the United States administration was unable to obtain the necessary support from Congress in finding later funds for Indochina if further procrastination by France prevented the creation and the implementation of a firm European policy; the French Government had to be aware of that. Moreover, a pledge of this sort from the French

¹¹ Ibid.

Government, whether written not oral, would have strengthened the position of the EDC proponents in the Cabinet against any possible later malingering in the Quai d'Orsay¹².

At the same time, the first more dubious nations, such as Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, began to show hopeful indicators as well. However, the situation appeared to be critical in France, that, increasingly divided on the issue, was suffering the very strong pressure exercised by the American administration, which was expressed publicly in the statement of the Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, who threatened the failure of the EDC with an *agonizing reappraisal* of the US commitment to the defence of Western Europe. Nevertheless, the doubts about the French willingness to bring the Treaty on the EDC to the attention of the National Assembly, were increasing. In January 1954, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Count Vittorio Zoppi, asked Quaroni for an opinion on the EDC affair and on the attitude that Italy should have adopted. With his habitual realism, the ambassador in Paris expressed doubts about the passage of the Treaty to the French Parliament; nevertheless, he was in favour of the ratification of Italy, adding that: "having said that, I really don't think it is the case that we make our own proposals: that we are accused of EDC inactivity does not make me lose sleep: the importance is that we save of Europe what can be saved and that we save the Atlantic Pact¹³".

Because of the several issues that affected the ratification process of the EDC, even some members of Italian diplomacy began to wonder about a possible reversal of it. These changes were further aided by Pella's resignation and the establishment of a new government in February 1954 under the leadership of the Christian Democrat Mario Scelba and his partner party, Attilio Piccioni at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs¹⁴. It can be stated that with the fall of the Pella Government, the attempt to explicitly link the ratification of the EDC to the solution of the Trieste problem ended. Scelba was a man who had been always close to De Gasperi and he made the attempt to continue from Palazzo Chigi the foreign policy of the politician from Trentino. In this sense, he demonstrated to be in favour of the ratification of the treaty and the completion of the process at the basis of the establishment of the EDC and the EPC. In fact, in the presentation speech of the new Government to the Chambers, on February 18, 1954, Scelba announced that the Council of Ministers, in its first meeting, had "confirmed the decision to ask the Parliament to discuss and decide on the ratification of the Treaty for the

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ivi; "Detto questo, non credo veramente che sia il caso che noi avanziamo proposte nostre: che ci si accusi di immobilismo CED non mi fa perdere il sonno: l'importanza è che si salvi dell'Europa quello che si può salvare e che si salvi il Patto Atlantico".

¹⁴ Ivi.

European Defence Community in the near future”¹⁵. The ratification procedure was therefore initiated in Parliament; this was also because De Gasperi had started again to exert influence on the new executive, but in a slow and methodical manner as to monitor France's developments and make adjustments as necessary.

To this commitment, however, it was linked that for the solution of the question of Trieste since the Government was convinced that “the Community of the peoples of which we are part¹⁶” could be strengthened even further if the “mutual solidarity and understanding of the vital interests of its components¹⁷” had to be demonstrated and to this idea it would have inspired its own action “to finally reach that solution of justice of the problem of the Free Territory of Trieste, reclaimed by the country and towards which the soul of the whole nation is addressed¹⁸”. In the same sense Scelba expressed himself in a letter of March 27 to the United States Secretary of State, Dulles. Indeed, in this letter he declared that the Italian Government was firmly convinced of the essential function of the EDC as a fundamental element of the defence of the free world, confirming therefore the necessity that the relative Treaty had to be ratified as soon as possible by the Parliaments of the countries involved in the process. However, he also illustrated some objective considerations, as well as some risks that could arise in the process and in the country, if the same discussion was not preceded by a settlement of the problem of the Free Territory of Trieste or at least through the implementation of the decision of October 8¹⁹. He also ensured that the majority of the Italian public opinion was in favour of the EDC, but it was exactly “the very strength of the circumstances that led to consider the problem of ratification in relation to the situation currently existing at the eastern border²⁰”. According to his perspective, the Italian public opinion was not in fact able to convince itself that the EDC was destined to realize an effective defence against the danger of an armed aggression against free Europe, considering that the

¹⁵ Documenti sulla politica internazionale dell'Italia, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE», p. XXIV; “confermato la decisione di chiedere al Parlamento che prossimamente discuta e deliberi la ratifica del trattato per la Comunità europea di difesa”.

¹⁶ Ivi, p. XXVI; “la Comunità dei popoli di cui facciamo parte”.

¹⁷ Ibid; “la reciproca solidarietà e comprensione degli interessi vitali di ciascuno dei suoi componenti”.

¹⁸ Ibid; “per raggiungere finalmente quella soluzione di giustizia del problema del Territorio Libero di Trieste, reclamata dal Paese e verso il quale si rivolge l'animo di tutta la nazione”.

¹⁹ The decision of October 8, 1953 was the Anglo-American decision to return the administration of Zone A of the Free Territory of Trieste (FTT) to Italy. To further explore the question of Trieste, see De Leonardis M., *La “diplomazia atlantica” e la soluzione del problema di Trieste (1952-1954)*, ESI, Napoli 1992, and De Castro D., *La questione di Trieste. L'azione politica e diplomatica italiana dal 1943 al 1954*, 2 voll., LINT, Trieste 1981.

²⁰ DPII, Serie A, Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE», n° 160, Letter from the President of the Council, Scelba, to the Secretary of State of United States, Dulles; “la forza stessa delle circostanze la porta a considerare il problema della ratifica in rapporto con la situazione oggi esistente alla frontiera orientale”.

Yugoslav governments succeeded in inducing two major Atlantic powers to suspend the implementation of the decision of October 8. As regards to the parliamentary field, according to Scelba, the failure to settle the Trieste problem would have resulted in forcing the Government, for the ratification of the EDC, to fight on two fronts: the right and the left. That scenario implied that, for the ratification itself, the Government should have relied only on the parties of the then coalition that disposed, in the Chamber, of just 15 majority votes. By contrast, a problem such as the one of the EDC, whose implications were extremely relevant in terms of the long-term commitment that it entailed as well as the constitutional problems, deserved an approval carried out with the widest possible majority and with the accession also of political and parliamentary forces that were not part of the then coalition Government²¹. That became even more relevant taking account that, in the Government majority itself, there were authoritative personalities who had previously expressed the conviction that the solution of the problem of Trieste had to be prioritized when it came to the ratification of the EDC. Therefore, there could be even the possibility that that the same majority of which the four governing parties disposed in Parliament, could shrink further or even become uncertain when it came to the final approval of the treaty establishing the EDC.

Scelba also warned that the non-application by the allies of the decision of October 8 would have offered to the social-communist opposition the most effective tool of propaganda as the extreme left would have accused the government of weakness and of being incapable to protect the national interests, whose major expression for the Italian public opinion was exactly the question of Trieste. The disappointment towards the non-resolution of the Trieste question was increasing also because of the difficult situation in which the Italians found themselves in Zone B, temporarily occupied by the Yugoslavs; that situation had already been recognized as unsustainable by the allies in 1948 and that had since then been further aggravating, resulting in a continuous exodus of Italians driven to escape the persecution of the communist dictatorship²². In front of this hard scenario, Scelba stressed that the implementation of the decision of October 8 could radically change the psychological, parliamentary and political situation, and could have even marked a decisive turning point in the course of Italian domestic policy²³. Therefore, the Italian Government's request was quite straightforward: it explicitly demanded the allies to execute the commitment made by the solemn decision of October 8 to transfer «de facto» to Italy the administration of zone A, thus

²¹ Ibid.

²² On the question of the exodus see Pupo R., *Il lungo esodo. Istria: le persecuzioni, le foibe, l'esilio*, Bur Rizzoli, Milano 2006

²³ Ibid.

establishing, above all, the premises for the achievement of a peaceful and agreed final solution of the problem. Moreover, in order to facilitate the implementation of this decision and the position of the allies vis-à-vis the Yugoslavs, the Italian Government was also available to make a formal commitment not to resort to any act of force to modify the state of affairs created between Italy and Yugoslavia in the Free Territory of Trieste²⁴. To conclude, Scelba's perspective in this letter attributed an enormous responsibility to the allies to obtain a rapid ratification of the EDC in the Italian domestic framework, as well as to consolidate the level of democracy in the country itself.

In a letter²⁵ wrote by Tarchiani, the Italian Ambassador to the United States, to Piccioni, the former made it clear that it had stressed to Dulles that the slowness of the discussions concerning Trieste that were taking place in London and the possibility of an unsatisfactory result could largely affect the possibility of a rapid ratification of the treaty in Italy. He also added, confirming the position already adopted by Scelba, that the execution of the decision of October 8, or if possible, an even more satisfactory solution, was the only base on which the Government could set and win the battle for the EDC with the help of the public opinion or with an appropriate parliamentary majority. However, Tarchiani expressed a pessimistic view as regards to the results of the London conversations about the Trieste question; indeed, he expressed his doubts regarding the possibility that those conversations had led, at least until that moment, to a draft solution almost equivalent to the decision of October 8. Some British indications that he collected suggested him that there was the possibility of a much worse proposal or some dilatory formula, contemplating an attempt to return to the project of the conference, as the correspondence of the «New York Times» of March 27 could imply²⁶. Furthermore, he admitted that, based on the surveys that he conducted on those days, he could infer that the letter from the President of the Council, whose content was previously analysed, had the effect of «blocking» such a communication. Therefore, as for the reply of the Secretary of State, that the State Department announced as next, it was likely to include a reference to the Yugoslav demands without an American «endorsement» to them, if that appeared to be in contrast to Italy's minimum needs. Moreover, Tarchiani expressed his belief regarding the fact that, in the immediate future and without new elements coming into play, the definitive solution offered by the allies would have only consisted in “nothing more than annexation of

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ DPII, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE», DD n° 167, Letter from the Ambassador in Washington, Tarchiani, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni.

²⁶ Ibid.

the city²⁷”. At the same time, the Ambassador recognized that the Italian internal situation exercised a relevant influence on the problem of Trieste to the point of determining a kind of reversal of responsibilities; in this sense, the Italians felt obliged to re-acquire consideration to the eyes of the Americans in their fight against communism.

After these premises, Tarchiani came to the question of major relevance, i.e., the time of the ratification of the treaty of the EDC. In this regard, the first possible option consisted in ratifying immediately the treaty and postponing indefinitely the solution of the Trieste problem; this would have occurred in the confidence that such ratification and other domestic policy initiatives of the Italian Government would have risen the image of the Italians in front of the Americans, pushing them to pursue the best possible solution for the Trieste question. By contrast, the second option consisted in suspending the ratification of the EDC until the solution of the problem of Trieste would have not been obtained.

Regarding Tarchiani’s position, despite being for long time in favour of the second option, he admitted that there were several aspects of foreign policy that made the first solution the most appropriate one. Behind this statement there was certainly a concern about a possible cooling of the Italians relations with Washington; he came even to the prospect of the threat of an interruption of the program "Off-Shore Procurements" in the event that Rome did not ratify the EDC²⁸. However, Tarchiani also recognised that the Italian domestic situation did not allow to make a choice: if the Italian Government, whatever the wishes of its leaders, was not in a position to make the country accept a policy of intensified cooperation with the West (which would be a natural consequence of the EDC) without a concrete demonstration of solidarity from part of the West in a vital problem for Italy such as the question of Trieste, the most appropriate path to follow was to explicitly state the impossibility of a rapid ratification instead of raising expectations that could not be satisfied. This acquired even more relevance considering that, for what concerns the Italian-American relations, certain actions of the Italian government as well as certain attitudes of the Republican Administration (including the position of Ms. Luce) determined the accentuation of the concerns of the moderate and democratic opposition against the EDC and, at the same time, those actions gave a strong tool of propaganda to the communist opposition and the extremist groups. Among these phenomena, Tarchiani recalled for instance the publication of the memorandum drafted by the American journalists after the famous lunch at the Mayflower Hotel; all the troubles related to the «Off-Shore Procurements»; the claim to include in the Italian-American agreements few

²⁷ Ivi: “nulla più che l’annessione della città”.

²⁸ A. Varsori (2022), op. cit; p. 170.

dignified clauses; the nature of the American press campaigns on Italy; the expeditious and often unfair procedures as regards the distribution of arms and the study of strategic plans; the silence on the Balkan military arrangements and other actions²⁹. In Tarchiani's view, these, as well as other similar phenomena, certainly contributed to make more difficult to maintain a certain level of confidence towards the United States and they increased the power and the credibility of their enemies.

As suggested by Quaroni, the most appropriate path in order to reacquire prestige was that of giving a new spirit to the activity of the Italian government, by fighting more vigorously the communism. On the other hand it appeared essential to make clear to the Americans that the Italian Government could be able to pursue its goals all the more easily without being "awkwardly and publicly incited to do so"³⁰; at the same time, it is necessary to stress that, in any case, an immediate ratification of the EDC in the face of a weak action of the Americans towards Tito, would have not certainly strengthened the Government. Tarchiani also admitted to agree with Quaroni by pointing out that the diplomatic action of the last September represented the only one which had a positive effect, albeit not decisive. By contrast, the extremely conciliatory attitude that was adopted in November following the threats of Tito and the Anglo-American vacillations and the Conference draft (an attitude approved and even recommended by Tarchiani himself) did not produce some progress for Italy as regards to the resolution of the question of Trieste and at the same time it caused several steps back in the relations with the United States.

For all these reasons, Tarchiani acknowledged the initiative of the President of the Council as extremely appropriate and timely. It was therefore the moment to see whether the Americans would have kept faith to the decision of October 8 or found an alternative in the form of an acceptable solution. If they were not able to comply to this task, it would have become quite difficult for them to follow simultaneously, with regard to Italy, two conflicting policies: the first consisting in requiring from Italy a full and unconditional cooperation, while the other based on subordinating every Italian interest to the needs of a process involving the gradual insertion of Yugoslavia in the Western bloc.

²⁹ DPII, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE», DD n° 167, Letter from the Ambassador in Washington, Tarchiani, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni.

³⁰ Ivi; "goffamente e pubblicamente incitato a farlo".

The answer of Dulles to Scelba soon arrived in a letter³¹ where, since the beginning, the Secretary of State demonstrated his appreciation for the frank and clear tone of the Italian representative. First of all, Dulles confirmed the assurances reported by Tarchiani that the American government viewed the solution of the Trieste question not only to be of fundamental importance for Italy and for Yugoslavia, but also for the American government itself. Therefore, he totally recognized the necessity and the interest of its government to elaborate a satisfactory solution for Italy and Yugoslavia in the most rapid and effective way. This is confirmed by the efforts that were underway in London for the research of the basis of a solution, with the perspective to include in these discussions also the Italian representatives in the near future³².

Dulles also recognized to perceive the conviction of the Italian government about the necessity for the ratification of the EDC treaty in order to achieve the permanent security and stability of the Member States of the Community and Western Europe as a whole. He also admitted being aware that the circumstances in which the debate on the ratification of the EDC was occurring would have been improved through the achievement of a rapid and effective solution to the Trieste problem, for which he ensured once again the commitment of the United States. In any case, according to his view, it could be inferred from the Berlin Conference and from the subsequent events that, more than ever, the creation of the European Defence Community represented the decisive turning point in the battle conducted by the North Atlantic Community “to permanently halt the advance of the Soviet Imperialism and to strengthen the cause of the European Unit³³”. He also recommended the Italian Prime Minister to use the majority, however modest it could be, which supported his government, in order to consolidate Italy’s place in the Community of Six.

In those same days, Dulles reported to the United States Department of State about his meeting with Eden, held on April 12³⁴. During that meeting, he recognized the seriousness of the problems related to France and the EDC question. He also admitted to fear that France had reached a position where government was no longer capable of taking hard decisions required of a great power and that there was the possibility that this weakness would have generated a vacuum in Asia, Africa and the continent into which their enemies could be tempted to move.

³¹ DP/II, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE», DD n° 171, Letter from the Secretary of State of United States, Dulles, to the President of the Council, Scelba.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ivi.: “per arrestare durevolmente l’avanzata dell’Imperialismo sovietico e per rafforzare la causa dell’Unità Europea”.

³⁴ Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Western European Security, Volume V, Part 1, 740.5/4-1354: Telegram from the US Secretary of State, Dulles, to the US Department of State.

Furthermore, he expressed to Eden that the United States were not able find an alternative to the EDC and that time was of the utmost importance, particularly with the growing restlessness of Germans. Eden confirmed his conviction that there was no good alternative to the EDC. He also referred to have been adverted that certain Frenchmen were thinking in terms of admitting Germany to NATO, subject, however, unilaterally to restrictions of the EDC treaty. This perspective seemed unrealistic to both Dulles and Eden. The latter, on this point, suggested that a possible solution could be that of brining Germany directly into NATO and indicated that he was far from certain that the French would have vetoed such action if they rejected EDC. The closing note of the discussion was Eden's statement that he knew of "no better hole" than the EDC³⁵.

However, it is important to underline that during the XIII reunion of the Atlantic Council of April 23³⁶, 1954, which took place at the Palais de Chaillot, no mention of the eastern frontier was made. As the General Director of the International Cooperation, Massimo Magistrati reported, the conference, which was called, for its brevity, the «Flash Conference» was characterized by a purely political content given that, on the immediate eve of the Geneva conference on the Far East, it had to represent the appropriate forum for a high-level exchange of ideas among the Representatives of the Allied Countries.

The report written by Magistrati did not appear to contain any truly new items or any issue capable of arousing particular reactions and discussions: the Organization, which had celebrated in those days its fifth anniversary since the conclusion of the Pact, on April 4, 1949, was definitively constituted in all its elements and in all its Committees and Working Groups and it was prompt to go ahead with its work without excessive issues. As for the purely political action, which was largely constituted by the collection and the examination of the news and the information relating to the development of the action and intentions of the Soviet bloc, a new report, compiled by the Secretariat itself and approved by the allied countries, allowed to know and follow in detail the work carried out by the Kremlin Government in the year following the death of the Soviet dictator³⁷.

However, the question of the approval of the EDC and the specific problem of the ratification of the Treaty of Paris of 1952 by France and Italy were not the subject of a concrete discussion during the meeting. Indeed, differently from had happened in the Session of the last

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ DPII, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE», DD n° 181, Note taken by the General Director of the International Cooperation, Magistrati.

³⁷ Ibid.

December, Dulles, in virtue of his experience and to avoid putting in difficulty the Government of France on the eve of the delicate Conference of Geneva, did not ask precise questions on the issue. Nevertheless, the Atlantic Council, in demonstrating its satisfaction towards the recent ratification of the EDC Treaty that occurred in Belgium, in the Netherlands and in Luxemburg, stressed the importance of the decisions that had been recently taken by the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States on their cooperation with that Community. In fact, that was occurring with the view of establishing clear foundations for their close and lasting association for the defence of the European continent. On this subject, the Minister Piccioni, in confirming that the Government of Rome had presented again the Treaty of Paris before the Parliament for the ratification, he added: “the Italian Government considers the European Community as a fundamental achievement of the European policy that has been pursuing for years. The Government, therefore, intends to do everything which is possible to ensure that the procedure that allows Italy to join the countries that have already ratified the agreements is complemented without unnecessary delay. In this regard, everything that the governments of the friendly countries will be able, for their part, to do in order to allow the difficulties still existing to be overcome and to obtain, in particular, that the parliamentary and democratic public opinion can reunite around the Italian Government in its pro-European policy, will make a very positive contribution to our common cause³⁸”.

The question of the EDC had, finally, being retackled in the XIII meeting (and especially in the short «secret» afternoon session at which only the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Permanent Representatives and some very few members of their staff took part); in this context, it was mentioned the interesting debate recently arisen in some countries about the pairing in time between the Atlantic Pact and the Paris Treaty of 1952. This derived from the fact that, while the EDC Treaty explicitly provided for a duration of 50 years, the Atlantic Pact provided that, at the end of the twentieth year from its signature, each contracting country was free to announce its withdrawal from the Organization. Moreover, the United Kingdom and the United States recently ensured their commitment, always and if the EDC was ratified and implemented, to ensure that their participation in the Atlantic Alliance was prolonged «indefinitely» and that was beyond the twentieth year. With such insurance, the French doubt

³⁸ Ivi, “Il Governo italiano considera la Comunità Europea quale una realizzazione fondamentale della politica europeista che esso persegue da anni. Il Governo, quindi, intende fare tutto il possibile perché la procedura atta a permettere all’Italia di unirsi ai Paesi che hanno già ratificato gli Accordi, sia completata senza inutili ritardi. A tale proposito tutto quanto i Governi dei Paesi amici potranno, per parte loro, compiere per consentire che le difficoltà tuttora esistenti siano sormontate e perché, in particolare, l’opinione parlamentare e pubblica democratica italiana possa riunirsi sempre più intorno al Governo nella sua politica europeista, formerà una contribuzione oltremodo positiva alla nostra causa comune”.

of seeing the EDC at a certain moment abandoned to itself and to an increasing German influence no longer existed. The discussion on this question, about which also Minister Piccioni confirmed that in Italy the Atlantic Pact was considered a diplomatic instrument with an “indefinite” time, did not lead to any precise resolution but, however, it created the feeling that indeed those French concerns were destined be useless as the Atlantic Alliance seemed intentioned to work and act without time limitations and therefore in a permanent combination with the EDC. As previously anticipated, at the meeting, no mention was made of the Balkan pact and its connections with NATO nor about the delicate question of Trieste³⁹.

However, as a matter of fact, the two issues (the EDC and the issue of Trieste) remained linked by a conditioning relationship. In the meeting⁴⁰ between Scelba, Piccioni and Dulles which took place in Villa Carminati in Gallarate, on May 3, 1954, the Italian Prime Minister, while stating that the Government kept the issue of Trieste separate from that of the ratification of the EDC, he also noted that the two issues were related and that there was an enormous risk in advancing a parliamentary action before the question of Trieste was resolved satisfactorily. Indeed, the urgency, recognized by the Italian Government, to bring into force the EDC, also highlighted the necessity for an urgent solution of the problem of Trieste, with regard to which the Italian Government could not accept, as a provisional solution, a solution less favourable than that offered to the previous Government on October 8. A less favourable solution, indeed, would have resulted in a defeat in the international arena and, consequently, in a serious loss of prestige. “And without prestige it is not possible to govern and much less to lead an effective resistance to communism⁴¹”.

Regarding this meeting, the United States Ambassador in Italy, Luce reported to the Department that, despite the necessity to deal with broader aspects of international problems, “Scelba spent most of his time discussing Trieste⁴²”. More precisely, the Italian leader brought out some relevant points: he pointed out the absolute necessity that all democratic nations could stick together to fight the Communist menace and that “what was needed was actions not words”. He also stated that, despite having a parliamentary majority of only 8 deputies, he

³⁹ See Caroli G., *L'Italia e il Patto Balcanico, 1951-1955. Una sfida diplomatica fra Nato e Mediterraneo*, FrancoAngeli, Milano 2011.

⁴⁰ Documenti sulla politica internazionale dell'Italia, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «II Fallimento della CED and della CPE», DD n° 187, Secret note on the Discussion of the President of the Council, Scelba and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni, with the Secretary of State of the United States, Dulles.

⁴¹ Ivi: “E senza prestigio non si può governare e tanto meno condurre una efficace resistenza al comunismo”. See also Preda D., *Sulla soglia dell'unione. La vicenda della Comunità politica europea (1952-1954)*, Jaca Book, Milano 1994.

⁴² Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Western European Security, Volume V, Part 1; 611.65/5-454: Telegram from the Ambassador in Italy (Luce) to the US Department of State.

would have continued De Gasperi's firm policy for NATO and EDC, adding that Italy had done much in the military field as proof of her adherence to the Atlantic Community; secondly, on the question of Trieste, the solution of this problem would have greatly helped the progress toward the EDC and the European Community. Scelba clarified that, unless the Trieste question was solved satisfactorily for the Italian public and the Parliament, it would have been impossible to pass the EDC despite the government and the democratic parties were fully aware of its importance. It was indeed impossible to separate the two questions because of internal political factors. Scelba also admitted that the urgency of the Trieste question was due to the lack of implementation of the decision of October 8, as Italian public opinion did not understand the delay in that regard. Other issues were also discussed such as Italian economic situation, the hydrogen bomb and the Balkan pact. On his part, Dulles brought the following points: firstly, he had received good impression of vigorous and realistic policies being followed by Scelba's Government and his anti-Communist moves; secondly, he was pleased to learn views of both governments on the Communist danger were similar. In this sense, the Secretary pointed out that the Kremlin had formed "monolithic, highly-disciplined groupings of some 800 million persons, and was trying now to expand its control, particularly in Southeast Asia". The Soviet type of enforced unity called for vigorous efforts, for voluntary unity by others which implied voluntary sacrifices, many of which US had already made in trying to assist its allies financially and militarily since the post-war period. "Unless Europe voluntarily is united, it might well be united in the Communist fashion", which would have also included Italy; thirdly, Secretary stated that there was rising discouragement in the United States because of apparent lack of European unit. Many Americans were feeling that the economic idea which had been provided by the United States since the beginning was not achieving its purpose, namely the unification of Europe. Indeed, some argued that the only solution to foster unity could be to stop providing US economic aid "so that force of reality and consequences would cause Europeans on their own to unity". Evidently, there was great disappointment in the United States over the slow progress regarding the EDC ratification by Italy and France. Europe was facing a critical situation; vigorous steps to unify were necessary before the situation could degenerate. Further discussions concerned the facilities agreement and Scelba's request for greater cooperation in coordinating anti-Communist propaganda⁴³.

The line that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs followed in this new phase consisted in the decision taken at a ministerial meeting on January 25, 1954, during which the position on the

⁴³ Ibid.

project of economic integration was made explicit, following a note⁴⁴ from the General Directorate for Economic Affairs. During this meeting, important points emerged: firstly, regarding the French policy of reducing the supranational power already granted to the existing or envisaged bodies of the ECSC and the EDC, the Undersecretary and Christian Democrat Lodovico Benvenuti, a committed federalist, reiterated that the Italian attitude remained not to accept such reductions and therefore not to step back from the EDC and the ECSC.

From a general perspective, it was confirmed the intention to follow the directive according to which, it was necessary not to step back from the «Europeanist» position taken by Italy. That was also because that tactical position had already brought some positive results which were testified, for instance, by the case of the Dutch approach to the Italian thesis on the Second Chamber. Certainly, only the development of the works could advise the opportunity to access those positions which appeared to the Italian government still less acceptable within the framework of the overall structure of the future Community. Secondly, as regards to the problem of the need for the preliminary investiture of the Executive by the Chamber of Peoples, the Undersecretary noted that the Italian Government's position could be closer to that of the Belgian, French, Dutch and Luxembourg delegations in order to facilitate an agreement on an issue which he considered of fundamental importance. Thirdly, it was assessed that it was still too soon for an in-depth discussion of the question of the distribution of seats because of its enormous political importance. The Italian attitude towards this issue was closely linked to the problem of the general structure of the organs and to the attributions and powers of the future Community. To understand this, it is useful to remember the reasons that pushed the Italian government to accept the weightings for the ECSC and the EDC. It was certainly difficult for the Italian government to present before the Parliament an agreement which acted in a too discriminatory way in favour of the electors of the small powers. With the awareness of the impossibility of obtaining the strictly proportional principle, the Italian government could not even accept a system where the Italian weight was less than the sum of the Benelux countries. In view of the complexity of the issue, the Undersecretary recognized that, in that precise phase of the process of integration, it was more appropriate that the Italian Delegation addressed that issue not in the Committee debate but through a cautious operation of rapprochement with the other Delegations in the corridor, with particular regard to the German Delegation, in order to gather each possible useful element of

⁴⁴ Documenti sulla politica internazionale dell'Italia, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «II Fallimento della CED and della CPE», DD n° 91, Report of the Ministerial Reunion of January 25, 1954.

judgment that could contribute to delineate the final attitude to adopt when the problem would have been discussed in the higher seat.

Fourthly, the question of the incorporation of the pre-existing Communities was examined and discussed in the draft of a working document of the Delegation prepared by Minister Cavalletti. Finally, as the last point, Minister Corrias finally gave reading of the note of January 23 of the General Directorate for Economic Affairs; it contained some comments on the development of the work of the Economic Committee. After a discussion in which Ivan Matteo Lombardo took part, and following the clarifications provided by Minister Corrias on the issue of the abolition of protections customs, the Undersecretary approved the observations contained in the aforesaid note, that had to be used as the norm of orientation for the Italian Delegation. In this note, for what concerns the "progressivity", it appeared to be necessary to insist on idea that it was not possible to set the dates for progress towards the common market from the outset; that derived both from a question of principle and from the consideration of the rapid evolution of the economic conditions both in Europe and outside. Furthermore, it was stressed in this note that the abolition of customs protections should have been achieved not only gradually, but as a last and conclusive step. With regard to "safeguard", insisting on the principle already accepted at the Conference of Rome, it seemed appropriate to stress that this safeguard should have related both to particular situations at the time of signature of the Treaty and to particular situations which could be determined as a result of the development of the common market, which was not possible to foresee at that precise moment. About the "coordination", which was probably the most delicate aspect of the economic sector, the General Directorate expressed its commitment to submit a more advanced study on this subject for the next February, but at the same time it manifested that the need for coordination could not be limited to a simple agreement of principle, but had to demonstrate concretely that it could ensure an effective equality of conditions in the course of the economic activity in the various countries⁴⁵.

1.2 The election of Mendès-France as a turning point

After a four-month siege under the Viet Minh forces led Ho Chi Minh, the French garrison at Dien Bien Phu, in Vietnam, was overrun on May 7, 1954. The French defeat in Indochina caused a serious political crisis and the fall of the government led by Joseph Laniel;

⁴⁵ Ibid.

that was the moment when the radical-socialist exponent Pierre Mendès-France was appointed as Prime Minister. It can be assessed that the formation of this new government marked the beginning of the final phase of the EDC and the EPC. Mendès-France was a progressive politician who had never shown particular sympathy for the EDC and, more generally, for the integration under the Monnet model. His interests were mainly focused on domestic politics and on a program of economic reforms and modernization of the country; despite this, he decided in the first place to quickly solve the international problems that affected France. Therefore, he first devoted himself to the Indochinese question, which was resolved by the Geneva agreements. However, these agreements were not accepted by Washington and the American authorities saw confirmed their suspicions about supposed "neutralist" tendencies of the French leader⁴⁶. Mendès-France then decided to address the problem of the EDC by attempting to draft a new version of the treaty with amendments that would eliminate its supranational character. Because of the attitude of the new French Government and its willingness to research a solution that would have to some extent replaced the Treaty of Paris, the three Benelux governments decided to press for the urgent convening of the Conference of the Six in Brussels between June 30 and July 3⁴⁷.

As the Italian Ambassador in Brussels Grazzi referred to the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs⁴⁸, the attitude of the new French government caused serious concerns to the influential Belgian leader Paul-Henri Spaak and his Luxemburg and Dutch colleagues as the EDC question was considered by Mendès-France as a mere French question. Indeed, the French Government was attempting to replace the treaty totally disregarding the fact that some partners had already approved it and they supported the establishment of supranational governing bodies that instead the French government aimed at discarding. As Spaak affirmed, "the EDC, in such conditions, would be dead"⁴⁹ and that could lead to a consequent weakening of the Adenauer Government, inducing the British to propose Germany's entry into NATO (which Belgium would have accepted only as a last resort) or the Americans to suggest a continental alliance (which Belgium would have not accepted). These were the main reasons why the three Ministers of the Benelux countries wanted to convene this conference, with the

⁴⁶ A. Varsori (2022), op. cit., pp. 171-172. On this subject, see also René Girault, *Pierre Mendès-France et le rôle de la France dans le monde*, Grenoble, PUG, 1991.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ DPII, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE», DD n° 205, Secret Telegram 7438/114, from the Ambassador in Bruxelles, Grazzi, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁴⁹ Ivi, p. 412. Original text: “

purpose of illustrating this dangerous situation to the French representative and highlighting that this attitude risked compromising the European unification.⁵⁰

The Italian Foreign Minister Piccioni immediately declared himself in favour⁵¹, as well as the Federal Chancellery. The French government, however, on the occasion of a meeting between Mendès-France and Spaak which took place on June 30, asked for a postponement of the meeting. In this difficult situation, on July 5, the following day of the colloquium between Quaroni and Mendès-France, the General Director of the International Cooperation reminded the Italian Ambassador to Paris, Quaroni⁵², of the existence of an «Italian case» regarding the issue of the EDC; indeed, Italy's adherence to the concept of common defence had always based its motive and its purpose on the possibility of launching and implementing a process of political integration in Europe. However, it began to circulate the idea that, in order to obtain the internal conciliation on the EDC, France intended to enhance the progressive weakening of every means addressed to initiate, through the gradual affirmation of the principle of supranationality, that political process of integration which was at the very basis of Italy's adherence to the EDC. Thus, the Christian Democracy, which was promoter, together with its allies, of the launch of the EDC treaty, would have found itself in serious difficulties if these discussions involving the French government would have compromised the principles that were at the core of such adherence.

Even more relevant was the launch in London, from the 5th to the 12th of July, of the Anglo-American negotiations on the application of the Bonn agreements as regards to Germany. These agreements would have allowed the Federal Republic of Germany to recover its sovereignty, regardless of the ratification of the EDC⁵³. In this regard, the diplomat Sir Frank Roberts made clear that no project of alternative to the EDC or addressed to modify it, was posed under examination. He also added that the fact that he was starting to examine the legal aspects of a separation between the Bonn agreements and the Treaty of Paris did not imply that the Anglo-Americans had renounced to see the EDC finally put in place. In reality, the subordination of the agreements to the ratification of the treaty, which the French had wanted

⁵⁰ DP II, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE», DD n° 206, Reserved note from the General Director of the International Cooperation, Magistrati, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni.

⁵¹ DP II, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE», DD n° 207, Secret Telegram from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni, to the Embassy in Brussels.

⁵² DP II, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE», DD n° 230, Letter from the General Director of the International Cooperation, Magistrati, to the Ambassador in Paris, Quaroni.

⁵³ Documenti sulla politica internazionale dell'Italia, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, DD n° 231, Telespr. from the Ambassador in London, Brosio, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

as a further safeguard, was now proving to be rather a complication and a damage faced with the justified and growing German impatience to regain the «status» of a sovereign nation. Indeed, the Americans and the Brits were convinced of the necessity to give a political recognition of Germany's prestige and that would have not necessarily passed through an immediate rearmament, as Adenauer told in his last speech⁵⁴. As Tarchiani communicated to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Piccioni⁵⁵, the British and the American governments clarified that, in practical terms, this decision taken by them was made, for its enforcement, dependent on the situation that would have prevailed when the French and the Italian Parliaments updated for the summer holidays, with particular regard to the achievement or the failure in the ratification of the treaty establishing the EDC. It appeared therefore to be clear that there was the maximum interest on the part of the Department of State towards the adoption in Italy of a procedure that could have allowed a ratification before the holidays. At the same time, the American and British governments clearly wanted to avoid the dilemma of the adoption of alternatives that could have been particularly unwelcome and disconcerting to France. Nevertheless, as already mentioned, the agreement reached in London was not intended to represent any alternative to the EDC, but it simply represented a way to achieve a temporary solution which could be suitable to satisfy the German expectation. The short-term problems that it posed would have been resolved automatically with the French and Italian ratifications before the Parliamentary holidays for the summer.

As already mentioned, the new French government had been for time pursuing a “replacement solution” for the EDC. On August 13, the Mendès-France Government approved the text of the amendments to the Treaty establishing the EDC; this represented a condition for ratification of the Treaty as communicated to the six governments concerned on the 14th.

In this regard, the Italian General Director of Political Affairs, Straneo, observed⁵⁶ that, behind the clauses of application and the largely amending attenuations of the Treaty proposed by Mendès-France, remerged the well-known French concern to obstruct, or at least delay, the rearmament of Germany. Ultimately, in Brussels the main object of the discussions would have not been the EDC, but the future of the German Federal State. There were therefore two opposite trends to be faced: on the one side, that of France, which aimed at a resumption of

⁵⁴ Ibid; in this regard, Sir Frank Roberts had a few words of criticism for Paris' reaction to Adenauer's speech, who had nothing offensive or disrespectful.

⁵⁵ DPII, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE», DD n° 236, Report from the Ambassador in the United States, Tarchiani, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni.

⁵⁶ DPII, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE», Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, DD n° 256, Secret Note of the General Director of the Political Affairs, Straneo.

dialogue with Russia with the precise goal of achieving a compromise on Germany in order to keep it harmless, or at least, to control its armaments; on the other side, there was the trend of the Federal Republic of Germany, which was intended to proceed, in a rapid and effective manner, on the path of its national reconstruction. According to the General Director, Italy's main aim in these circumstances was firstly to try to eliminate the political scope of certain clauses of the Protocol, which postponed of eight years the establishment of the EDC and set up the possibility of its dissolution in the event of unification of Germany. The General Director even perceived this postponement as an instrument used by the French Government to please Russia in exchange for the armistice in Indochina. Therefore, the Italian action in Brussels had to focus its aim essentially "on changing the harsher clauses of the Protocol, not to the point of making it unacceptable to the French Parliament, because this would mean wrecking any possibility of ratification of the EDC and preventing its very birth⁵⁷". From a general perspective, the action of the Italian Delegation had to be based on some fundamental aspects such as: avoiding a new parliamentary discussion of the Treaty; facilitating the approval of the Treaty by France, accepting therefore only small modifications that would not compromise the whole picture; taking into account the German expectations; keeping firm the principle of European integration, even on the political side; avoiding that some actions taken during the Conference of Brussels could lead the United States to abandon the question of the EDC; keeping in mind all the steps on which the tactics of Mendès-France seemed to be based⁵⁸.

Furthermore, taking into account the analytical and technical examination of the draft protocol implementing the EDC treaty⁵⁹, it could be easily inferred that it assessed, in an explicit manner, that political and defence policy decisions, particularly those concerning the deployment of European forces, did not belong to the Community; therefore, the purely technical nature of the Community itself was stressed. It also emerged the intention to emphasize the lack of effective command powers by the Commissariat, contrasting therefore the original formulation of the treaty, as well as the idea to allocate the headquarters of the EDC in Paris. Moreover, the draft protocol interpreted in an authentic way the article 218,

⁵⁷ Ibid, pp. 487-488. Original text: "a tendere a far modificare le clausole più aspre del Protocollo, non fino al punto però da renderlo inaccettabile al Parlamento francese, perché ciò significherebbe far naufragare ogni possibilità di ratifica della CED ed impedire la sua stessa nascita".

⁵⁸ Ibid; indeed, the tactics of Mendès-France should have developed in 4 steps: firstly, to ensure the approval of the Protocol by the members of the EDC; secondly, to obtain a vote of approval from the French Parliament, but not the final ratification; thirdly, to propose to reopen conversations with Russia on the German issue and, only in the event that such conversations would have been impossible or negative, ask the Parliament to ratify the Treaty.

⁵⁹ DPII, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE» DD n° 257, Secret note of the General Directorate of the International Cooperation.

affirming that, the occurrence of the «situation nouvelle» (whether NATO would stop to exist or change its composition), would have entailed the freedom for each State to decide whether or not to continue to participate in the EDC. It also constituted, always for the same purpose, an unexpected «situation nouvelle», which was not specified by the original Treaty; in this new scenario, the States could decide to interrupt their participation to the EDC in the case in which the United States and Great Britain did not maintain in the Old Continent, including Germany, armed forces in «equal proportion» in front a continuing threat to the security of Western Europe. This paragraph constituted even a third situation, not provided for in the Treaty, which gave the Member States the freedom to decide whether to continue or less to participate in the EDC. This situation referred specifically to the case of the reunification of Germany.

Significant changes were also evident in the Second Title of the treaty, related to the organization and the operation of the organs of the Community; in particular, these paragraphs tended to put the Commissariat in a subordinate position vis-à-vis the Council, to emphasize its purely technical functions and to restrict its freedom of action, especially during an initial long transitional period. This scenario inevitably affected the supranational aspect of the Commissariat itself.

The draft protocol also amended the provisions concerning the rank of the military personnel, largely limiting the active role of the Commissariat in favour of the national authorities. For what concerns the military provisions, it limited the integration (i.e., the obligation to constitute the armed bodies with basic units of different national origin) to the army units that were only stationed in the coverage area and their supporting air forces. The draft protocol also aimed to achieve that the training and the review of the military programmes had to take place under and in accordance with the NATO procedure.

Moreover, the General Directorate of the International Cooperation⁶⁰ assessed that the statements contained in the preamble had clearly a political nature. Indeed, the third paragraph of the preamble constituted a general policy towards the EDC, which was not provided for in the Treaty. Thus, it was extremely difficult to deny the political nature of the protocol itself and that particular aspect made it necessary for it to be ratified by the Parliament under the Italian Constitution. Even regarding the economic and financial provisions, there were several

⁶⁰ DPII, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, , Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE»DD n° 258, Note of the General Directorate of the International Cooperation.

changes that were especially to the detriment of Germany and some modifications were also made in the Title VII, containing general dispositions.

The General Directorate of the International Cooperation also summed up⁶¹ all the information received from the capitals of the countries of the European Community and Washington regarding the French proposals which had to be discussed at the Conference of Brussels. Regarding Bonn, the press reactions to the French proposals were clearly negative. More precisely, the German attitude towards the decisions taken by the French Government could be summed up in the following four points: 1) avoiding a return of the Treaty to the Parliament; 2) keeping the concept of European integration intact. It is important to stress that, for the Germans, the EDC Treaty was not intended only to allow the establishment of Armed Forces, but it was destined above all to constitute the beginning of the European Community. Therefore, the principle of supranationality had to be absolutely maintained; 3) the German Government could not allow any discrimination against the German armed forces; 4) clauses that directly affected the effectiveness of the defence could not be accepted. Moreover, Chancellor Adenauer believed that the French proposals affected the very essence of the Treaty and the European integration itself, while undersecretary Hallstein thought that Mendès-France would have arrived in Brussels ready to negotiate. However, the Germans were not intentioned to the take positions as first in Brussels and were ready to leave that initiative to President Spaak. At the same time, the French Vice-High Commissioner in Bonn confirmed to Ambassador Babuscio Rizzo the good disposition of Mendès-France to make changes to the French proposals⁶².

As regards to the position of Luxembourg towards the French proposals, it underlined the fact that the changes made by Mendès-France altered the supranational character of the institution, requiring therefore a new parliamentary ratification. The work of Mr Bech in Brussels was intended to be conciliatory, even though he was obliged to fulfil the commitments that he had made to the Parliament. Concerning the Hague, it was also in this case underlined how the French proposals undermined, among other things, the supranational content of the Treaty. Therefore, they would have implied the need for a new ratification procedure. Brussels certainly considered the French proposals as unacceptable. More specifically, Spaak illustrated to Ambassador Grazzi the following points: 1) those proposals would have required further parliamentary approval; 2) they contained discriminatory clauses

⁶¹ Documenti sulla politica internazionale dell'Italia, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, DD n° 259, Secret note of the General Directorate of the International Cooperation.

⁶² Ibid.

against Germany; 3) the Belgian Government was particularly opposed to the modification of the powers of the Commission and the formulation of the proposal for the initial period. Moreover, in order to avoid an eventual Franco-German conflict, Spaak considered it desirable for some other Delegations to adopt a clearly negative position at the beginning of the Conference. He was also hopeful that, in the best of the hypothesis, the Conference would have ended up with a joint declaration rather than a protocol.

Regarding Washington, the State Department spokesman firstly denied the information delivered by the «New York Times» according to which the United States were demonstrating their willingness to approve the French proposals. The French Government was indeed aware of the American opinion about the importance to maintain the supranational and non-discriminatory character of the Treaty. In Washington, there were several concerns about the possibility that the French proposals could represent an action aimed at reopening the discussions with Moscow to solve the German problem on the basis of the neutralisation of Germany.

1.3 The Conference in Brussels: a further step towards the failure?

The conference in Brussels, scheduled already during the conference in the Hague on March 30, and later postponed at the French request, was held from the 19th to the 22th August and it had the decisive role of concluding negatively the long process following the signing of the Treaty of the EDC. The first meeting of the conference, on the morning of the 19th, the same day in which De Gasperi died, was brief and resulted in an official report, while the follow-up to the conference took place in a restricted session and did not produce an official report.

The intervention of Piccioni⁶³, on the 19th, followed the content elaborated by the General Directorate of the International Cooperation on the basis of the analysis of the French proposals. Indeed, in that scheme of intervention, it was explained how the Italian actions carried out over the years in favour of the EDC were based in a specific view of the country itself; indeed, “Italy saw in the CED the new word, the expression of the overcoming of ancient settings and ancient mentality that the history, through two tragic experiences, condemned

⁶³ DPII, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE» DD n° 265, Note of the General Directorate of International Cooperation.

without possibility of appeal⁶⁴”. It is relevant to stress that this reason, whose symbolic and emotional content was certainly extremely high, also outweighed the technical military aspects in the perspective of the parliamentary and public Italian opinion. It appeared to be necessary in order to contribute concretely to the construction of a united Europe, and to lay the serious foundations of a lasting solidarity among the countries involved in the process of integration.

Regarding the document presented by the French government, three main orders of issues appeared to attract the Italian attention: firstly, Italy had concerns regarding the French proposals that appeared to eliminate or substantially alter the supranationality of the institution itself, which had to remain one of the guiding principles of the Treaty of Paris. Secondly, there were in the protocol some proposals that, according to the Italian perspective, tended to create a discriminatory situation and therefore were contrary to Article 6 of the Treaty. As already mentioned, there were also proposals in the military field such as those concerning the limitation of the integration of Forces to the so-called «coverage zones», which was a completely new concept and others concerning the appointments and the grades of the military personnel, making a difference between, on the one hand, the countries that disposed of a national military organisation before the entry into force of the Treaty and, on the other hand, the only country which was not in such a position. In the Italian view, it was also relevant to recall the proposals relating to the freedom of manufacture of nuclear combustibles in all the areas that were not strategically exposed, as well as the proposals that established new financial implications in relation to the provisions affecting the areas that were strategically exposed. Finally, a third category of proposals appeared in the Protocol, for which a new parliamentary examination was certainly necessary. Indeed, as far as the Italian Government was concerned, these amendments would have placed itself in an extremely difficult situation before the Parliament and the same scenario could be foreseen for the countries that had already completed the procedure. Among these approaches there was certainly the already mentioned right to withdraw that could be exercised by the member States in the new situations outlined by the French Government and not provided for in the original Treaty. Even the preamble and that statements that it contained showed that the protocol had a political nature of such importance as to make parliamentary ratification necessary, at least in accordance with the Italian Constitution⁶⁵.

⁶⁴ Ibid; “L’Italia vide nella CED la parola nuova, l’espressione del superamento di antiche impostazioni e di antiche mentalità che la storia, attraverso due tragiche esperienze belliche, ha condannato senza possibilità di appello”.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

Therefore, because of these points, the Italian Government was not able to accept the Protocol unless those same points were eliminated or could undergo a significant transformation. In particular, two concepts contained in the protocol deserved special attention in the view of the Italian Delegation: one aspect concerned the wish and the spirit of the French Government which seemed to suggest the need for a gradual application of the Treaty in particular regarding the entry into force of the clauses having a supranational nature. In this regard, the General Directorate for of International Cooperation, demonstrated to be quite forthcoming; in fact, there was awareness of the novelty and the implications of the Defence Community which made it reasonable to hypothesize a formula to make its start and its work more graduated and harmonious, provided, however, that fixed and well-defined terms were immediately established. The second aspect was related to the recognition of the possibility that the experience collected in the aftermath of the initial execution of the treaty itself could have provided for important advice addressed to review and amend some provisions of the Treaty itself. This was a French desire that, in the opinion of the Italian Delegation, appeared justifiable. Therefore, it was a good idea to further develop or specify such provisions (that were already present in the treaty) in order to meet these French wishes in a more concrete manner.

To better understand the Italian position at the conference, it is relevant to analyse the note⁶⁶ of the Secretary General of Foreign Affairs, Zoppi to Piccioni. Zoppi stressed again how, from the beginning, the Italian adhesion to the EDC was marked by a clear pro-European approach which viewed this new Community as a crucial step in the further development of the European integration. This approach was reaffirmed in front of the French Government when Italy accepted the required Additional Protocols in April 1953, and it is totally in line with the position adopted by the Benelux countries in defence of the supranational aspects of the Community.

Nevertheless, the Italian attitude at the conference had to take into account all the other aspects related to the problem, especially those visible in the international situation, in the position of the Mendès-France Government and in the attitude of the other four countries, in particular the German Republic. Another aspect of the Italian intervention at the Conference was certainly the one related to the ratification procedure: in particular, the Italian Delegation intended to emphasize the recent votes that were set up within the Parliamentary Commissions,

⁶⁶ DPII, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «Il Fallimento della CED and della CPE»DD n° 250, Note of the Secretary General of Foreign Affairs, Zoppi, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni.

being aware that it could be necessary to provide more details. Obviously, the most favourable impression would have aroused if it could have been communicated that the Italian Government considered the likelihood of working to speed up the procedure itself both in the debate in the Chamber and in the «process» to be initiated at the Senate. An aspect which had to be further examined at the preparatory meeting. Furthermore, in a secret letter⁶⁷ that was sent by Magistrati to Quaroni, the former reported the content of the discussions in Brussels, taking into account also the meeting between Mendès-France and Piccioni. It emerged the question about how it was possible to fill the «void» caused by the lack of consensus among the six in Brussels. Mendès-France seemed concerned about that idea, contained in the letter sent to him by Foster Dulles, on the possibility of consultation between America, the United Kingdom and the States loyal to the EDC, a meeting that, according to him, would have been just an Anglo-German-American encounter with a side of smaller countries. Therefore, as Magistrati affirmed, the path that Italy would have followed consisted in awaiting the decision of the French Parliament, which however was demonstrating its inability to reach a real vote. If this did not happen the position would have remained open and the Italian Government should have taken a decision on whether or not to start a difficult debate on the EDC, in the Chamber, towards the end of September. It is important to stress that, as regards to the Italian Delegation, despite repeating its commitment to the Treaty and to its supranational setup, it did not assume a prejudicial position hostile to the French theses. At the same time, after the failure of the meeting in Brussels, the Italian authorities felt the necessity to ensure that Tarchiani could highlight in front of the Eisenhower administration that there was a relevant difference between the Italian positions with respect to the French ones⁶⁸.

On August 30, 1954, the French National Assembly rejected with a *motion préalable* the treaty on the EDC. The US Ambassador in France, Dillon, tried to explain the significance of this rejection in terms of future and on the possible developments during the coming months⁶⁹. First of all, as a slight consolation it could be recalled that the debate at the Assembly constituted only “first of four hurdles⁷⁰”: second would have been the Council of the Republic, third the second reading in the Assembly and finally the constitutional issue which might have been raised by the Upper House. This process could imply additional three months of waiting before it became clear whether French ratification would have actually taken place. Moreover,

⁶⁷ DP/II, Serie A: Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, DD n° 288, Secret letter of the General Director of the International Cooperation, Magistrati, to the Ambassador in Paris, Quaroni.

⁶⁸ A. Varsori (2022), op. cit. p. 172.

⁶⁹ Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Western European Security, Volume V, Part 1, 740.5/8-3154: Telegram from the US Ambassador in France (Dillon) to the US Department of State.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

interminable discussions would have followed in the next months regarding whether the lineup of 319 to 264 really constituted the strength of anti and pro-EDC forces and whether under different circumstances the results would have been different. However, from the point of view of future developments, it could be argued that the margin was so large that chances of bringing treaty up once more for discussion appeared reduced. In any event, such action would have presupposed not only the overthrow of Mendes-France Government but also a major international crisis. Although the French leader did not have a cohesive coalition, he was not in a particularly vulnerable position in Parliament at that moment. Indeed, despite the criticisms that he would have received from many sides, particularly by the EDC proponents, the United States were aware that he had a concrete possibility of continuing in office for considerable time. "He is no longer the miracle man who can make difficult decisions or pull rabbits out of his hat, but he has hardly exhausted his credit in country even though doubts are increasing as to his ultimate foreign policy objectives⁷¹". As for Germany, Dillon did not foresee major difficulties in putting contractual agreements with that country into effect; he expected that Mendès-France would have been careful to avoid any break in Western solidarity over contractual issue. Moreover, Dillon also stressed that a major factor in the rejection of the EDC was the nationalistic reaction to the attitude of France's partners at the Brussels conference, as represented by Mendès-France. This reaction was evident throughout the brief debate and should have been considered in future dealings with the government. In fact, the rejection of the EDC represented the triumph of nationalist elements that, according to Mendès-France's own estimate, had even increased during the few months of his administration. Finally, the French leader's position on an alternative policy to the EDC was not yet clear but whatever his personal views could be on the desirability of German rearmament, he had reiterated its political necessity to maintain Western solidarity. Finally, Dillon expected that Mendès-France would have soon proposed a formula voiding the outright of NATO membership and that he would have aligned himself closely with British position on safeguards. In this sense, after the debate there was an even stronger impression about the possibility that the French leader had received British assurances that unrestricted German rearmament could be avoided⁷².

In any case, the rejection of the EDC opened a serious crisis within the Western bloc that would have been anyway recomposed in a few months. One of the pillars that De Gasperi's foreign policy had been built upon vanished for Italy as a result of the apparent failure of

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

Europeanist politics. It was a matter of rethinking Italy's international action, an evolution that after some initial uncertainties would have taken place more quickly and effectively than could have been expected at the end of the summer of 1954⁷³.

⁷³ A. Varsori (2022), *op. cit.* p. 172.

Chapter 2: In the aftermath of French non-ratification

2.1 The beginning of a new international role for Italy

Between the end of 1954 and 1955 several international issues found a solution, determining for Italy the conclusion of the long post-war period characterized by the consequences of the defeat and the constraints of the peace treaty. This would lead, along with other external factors and radical changes that occurred on the domestic level, to the start of a different international role for the country⁷⁴. Among the events related to this transitional phase, first and foremost goes the period following the Brussels Conference of August 1954, where, with the rejection by the French Parliament of the ratification of the EDC Treaty, it became evident throughout the continent that the negotiations for the Defence Community and consequently for the European Political Community had failed⁷⁵. The rejection by the French Parliament occurred only a few days after Alcide De Gasperi's death; until the end the statesman from Trentino, although no longer in government, fought for the European Defence Community and, above all, the European Political Community project to be implemented, which is testified by multiple letters addressed by him to Fanfani⁷⁶. In this regard, De Gasperi was strongly convinced that the Atlantic and European choice, which in his vision were closely linked, represented the solid and perhaps the only guarantee for the future of Italian democracy, whose enduring weakness was evident given that the republican system was squeezed between the position of the Leftists, still linked to the Soviet myth and to a revolutionary perspective, and the conservative forces, tendentially hostile to the Western-style liberal democracy⁷⁷. These forces were indeed present not only in the neo-fascist and monarchist right-wings, but also in some sectors of the Christian Democrat electorate and in the Catholic hierarchy⁷⁸.

It can be affirmed that these events marked the conclusion of the phase of the "great hopes" of Monnet's European construction; indeed, it appeared to vanish a particularly important period in the European policy pursued by Italy, characterised by ambitious plans and high hopes. This situation created serious concerns among the authorities of the various countries; as far as the United States were concerned, in a memorandum the US Second

⁷⁴ A. Varsori, *Dalla Rinascita al Declino*, cit., p. 181

⁷⁵ A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d'Europa?* cit., p. 119

⁷⁶ A. Varsori, *Dalla Rinascita al Declino*, cit., p. 181

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid. On De Gasperi and his ideas see also C. De Gasperi, M. Romana, *De Gasperi, Uomo Solo*, Milano, Mondadori, 1964.

Secretary of Embassy in France, Herz, defined the defeat of the EDC treaty as the “most important and tragic event in the post-war history of Western Europe⁷⁹” and he provided some reflections that could be useful for future researchers. It is certainly interesting to recall some of those as to better understand how that outcome was reached. For instance, he recognized to be doubtful whether, even with maximum effort of Mendès-France, this last one could have obtained a satisfactory majority for the EDC if he had not at least gone through the motions of seeking new concessions at the Brussels conference. Indeed, the French leader apparently never intended to push the treaty through by a simple majority—he always sought a compromise that would have yielded a “large, national” majority and that was unobtainable through the Spaak proposals. It was probably unobtainable, moreover, even if Mendès-France’s own protocol had been accepted. In addition, according to Herz, despite there was a large and documented agreement on the fact that Mendès-France played a decisive role in the defeat of the EDC treaty in the French National Assembly, it must be recognized that he bearded that responsibility only in the limited sense that it would have been required an effort that none of his predecessors had been willing to put forward. Everybody seemed to agree that the Laniel government, in the fall of 1953, would have required much less effort to obtain a favourable vote. Furthermore, only a small fraction of the proponents of EDC ever advocated its ratification as a step toward the outright of a European federation. The European ideal, as a matter of fact, was virtually absent from the ratification debate and its sequel on August 31. The arguments of the proponents were focused on the reasonableness of the ratification as involving “a lesser evil, as warding off or minimizing certain dangers⁸⁰” such as the danger of German dynamism and irredentism, the danger of American withdrawal or lessened support, and in the last place the danger of Soviet aggression. The dynamics and the propaganda initiative were indeed always on the side of the opposition whereas the proponents themselves for the most part considered the non-Communist opponents of EDC “as honourable men, moved by considerations of high patriotism albeit perhaps mistaken in some of their reasoning⁸¹”. In this sense, no French government ever attempted to challenge the opponents of the EDC as this would have implied breaking up the governing coalition. Despite many other factors could be cited as operative in the defeat of the EDC treaty, Herz pointed out that “the great tragedy of the defeat of EDC, in terms of the political development of France, is that it came precisely at a time when the country might have rid itself of this inferiority feeling

⁷⁹ Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Western European Security, Volume V, Part 1, Memorandum by the Second Secretary of Embassy in France (Herz).

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

and when European integration might have been plausibly presented to it as the road into a safer and better future for most Frenchmen”. Nevertheless, Herz was quite optimistic that this attitude of the French Government would have not been a lasting one; several non-Communist enemies of EDC still stressed that they were not against European unity, which testified the “vitality of the idea of European unification, whose value may also become more clearly apparent in the search for alternatives and substitutes for the defeated policy⁸²”.

As far as the Italian government was concerned, its ranks seemed above all worried about the reactions that could potentially come from the United States⁸³; in particular, major concerns derived from the possible criticisms that Washington could have addressed to Italy for not ratifying the Treaty on the European Army, and in a longer-term vision, from the threat posed by an eventual rethink of the American presence in the European scenario leading towards a progressive disengagement. A similar reaction by Eisenhower would have certainly led to uncertain and worrying consequences⁸⁴.

More precisely, in the first case there would have been a strong weakening of the Italian role within the Western system, which would have even occurred in a difficult phase characterising the bilateral relations with the Eisenhower administration; in fact, this last one acknowledged the weakness and the inconsistency of the moderate forces' commitment to the fight against the communist advance⁸⁵. Regarding the second eventuality, the leaders of the Italian government feared that a choice of Washington in the neo-isolationist sense could compromise the support and the already difficult internal balances according to which the Christian Democrats could firmly remain in power thanks to the widespread belief that the United States were not willing to accept a shift to the left of the political axis of the country⁸⁶. Alberto Tarchiani himself admitted to Piccioni the difficulty “to reconstruct the essential lines of the American attitude in view of the failure of the EDC”⁸⁷, despite this situation could have been predictable for some time, especially after the Brussels conference. The American Government had long adopted a “unilateral policy”, refusing to consider any “alternative” even when the suggestions coming from London invited it to go in that direction⁸⁸. As it is

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d'Europa?* cit., p. 119

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid. See also M. Del Pero, *L'alleato scomodo*, Roma, Carocci, 2001.

⁸⁷ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 17, Secret Report from the Ambassador to the United States Tarchiani to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni; “ricostruire sul momento le linee essenziali dell'atteggiamento americano in vista del fallimento della CED”.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

known, the only decision agreed, but in very general terms, between the British and the Americans, was that concerning the disengagement of the EDC Treaty from the Bonn Contractual Conventions and the return of formal sovereignty to the Federal Republic of Germany. However, it must be recognized that the foreseeable sharp negative reaction towards France was accompanied by the frequent observation that the French attitude was largely due to the lack of direct participation of Great Britain in the EDC.

As far as Italy was concerned, Tarchiani referred that the United States State Department viewed in a positive light the position and the actions recently adopted by the Italian Government, such as the votes by the various Parliamentary Committees, the attitude shown in the conference of Brussels, the public and confidential demonstrations after the latter, in particular a meeting of the President of the Council with Mrs Luce and a letter to the Secretary of State⁸⁹. Tarchiani also highlighted the necessity to take rapid and effective actions in order to prevent the “vacuum or confusion left by the failure of the EDC project from giving rise to some unbridgeable flaw in the Atlantic structure⁹⁰”. The Americans were aware of this danger, and they showed willingness to adopt a cautious and slow approach to solve this difficult situation. Moreover, despite a substantial lack of concrete evidence regarding possible future developments of American policy, there were some main lines to consider: a desire to avoid «the worst» that is a breakdown of the Atlantic block as a result of the failure of the EDC, openly denying American intention to orientate itself towards “peripheral” alliances; avoiding every move that could push France on the path of isolation and neutralism and therefore every consultation and every project that left France out; giving Germany prompt satisfaction while individuating a way to make its rearmament possible in the shortest time; maintaining the closest possible cooperation with the United Kingdom or the five members of the EDC⁹¹. As for Germany, the application of the «contractual Agreements» appeared to the Americans as an excellent first step on the path towards the integration of Germany into the European Community and the regaining of full sovereignty by Germany itself; this was indeed the fundamental premise for a solution that would have allowed its participation in the defence of Western Europe on an equal footing. At the heart of the matter, Germany’s rearmament had to be made possible at all costs and by whatever means, and the United States were already operating in that sense. However, as Tarchiani acknowledged, the main issue at stake was not

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid; “il vuoto o la confusione lasciati dal fallimento del progetto CED non diano luogo a qualche falla incolmabile nella compagine atlantica”.

⁹¹ Ibid.

only to rearm Germany, but also to ensure its military cooperation with NATO countries⁹². The fact that the Atlantic Council, from which the initiative for the creation of the EDC started in 1950, had been convened was a clear indication that, only through any form of NATO-Germany link, a solution for the problem could be identified⁹³.

Furthermore, Tarchiani went so far as to suggest that Italy should have also approved the EDC in order to confirm the good faith of the government of Rome and to underline the diversity of the Italian position with respect to that of Paris⁹⁴.

In light of all these factors, it seemed that a new era in Italian foreign policy was beginning; in contrast to the previous policy implemented by the Christian Democracy under De Gasperi, this new approach placed bilateral relations with the United States rather than European policy at the centre of the country's interests⁹⁵. The plans for a federalist-style European union seemed to be, at least momentarily, set aside by the Scelba government and the diplomacy of Palazzo Chigi that demonstrated how the new Italian priority was the safeguarding of the Atlantic Alliance, or in other terms, the relationship with the United States; in this sense, it is quite emblematic that the Italian authorities hastened to reassure the American interlocutors about the loyalty of the country towards NATO, despite the fact that the Parliament had not yet completed the procedure for ratifying the Treaty on the European Defence Community⁹⁶. As Secretary General to Foreign Affairs Zoppi referred to the Italian Embassies⁹⁷, the main circles in Rome recognized that the French rejection of the EDC nullified “the efforts that had been made in recent years to create, through the Defensive Community, a military and political organization and integration of Europe, and that had led to the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris⁹⁸”. However, at the same time, there was a strong awareness that the crisis opened by the vote in French Parliament did not represent the crisis of Atlantism as the opposition, consistently tenacious in pursuing its aims, would have inferred. By contrast, the failure of those particular forms of association that the EDC had planned, implied the necessity to enhance a reinforced and operating Atlantic connection⁹⁹. In

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ A. Varsori, *Dalla Rinascita al Declino*, cit., p. 181

⁹⁵ A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d'Europa?* cit., p. 120

⁹⁶ A. Varsori, *Dalla Rinascita al Declino*, cit., p. 181

⁹⁷ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO» DD n° 3, Telespr. From the Secretary General of Foreign Affairs, Zoppi, to the Embassies.

⁹⁸ Ibid; “gli sforzi che erano stati compiuti in questi anni per dar vita, attraverso la Comunità Difensiva, ad una organizzazione ed integrazione militare e politica dell'Europa, e che avevano condotto alla stipulazione del Trattato di Parigi”.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

this sense, Italy was certainly not intentioned to abandon the principles that found their firm base in the Atlantic Alliance. Furthermore, the responsible circles in Rome were still convinced that the joint declaration agreed between the Six in Brussels offered the basis for action to explore, in union with the other allies, the current possibilities of concretely realizing the statements contained in it: strengthening European cooperation to protect Western Europe against the forces which threatened it; avoiding any neutralization of Germany; contributing to its unification and to its participation in the common defence; prefiguring a political and economic formula of Western integration. Essentially, according to the Italian perspective, the problem of security and peace remained the central problem of a free Europe and the best way to solve it was precisely to ensure the presence of a democratic Germany within an efficient Western system whereas ensuring the exchange of ideas in the normal diplomatic channels.

The main purpose of this shift of Italy towards Atlantism was essentially to preserve positive relations with the public opinion while strengthening the moderate government's position to contrast the intense pressure coming from the socialists and the communists. Therefore, it can be recalled that the initial regret of the Italian government over the crisis in the development of the projects of political and military integration was soon replaced by the strong desire to reaffirm full confidence in the United States and to firmly avoid calling into question the participation in another defence device, that of the Atlantic Alliance¹⁰⁰. This was the new priority of the diplomacy of Palazzo Chigi as well as of the successors of De Gasperi who were now focused on the Western choice, especially on the bilateral relations with the United States but without, at the same time, overlooking the question of Trieste, which remained unsolved.

As already stressed, in the American capital, the reaction to the failure of the EDC was particularly harsh and the hypothesis of a decrease in the US engagement in Europe was once again raised; however, it must be admitted that the irritation of the administration was mainly directed against Paris, in particular with regard to Mendès-France, who was considered the principal responsible for the failure of the integration projects¹⁰¹. Italy was perhaps considered a marginal factor in the overall process that had led to the failure of the EDC and the EPC, despite the non-ratification and the lenient attitude shown by the Italian delegation towards the French leader, who was instead subjected to harsh pressure from other European leaders, in particular from Spaak¹⁰². The strong attitude of Spaak towards France was indeed confirmed

¹⁰⁰ A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d'Europa?* cit., p. 119-120

¹⁰¹ Ivi, p. 120

¹⁰² Ivi. p. 120

by the Ambassador to Brussels Grazzi to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni¹⁰³; the former also made reference to some preliminary ideas that the Prime Minister of Belgium wanted to share with the Italian Government: firstly, he believed that Mendès-France should have been prevented from attempting to oppose Britain to other allies, using therefore what he defined as “the British card”; secondly, he stressed that any attempt to discuss the German problem outside the Benelux countries and Italy had to be rejected with all efforts; thirdly, he invited the Benelux countries and Italy itself to advance a collective re-examination of the new situation that had arisen in order to continue the path towards the political and economic integration; finally, he stressed the urgency of German rearmament, also in order not to discourage the conscience of the other countries, that had already faced serious military expenditure on the assumption hitherto proclaimed that the German contribution was indispensable¹⁰⁴.

In this regard, his idea was precisely to request the convening of the NATO session or to propose a deadline (possibly 3 months) during which France had the obligation to choose between a softened wording of the EDC or the controlled German rearmament with immediate admission of Germany into NATO. Spaak was also clear about the impossibility of the EDC without some element of supranationality and therefore he did not expect any participation in it of England¹⁰⁵. In addition, Grazzi pointed out the important reference made by Spaak to the need for Italy and the Benelux countries to continue to maintain alive as much as possible the pro-European idea, despite postponing it to a later date because of the urgency of other issues at stake. When criticizing once again the delaying and conservative action carried out by the French government, he recognised that France would have obtained a very different position if instead of following the “great” it would have taken the head of the smaller nations, a position which according to Spaak could be now offered to Italy. In Grazzi’s opinion, this view was even more applicable in the complex framework that could arise from such a situation, if on the one hand, Italy was not willing or able to resume its closer bilateral relations with France, and, on the other hand, Italy showed its desire to play a more active part in dealing with major international issues¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰³ DP11, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n°2, Telegram from the Ambassador to Bruselles, Grazzi, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

2.2 Great Britain as a mediator between Washington and Paris: the Eden Plan

The events related to the failure of the EDC allowed the British government, which had never shown particular enthusiasm towards the European construction under the Monnet or Degasperian models, to fully re-enter in the European diplomatic balances¹⁰⁷. Immediately after the decision taken by the French Parliament, in order to enclose the British proposals, the Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, the Conservative Anthony Eden, drew up a draft, whose general features had long been outlined within some British government departments. This plan was articulated on the basis on two fundamental elements: on the one hand the national rearmament of West Germany and its inclusion in the Atlantic Pact and NATO¹⁰⁸; on the other hand, a reform of the Brussels Pact that would have allowed the inclusion of the German Federal Republic¹⁰⁹. The implementation of the first proposal would have satisfied the American will to complete and strengthen the process of Western defensive integration, thus creating a cohesive bloc capable of facing the Soviet threat. Instead, the German entry into the Brussels Pact would have ensured French ambitions regarding the possibility of creating a European alliance on the military level without the presence of the United States and avoiding the necessary transfer of sovereignty to a higher body envisaged within the EDC. In this way, Paris could keep the full sovereignty over its armed forces¹¹⁰.

In fact, among the ranks of the British authorities, there was the awareness that, for France at that moment the central question was no longer represented by the rebirth of the Germany army, but rather the transfer of sovereignty in sensitive areas such as those regulated by the Community of Defence and even more so by the European Political Community. It is in this regard certainly interesting to consider what the General Director of Political Affairs Del Balzo referred to the General Director of International Cooperation Magistrati¹¹¹; in fact, he reported of a circular telegram signed by Mendès-France calling on the Representations to the Atlantic Governments to stress the following two points in connection with the recent vote in the French Parliament on the EDC: firstly, the vast majority of the Assembly (except of course the Communists) supported the Atlantic Pact; secondly, the French Government confirmed its intention of seeking suitable means to ensure Germany's cooperation in the

¹⁰⁷ A. Varsori, *Dalla Rinascita al Declino*, cit., p. 182

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d'Europa?* cit., p. 121

¹¹¹ Documenti sulla politica internazionale dell'Italia, DD n° 5, Secret note from the General Director of Political Affairs, Del Balzo, to the General Director of International Cooperation, Magistrati.

defence of the West, with certain safeguards. However, the concept of “safeguards” and its implications still lacked substantial clarity.

As regards to Eden’s proposal, it therefore attempted to create a different balance within the Western front where a renewed Franco-British *entente cordiale* would have compensated the inevitable strengthening of contacts and relations between Washington and Bonn¹¹². Moreover, in the long term, both London and Paris, once the question of the defence of the old continent had been resolved, could have focused their attention on safeguarding their role as imperial powers, that seemed to be challenged by the policy of the Eisenhower administration and its attitude towards the imperial empires and the process of decolonization¹¹³.

After demanding Dulles not to make rash choices, Eden decided to carry out a mission in the main capitals of Western Europe in order to expose his project and try to capture the opinions of the various governments; in the framework of this initiative a stop was certainly planned in Rome. Within the peninsula, the first reactions to the plan were not the most enthusiastic. Italian diplomacy was substantially aware of the fact that, if the Eden Plan had been realized, this would have favoured the presence of the Franco-British axis at the centre of the European diplomatic balance, relegating Rome to a more reduced role¹¹⁴. In addition, a further concern stemmed from the fact that the London’s attention towards the military aspects of the relations among Western European countries and the emergence of more traditional alliances could negatively affect Italy’s ability to manoeuvre as a secondary military power¹¹⁵. By contrast, Italy largely preferred to be included in the framework of organisms with a political or economic character, where supranationalism would have allowed to "camouflage" the Italian limits in the military and political fields, favouring a full involvement of the peninsula in international affairs¹¹⁶.

The concerns expressed so far were shared also by politicians who had been particularly close to De Gasperi and shared his vision of European integration. For instance, the Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs, Lodovico Benvenuti, wrote: "a Paris-London axis would be tempted [...] to exercise a third force function between America and the Soviet bloc, and this because of the particular interests that England and France still intend to protect in

¹¹² A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d’Europa?* cit., p. 121

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ivi, pp. 121-122.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

their former colonies¹¹⁷”; he sustained the necessity of avoiding the formation of “diaphragm between us and the United States of America and (that) lead us to subordinate our freedom of movement on the bilateral Italo-American plan, to the necessity of the new European system of Anglo-French pre-eminence¹¹⁸”. At Palazzo Chigi, however, there were those who already seemed ready to accept the hypothesis of the inclusion of West Germany in NATO on the condition of an agreement that would place some restrictions on West German rearmament. Italian doubts did not disappear even when the British side, aware of the perplexity inherent in Italian diplomatic circles, pointed out that Italy might joined West Germany in a reformed alliaice¹¹⁹.

In order to raise support for his plan, Eden spoke with the leaders of the three Benelux countries in Brussels in the middle of September, and then he spoke with Adenauer in Bonn. It must be said that, in both instances, he received encouraging feedback on his project. As the General Directorate of International Cooperation assessed¹²⁰, the news of Eden’s visit to the European capitals showed the extent to which London was keen to remain at the forefront of the search for a solution to the German problem. What were the exact terms of the English project could be perhaps known after Eden’s visit to Rome. However, it could already be seen that the trend, which was emerging as the lowest common denominator among the majority of the countries concerned, was to seek a solution within the framework of NATO¹²¹. Whether and how this coincided with the French and perhaps British plans was not known yet.

When he arrived in Rome, it can be argued that the conversation with Piccioni and Scelba was marked by a certain surrender on the part of the Italian authorities to the British project; in spite of concerns expressed in previous days, the Italian authorities felt that they could not oppose to the British initiative¹²². This behaviour was exactly due to the fact that the Eden Plan, in addition to enjoying the support of the United States, was also gathering support among the governments of all European countries, and therefore seemed realistically destined to be implemented. In this sense, a potential failure of Italy in joining the implementation of

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 122, “un asse Parigi-Londra sarebbe tentato [...] di esercitare una funzione di terza forza fra l’America e il blocco sovietico, e ciò in ragione dei particolari interessi che Inghilterra e Francia intendono tuttora tutelare nelle loro ex colonie”.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 122, “diaframma fra noi e gli Stati Uniti d’America e [che] ci conduca a subordinare la nostra libertà di movimento sul piano bilaterale italo-americano, alle necessità del nuovo sistema europeo a preminenza anglo-francese”.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 43, Note of General Directorate of International Cooperation, Office I.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d’Europa?* cit., p. 124.

the plan would have certainly determined a substantial isolation of the government of Rome; the participation in the plan seemed, therefore, the only viable course¹²³. Moreover, on the one hand, if successful, the British project would have contributed to preserve NATO unity and the American presence in Europe; on the other hand, the British government, Eden in particular, was committed to find a final solution on the Trieste issue¹²⁴. The fate of the city of Trieste was certainly an element whose relevance was too elevated in terms of its reflections on the domestic political situation for Rome to create obstacles to London's initiative regarding a "replacement solution" to the EDC. During the meeting, however cautiously, Piccioni also referred to other European bodies—from the OECE to the Council of Europe and the ECSC—suggesting forms of coordination between a possible modified Brussels Pact and these organizations¹²⁵. The General Directorate for International Cooperation¹²⁶ had perplexities on the fact that the extended Brussels pact could be regarded as a substitute for the EDC; firstly, because the EDC was a military pact and secondly because the Brussels Treaty, absorbed by NATO in its military aspects, had not yet shown any particular vitality in the other areas in which a common policy was envisaged: economic, social and others. It was therefore not clear how this revitalised body could effectively replace the European spirit already contained in the failed EDC system¹²⁷.

In order to be able to objectively appreciate the usefulness of using the Brussels Pact instrument to initiate any resumption of European policy, the question to be asked was therefore whether in the English draft the revision of the Treaty would have concerned only a formal adaptation of its stipulations (with the obvious abolition of the anti-German clauses) or whether it should have been radically transformed into a new system capable of providing a real political impetus on the way to the realization of greater and closer continental unity¹²⁸. It should be borne in mind that if the military aspect of the Brussels alliance had practically come together within the framework of the major military alliance of the West: that of NATO, in its so-called political aspect, the Brussels Treaty was the driving force behind the creation of the first European consultative body, the Council of Europe.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ A. Varsori, *Dalla Rinascita al Declino*, cit., p. 183.

¹²⁵ Ibid. p. 183

¹²⁶ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 76, Note of the General Directorate of International Cooperation.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

The same perplexities were shown, despite not openly, by the United States, who certainly preferred the easiest way of NATO. Therefore, Italy certainly aimed at examining in all its aspects the problem of the possible enlargement of the Brussels Pact on it while deepening as far as possible with appropriate contacts - and also with the other capitals concerned - a more exact profile of the new treaty to which the country was proposed to participate. It was thus appropriate to continue studying the hypothesis that the solution to the problem should be sought in the admission of Germany to NATO, without the need for an extension of the Brussels Pact, revised and corrected to Italy and Germany.

Regarding the Eden Plan, the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Lodovico Benvenuti¹²⁹, affirmed that the formula proposed by the Eden Plan was the least suitable for finally bringing the knot to the solution, namely, to obtain immediately, without delay, that Western defence was strengthened with an effective German contribution. In this regard, Benvenuti highlighted how the tactic of waiting and seeing was typical of the British «*forma mentis*»¹³⁰, but it was totally counterproductive in a historical phase in which speed was largely needed.

After the meeting with the Italian political leadership (which however did not cover large importance in Eden's biography¹³¹, Eden moved to Paris, where he had to face a certainly more delicate meeting with Mendès-France following which, despite some resistance, the French Prime Minister ended up accepting Eden's terms and opened up the prospect of a conference being convened soon in London in which Britain, the US and Canada would have participated along with the representatives of the Europe of the Six.

Regarding the Italian attitude towards this conference, Piccioni¹³² recognized that the Italian Government heard with satisfaction the first unofficial news that the British Government would have moved towards such a Conference in order to examine the problems resulting from the vote of the French National Assembly on the EDC. He also stressed his belief that the Conference should have preceded by a proper exchange of views through diplomatic channels on the essence of the problem to be discussed during the Conference¹³³.

¹²⁹ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO» DD n° 83, Note of the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Benvenuti.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ See A. Eden, *The Memoirs of Sir Anthony Eden. Full Circle*, Cassell, London 1960, pp. 157-158.

¹³² DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n°6, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni, to the Embassies, Representations and Legations.

¹³³ Ibid.

In this regard, some statements could be made on the part of the Italian government: 1) it was in favour of the restitution of sovereignty to Germany. This is a decision which, especially at the present stage, had to be taken directly by the Three Occupying Powers; 2) as for the question of rearmament, which should have been the main subject of the Conference of Eight, it was perceived as possible to formulate other formulas once the most satisfactory one (the EDC) had been put aside. However, it was necessary to exclude the hypothesis of a five-party EDC as the Italian Government strongly believed in the impossibility that a body aimed at defending Western Europe could be formed without the inclusion of France or Germany. Even the hypothesis of an indirect association of Germany to the Atlantic Pact through a small NATO with that connected and constituted by the six EDC countries, with or without England, seemed to be discarded¹³⁴. Therefore, it can be inferred that the perspective of the Italian government was more likely to explore and deepen the possibility of Germany joining NATO on equal terms, but in a manner acceptable to the French. Moreover, in some fields such as the one of armaments, it was possible to use the results of studies that had already been carried out by the EDC Treaty and NATO planning system as to find suitable solutions to adopt; 3) the Italian government also wondered whether it was not appropriate for the British Government, in promoting the Conference, to have all the participants confirm their commitment to abstain, even after the restitution of sovereignty to Germany, from attempts at East-West dialogue until an agreement was reached on German participation in the West defence. It is evident that in a moment of weakness and apparent disorientation in the Western context such attempts could have had serious consequences for the cohesion of the free world.

As the General Directorate of International Cooperation recognised¹³⁵, it can be argued that the failure of the Brussels Conference and the burial by France of the EDC Treaty, offered the right to Great Britain to take back the initiative to deepen its European leadership, in a moment where it had been mitigated. As already stressed, the English did not have large sympathy towards the EDC system, however their attitude had been contained only for the American push and for the policy of the Six countries that seemed to proceed seriously in the path of unification¹³⁶. In addition, the problem of German rearmament was a problem which concerned Britain as much as France, although it generated a different concern.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ DPIL, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 31, Note of the General Directorate of International Cooperation.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

As for the American position, that was not yet sufficiently clear, except in the objective: to secure and legalize in some way the German military contribution to the defence of the European West. Moreover, in a report sent by Tarchiani to Piccioni¹³⁷, the former referred that the State Department did not raise any fundamental objections to the British proposal. On the contrary, it was moving in the direction of this initiative and had considered the prompt Italian accession as a first favourable development. However, that the first news of the British initiative had aroused surprise in Washington is a fact; therefore, it was possible that a certain coldness had remained if not in the offices, at least in the mind of the Secretary of State¹³⁸. The American Government certainly found itself in a very difficult position as it could not risk a new failure of European policy at that moment. The attitude of American public opinion, in contrast to the deliberate moderation of government circles and the press, was fiercely critical and bitterly pessimistic of this policy, which was certainly relevant to consider in view of the imminent elections that would have taken place in the country.

However, recent events also showed that the Americans were very sincere when they said they had no alternative to the EDC. The rigidity and complexity with which they set themselves and follow the general lines of a certain policy implied that the Department at the crucial moment saw itself disarmed and incapable of concrete initiatives¹³⁹. High-level consultations were under way among the various departments concerned to establish the new line of action to be taken on the whole problem of European integration. In this context, the only concept that seemed to prevail in the personal opinions of the officials was that the projects of new bodies, more or less traced to the EDC model, had no serious chance of realization¹⁴⁰. On the other hand, in order to pursue a concrete and immediate goal, it was necessary to remain within the framework of NATO, studying some possibilities of «linking» Germany to the Atlantic Alliance or the «insertion» of Germany itself. This did not exclude that in longer-term plans and action, the work for European integration along the lines of the EDC would have continued¹⁴¹. The work which is taking place in the European capitals was closely followed by the United States, who even hoped to assist to the formation of some news ideas on which the European governments concerned could agree.

¹³⁷ DPII, DD n° 45, Secret Report of the Ambassador to the United States, Tarchiani to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni. Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO».

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

In other words, the Americans not only wanted to show themselves to be «open minded» but they themselves seemed to feel the need that at this moment the «Europeanism» of Europeans gave the real measure of its vitality¹⁴². In fact, there were still European sympathies in Washington, in the sense that it was probably hoped that the French rejection of the EDC had not definitively compromised the possibility of using at least the positive ideas of the European process.

Concerning rearmament, while in the first phase the talk focused on participation in the Western defence without discrimination, at a later stage Adenauer implied that the right to rearmament in Bonn would have been used not in an unlimited manner; in other words, making the checks acceptable¹⁴³. However, the real question was whether these limits, in the German programme, should have not been understood as applying to the other participants in Western defence.

As for the Benelux position, it had to take account of the fears of those nations about the possibility of an uncontrolled rearmament of Germany, as would have been the case with a pure and simple admission to NATO¹⁴⁴. The French position instead was far from being clear: rejected the EDC, Paris had to recognize German sovereignty. However, it was inconceivable that it should have accepted a German entry into Western defence without a series of brakes and limits that were lower than those achieved with the EDC agreements.

Furthermore, as for the Italian delegation, it was essential that it presented itself to the conference with very clear ideas about its objectives in order to avoid unpreparedness towards the projects that were discussed; the European question should have not been abandoned, not least in view of the fact that it was precisely as a member of the Community of Six that Italy was invited, in preference to others, to discuss the problem of the use of the German factor in the Western defensive system¹⁴⁵.

As for the Government of Bonn, instead, as reported by the Ambassador to Bonn¹⁴⁶, Babuscio Rizzo, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the news of the British initiative did not raise many hopes for a rapid solution to the problem of German rearmament as the Conference seemed to be neither imminent nor hypothetical. Certainly, as the British Deputy High

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 31, Note of the General Directorate of International Cooperation.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 22, Telespr. by the Ambassador to Bonn, Babuscio Rizzo to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni.

Commissioner assessed, in order to avoid a new Brussels, it was extremely necessary to obtain a careful preparation. However, it was also generally recognised that the British initiative, regardless of the way in which it could develop, had already rendered “remarkable service by filling without wasting time the void created by the negative vote of the French National Assembly¹⁴⁷”. In fact, that vacuum was considered as dangerous for the public opinion of the European countries and especially for Germany.

With the usual cynicism that distinguished him, Quaroni¹⁴⁸ clarified to the Italian Government that there could not be any more misunderstandings or illusions about the significance of the EDC vote in the French Chamber; indeed, the EDC was rejected because there was no majority. Moreover, the number of votes that the EDC had, 264, corresponded, almost exactly, to the forecasts of all the people who had provided the exact information. In fact, as Quaroni pointed out, “it is not because Mendès-France was President of the Council that the EDC did not find a majority: it is because there was no majority for the EDC that Mendès-France became President of the Council¹⁴⁹”. One could even add that it is exactly because this majority was not there that Mendès-France, once he became President, did not change his mind. There were therefore no illusions: the EDC, the one signed two years ago, was “buried”: and with it, Quaroni feared, the idea of Europe realized through specialized supranational agencies. The main question to understand what could be done to limit the damage provoked by the non-ratification, if and to what extent this was possible. Mendès-France declared in Brussels and Paris, more diplomatically than publicly, that he recognized the need for the rearmament of Germany, the improvement of Franco-German relations and more than once, in all circles, its loyalty to Atlantic politics¹⁵⁰.

However, as for his loyalty to Atlantic politics, and more generally for all his foreign policy, the attitude of Mendès-France was rather ambiguous.¹⁵¹ Moreover, a further difficulty that was likely to occur consisted in the case in which the French government would have accepted the entry of Germany in the NATO; indeed, it was quite improbable that this would have obtained the approval of the French parliament, determining therefore a similar situation

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.; “un notevole servizio col riempire senza perdita di tempo il vuoto creato dal voto negativo dell’Assemblea Nazionale francese.”

¹⁴⁸ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 25, Reserved report by the Ambassador to Paris, Quaroni to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Piccioni.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.; “non è perché Mendès-France era Presidente del Consiglio che la CED non ha trovato una maggioranza: è perché non c’era maggioranza per la CED che Mendès-France è diventato Presidente del Consiglio.”

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

to the one in Brussels, where France would have advanced its projects whereas the other governments would have proposed serious modifications to them, leading to the failure within the French Parliament¹⁵². Quaroni recognized the complexity of this situation, where in the absence of a concrete British or American plan of action on the eve of this conference, the risk was that Italy would have found itself not only without the EDC but also without the Atlantic Pact¹⁵³. If that would have occurred, the only possible alternative was to close the Italian links with America even further. Quaroni recommended to the Italian government to be extremely calm and cautious and to avoid taking strong initiatives: “let us be calm, let us see how things turn out, let us not try to pull out the chestnuts from the fire for countries, parties or people who will not be grateful or who can do little to show their gratitude. Let us not forget that the situation is in the hands of the British¹⁵⁴”.

2.3 The appointment of Gaetano Martino and the London Conference

On March 26, 1954, however, the Montesi case, which had been initially dismissed, was officially reopened by the Appeal Courts of Rome. On September 19, the scandal was such that Attilio Piccioni felt obligated to resign as Foreign Minister and from all his official positions. He was then replaced by the liberal Gaetano Martino¹⁵⁵. It was therefore the latter who led the Italian delegation to the meeting held in the English capital. The London negotiations opened in late September 1954 and, as it was expected, the Italian authorities took a cautious attitude; while conforming to the substantial choices elaborated by Eden, in contrast to other delegations, they attempted to avoid any friction with Mendès-France in order to show some sort of understanding for the problems encountered by France during the ratification of the EDC¹⁵⁶. From a general perspective, the conference saw substantial commonality of interests among the parties, that among other aspects, ended up with an agreement in principle around the English plan and with a proactive intention to convene a further conference, to be held in Paris at the end of October, with the aim of finally bringing the negotiations concerning the Eden Plan to a conclusion¹⁵⁷. As for Italy, it must be affirmed that the London conference brought important outcomes on the bilateral level; in fact, a few days after the conference,

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.; “Stiamo tranquilli, stiamo a vedere come si mettono le cose, non cerchiamo di tirar fuori le castagne dal fuoco per paesi, partiti o persone che non ce ne saranno grati o che poco possono fare per mostrarci la loro gratitudine. Cerchiamo di lasciar venire le cose, e non ci dimentichiamo che la situazione è in mano agli inglesi”.

¹⁵⁵ A. Varsori, *Dalla Rinascita al Declino*, cit., p. 183.

¹⁵⁶ A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d'Europa?* cit., p. 124.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

with the decisive concurrence of the British government, an agreement- the so-called "memorandum of understanding,"- was reached, thanks to which a solution to the Julian problem was found through the substantial partition of the Free Territory of Trieste between Rome and Belgrade and the consequences return of the city of Trieste to full Italian sovereignty.¹⁵⁸ This was therefore the moment where the most difficult and lasting legacy of the Second World War peace treaty was closed. Although the agreement did not precisely meet the demands that had long characterized the Italian position (so much so that it was not even presented in Parliament since it was not a treaty), public opinion seemed overall quite satisfied with the possibility to put an end to what was perceived as a very painful chapter in the country's history. In this regard, the spontaneous demonstrations of jubilation by the population of Trieste upon the arrival of Italian troops in the city seemed to seal the crowning and, above all, the exhaustion of a national - in some cases nationalist - sentiment that had survived the end of fascism for some time¹⁵⁹.

At the end of October, the negotiations resumed in Paris, where three parallel conferences took place at which Italy, probably in the light of the great result already achieved in London, played a secondary role, in fact adapting to the decisions of the other powers¹⁶⁰. In the first conference, attended by all the members of NATO and the Federal Republic of Germany, it was sanctioned the entry of Bonn into the Atlantic Pact; in the second, which saw among the participants the three victorious powers of the Second World War (United States, Great Britain and France) plus the German representatives, there was the return for West Germany to full sovereignty; the third and last, which brought together the countries of the Treaty of Brussels plus the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy, led to the creation of the Western European Union¹⁶¹. It can be argued that the ratification of the WEU was carried out, albeit not without difficulties, within all the acceding States by the first half of 1955, thus allowing the completion of the Western defensive system and favouring the stabilization of the balances in Europe. This made the region less susceptible to Eastern influence.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ M. De Leonardis, *La « diplomazia atlantica » e la soluzione del problema di Trieste (1952-1954)*, Napoli, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1992.

¹⁶⁰ A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d'Europa?* cit., pp. 124-125.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

Chapter 3: The birth of the Western European Union: a parenthesis or a step forward in the process of European integration?

3.1 Towards the Paris Conference and the birth of the WEU

As stressed in the previous chapter, during the conference of London the Italian delegation led by Gaetano Martino took a cautious attitude during the conference and, while conforming to the basic choices drawn up by Eden, unlike other delegations, avoided any controversy with Mendès-France, trying to show, as they had done before, a form of understanding for the problems encountered by France during the ratification of the EDC. The conference ended with an agreement in principle around the British plan, and it was decided to convene a conference in Paris at the end of October to complete the discussion on such issues¹⁶².

In a letter¹⁶³ sent by Martino to Chancellor Adenauer, the former expressed his appreciation for the common work that had been performed by the Western Nations for a closer and more permanent understanding, and his conviction that the “common efforts made in London were really worthwhile in strengthening the free world and that the path taken will make it possible to make a decisive contribution to the maintenance of peace¹⁶⁴”. On the basis of these assumptions, he was then ready to travel to Paris in order to cooperate again to the achievement of those purposes.

The ambassador to Brussels, Grazzi sought to clarify the situation in the aftermath of the London Conference by reporting his views on the Belgian document on the functioning of the Brussels Pact to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs¹⁶⁵; the framework deriving from that Pact had to be intended as the basis for any future action. In this regard, the preamble spoke of “resserrer les liens économiques, culturels et sociaux qui les unissent déjà” (the Contracting Parties) and it stated the necessity to “constituer en Europe Occidentale une base solide pour la reconstruction de l'économie européenne¹⁶⁶.” On the other hand, the concept of coordinating economic activities for the purpose of harmonizing production and developing trade was

¹⁶² A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d'Europa?* cit., pp. 124-125.

¹⁶³ DII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 159, Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs Martino to the Chancel of Federal Republic of Germany, Adenauer.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid; “gli sforzi comuni compiuti a Londra hanno realmente valso a rafforzare il mondo libero e che la via intrapresa permetterà di recare un contributo decisivo al mantenimento della pace.”

¹⁶⁵ DII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 160. Telespr. from the Ambassador to Brussels, Grazzi, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid; “strengthen the economic, cultural and social ties that already unite them” (the Contracting Parties) and it stated the necessity to “build a solid foundation in Western Europe for the reconstruction of the European economy”.

clearly set forth in Art. I°. The social and cultural spheres were set out by Art. 2 and 3 respectively, while, on the other hand, nothing was said or hinted at as to the formation of a common political authority, or, rather, the development of the concept of a political will that either went outside the sphere of the executive (Foreign Ministers) and referred to an assembly of representatives, or created, perhaps through majority voting, a directorate that imposed a will superior to that of the individual participating governments. However, after the London conference, Grazzi was able to identify two innovations in this field: the majority voting for certain issues, predominantly if not exclusively military, and the activity of reporting to the Strasbourg Assembly. Thus, according to this perspective, on the one hand, it can be argued that the London Conference marked a step forward in the political field compared to the situation created by the original Treaty, while on the other hand the implementation in the economic and social areas that already existed had not until then yielded appreciable results. As regards to the analysis of the study document prepared by the Belgian Ministry, Grazzi drew a conclusion according to which it can be argued that the original “charpente” of the treaty to which they were called, presented, from the standpoint of statements of principle, favourable bases for expansion and use in accordance with the interests of Italian policy.¹⁶⁷ The same could not be said, however, as regards to the institutional authorities and their powers, and even less, about the use that had been made in practice of the possibilities, whether few or many, that the original instrument offered. However, “starting from the circumstance that military tasks will necessarily make the association as lively as the means it will be called upon to dispose of”, it was possible to establish some, though not numerous, basic points from which to begin a progressive action. This was intended first of all to embrace the economic sector also in order to rely on the interest of countries such as those of the Benelux; and only empirically bring together the activities of this as well as of the cultural and social sectors in an efficient permanent Commission and in an Advisory Council which would become a de facto European Directory. Therefore, the observations that could be drawn from the reading of the Belgian document mainly relied on the necessity to demand, from the outset, a very narrow set of basic determinations¹⁶⁸.

Moreover, as the General Directorate of International Cooperation reported to Martino¹⁶⁹, the London Working Group finalized the draft protocol for the accession of Germany and Italy to the Brussels Pact. However, the text drafted at the London Conference

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Documenti sulla politica internazionale dell'Italia, DD n° 161, Secret note from the General Directorate of International Cooperation to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino.

and annexed to the Final Act of the Conference itself was modified in the following way: first, the new name being proposed for the Organization, namely "Western European Union" was inserted (the Germans were in favour of the name "European Union"); second, it was considered to include an article specifying that the deliberations of the WEU Council shall be taken unanimously, subject to exceptions (of simple or qualified) specifically agreed upon by the 7 Powers (the Belgians were in favour of a formula whereby a simple majority would have sufficed for all cases in which a different manner was not expressly stipulated). The London Working Group also dealt with the decision taken in London that the WEU Council had to submit an annual report to the Delegates of the 7 Powers in the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe. However, some legal and practical questions arose; Belgians and Germans thought that the Delegates of the 7 Powers would have constituted, for the purposes of the aforementioned annual report, an Assembly separate from that of the Council of Europe¹⁷⁰. In addition, the London Working Group also pronounced itself on the question of the Organization and Seat of the WEU Council issue which evidently had a fundamental political aspect. In this regard, the NATO Secretary General, Lord Ismay, had pointed out the technical reasons why he believed that the WEU Council had to be constituted in a similar way to the Atlantic Council, i.e., having Ministers' Representatives in permanent session; thus, he considered it convenient that the Permanent Representatives would have been the same in both Councils and that the Councils would have been located in the same place (namely Paris). Instead, the London Working Group agreed that the WEU Council, albeit organized in permanent session like the Atlantic Council, should have resided in London. Particularly firm on this point were the British, who also made a move in this regard at the Italian Ministry. As regards with the Americans, although they were in favour of the proposal of Ismay, they maintained general cautious attitude of "observation". Concerning the seat of the Armament Control Agency, the majority pronounced for Paris (only the Germans suggested London) while the idea, which also came from the Paris Working Group, of creating a permanent WEU Council Commission in Paris to ensure liaison was rejected¹⁷¹. The London Working Group then deemed it necessary that the commitments made by Britain to maintain British troops on the European continent and by Germany to refrain from manufacturing certain armaments had to receive a more precise and binding legal formulation. To this purpose, it drew up a draft protocol which was also intended to be annexed to the protocol of accession of Italy and Germany to the Brussels Pact: this draft, still at the working paper stage, was sent for further

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

definition to the Paris Commission¹⁷². The London Working Group also dealt with questions concerning German and Italian acceptance of the jurisdiction of the High Court of Justice in The Hague and it mentioned the problem of sharing WEU expenses.

Regarding the Paris Commission for matters related to the organization of the Brussels Treaty, it had several tasks: firstly, the fixation of force maximums, which was agreed in a special agreement provided for in the London decisions to be annexed to the protocol of accession of Italy and Germany to the Brussels Pact. This agreement indicated, in a schematic way, for each country the number of divisions and aircraft. For Italy the figures envisaged were 16 1/2 divisions for peacetime (and with authority then to constitute others for mobilization) and 1350 aircraft, which implied that the Italian request for changes from the EDC Special Agreement had been granted¹⁷³.

As far as the navy was concerned, the agreement did not fix levels: express reference was made to the decisions to be taken at the annual review, with the stipulation that for Germany the levels provided for at the time in the EDC Special Agreement were not exceeded. This agreement (which had to be ratified) also reproduced, in another article, London's decisions in principle regarding the possibilities and methods of possible modification of the maximums specified in the agreement, as well as those regarding inspections and controls. Secondly, it was underway the finalization of the draft protocol establishing the Arms Control Agency, which specified its composition, its functions with particular regard to inspections and controls, and the method of ascertaining maximum allowable stocks. The system envisaged imports control limited to the European continent as to have a reduced weight on nations that had overseas defence needs and could be allowed to keep under national control, for other needs specific to them, part of their Armed Forces. However, the Italian Defence Staff expressed concern about the powers, which it considered excessive, assigned to the Agency. These concerns also regarded the more unfavourable position, with respect to other countries, in which Italy, as well as Germany, would have found itself in relation with the various exemptions enjoyed by Nations with overseas needs. The Italian Defence Staff also believed in the principle that the office of Director of the Agency had to rotate among all Member States in turn and that in general the interference of the Agency had to be limited¹⁷⁴. Thirdly, in terms of the definition of armaments subject to control, the Commission prepared a draft protocol, also to be annexed to the above-mentioned Protocol of Accession,

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

reproducing in substance the decisions of principle adopted in the London Final Act (manufacturing waivers and stockpile limitation) and lists indicating the armaments to which these decisions referred. However, discussions on these lists revealed a contrast between the French Delegation, whose wish was to extend control to as many materials as possible, and the majority of the other Delegations (particularly those of the Netherlands and Belgium), which, by contrast, tended to limit the control to a small number of major armaments. Finally, the issue concerning the definition of general principles for agreement about the internal defence and police forces was postponed to later decisions to be made within the Brussels Treaty Organization¹⁷⁵.

As far as the Paris Commission on NATO-related issues, it had the following tasks: firstly, it had to prepare Germany's accession to NATO. In this sense, after an initial discussion about the form to be given to the related instrument, that of an invitation protocol was chosen, as was done for Greece and Turkey at the time. This protocol recalled in the preamble the "tripartite security declaration" and in the text it substantially reproduced the provisions of Articles 1, 3 and 4 of the protocol for the accession of Greece and Turkey. Secondly, it had to determine the new powers to be given to the Atlantic Commands. The Commission had studied in this regard a document which should have taken the form of an Atlantic Council resolution: it referred to (1) the obligation to make available to NATO all forces stationed in the Atlantic Command area with the exceptions provided for; (2) the increase in the powers of the Atlantic Command for (as regards the deployment of forces; (3) the integration of forces; (4) the increase in the Supreme Allied Commander Europe's responsibilities and attributions in logistical matters; and (5) the powers of inspection given to the Atlantic Command. This document, however, raised once again concerns in the Italian Defence Staff, which considered many of the provisions under consideration to be very burdensome and likely to seriously jam the free movement of the national military readiness as well as to create new financial concerns for Italy. Among other aspects, the system envisaged allowed the Atlantic Commands not only to take action to prevent evasion at maximum commitments but also to claim for any shortfalls from minimums. The Italian Defence Staff also emphasized again in its remarks the fact that the major consequences of a system of constraints, designed to surround German rearmament with limitations, could result in a performance whose impact would have been greater for Italy, as well as Germany, with respect to the other States. Thirdly, the Commission prepared a text noting the adherence of all NATO members to the "Tripartite Security Declaration" made by

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

the 3 occupying powers at the London Conference. As the General Directorate of International Cooperation affirmed, it was then necessary for Italy to prepare its declaration of accession in such form as it deemed appropriate¹⁷⁶.

The main points of the documents and the work carried out by the Committees were also discussed by Magistrati in a Ministerial reunion¹⁷⁷ chaired by Martino. In this examination, he tackled some issues deriving from such documents: on the problem posed by paragraph 12 of the London Final Act (the annual report of the Brussels Organization to the delegates of the seven in the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe); he also mentioned the desire expressed in the framework of the ECSC on the possibility of resuming consideration of using the Common Assembly for such a report, and he noted that this was a matter on which the ministers in Paris had to pronounce¹⁷⁸. The same was valid for the question of the headquarters of the Brussels Organization. Regarding the constitution of the Council of the Brussels Organization (to be called the Council of the Western European Union), he mentioned the inappropriateness of its being made up of the Ambassadors of the six Powers accredited in London, as it had been the case with the then Brussels Advisory Council. He pointed out that this had also been clearly expressed by the Dutch, who emphasized the uneasy position in which foreign Ambassadors would have found themselves in vis-à-vis the Foreign Office in the event that they were to take opposite positions to those of the British representative¹⁷⁹.

He added that on the American and Canadian side the British proposal to keep the headquarters of the organization in London was not viewed with favourably. Finally, he noted an interesting development that occurred during the Paris proceedings according to which it appeared that the Dutch and Belgians did not renew the commitment they had already made in London in terms of not manufacturing A B C weapons¹⁸⁰. Moreover, at the invitation of Minister Magistrati, Prof. Perassi illustrated the draft Italian declaration on the acceptance of the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice and explained the scope of the reservations manifested in this acceptance. After mentioning the question of the distribution of expenses of the Brussels Organization, Minister Magistrati examined the work done by the Paris Committees and in particular the question of setting maximums of forces, the problem of the publicity to be given to these understandings, and the question of the Arms Control Agency.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 162, Report of the Ministerial reunion.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

Concerning this last point, he expressed the same concerns of the Italian Defence Staff that were previously mentioned, namely that more onerous commitments arose from it for countries that did not have military needs overseas. He also pointed out that a very rigid French position was to be expected partly because it seemed that on the French side “there is a desire not so much to control the product as the machine that produces it¹⁸¹”, a position which, as Belcredi noted, had found the full support of the British. On the issue of notification to the Agency of external aid, it is relevant to highlight that it appeared in Paris that the Canadians were intended to interpret this notification as being limited to the procedure and not to the amount of aid, representing therefore an indication of Canadian distrust of the new Organization. In addition, Magistrati analysed NATO issues, namely the protocol for the accession of Germany and the problem of expanding the powers of the NATO Commands¹⁸². On this issue Belcredi explained how in the Committee the Italian delegate was almost always isolated and that therefore in substance a considerable strengthening of Supreme Allied Commander Europe's powers was accepted in the approved resolution. He noted, however, that, at the request of the Danish delegate, the Paris Committee approved a statement by which, from a legal perspective, the scope of the provisions contained in the approved resolution was toned down, although in the practical field this scope was effective. Finally, concerning the question of Italy's accession to the tripartite declaration on security, Minister Del Balzo assured that it was going to be prepared by his General Directorate.

As regards to the observations and the instructions for the Italian Delegation in light of the above considerations, Minister Martino noted first of all that with regard to the problem of the parliamentary body that was to receive the annual report of the Brussels Organization, the decisions reached in London were to make such a communication to the delegations of the seven countries in the Assembly of the Council of Europe. That is, it was a different body from the Consultative Assembly and as a consequence, he did not perceive the need for an authorization procedure on the part of the Council of Europe Assembly. His opinion was rather that a new Secretariat had to be created for such an Assembly of Seven and he did not have special preference for the Strasbourg Assembly, while he was personally willing to review the London decisions in favour of a report to the ECSC Assembly. On the question of the composition of the Western European Union Council, Minister Martino supported the Dutch proposal that it could not be composed of the Ambassadors in London. He also reported that

¹⁸¹ Ibid; “si voglia non tanto controllare il prodotto quanto la macchina che lo produce”.

¹⁸² Ibid.

the Ambassador of the Netherlands confirmed to him the Dutch intention to withdraw in Paris the commitment made in London by the Benelux to refrain from the manufacture of A B C weapons. However, he was well aware that this could cause serious difficulties in Paris because Germany would have found itself in an openly discriminated against position. On NATO issues, Minister Martino highlighted that as early as London he had occasion to point out the error of the French in insisting on matching NATO minimums with Brussels maximums. This was not only a practical issue but above all a theoretical one. He also manifested the view that in Paris it was not convenient to insist on the opportunity to set limits that did not coincide¹⁸³. In this regard, Belcredi pointed out that at the Committee in Paris, the representative of the Standing Group admitted that some of the Brussels ceilings were too low. He also drew attention to the list of arms subject to control, emphasizing the action taken by Ambassador Alessandrini to keep this list within the strictest limits. He then mentioned the problem of the geographical areas covered by the agreements; while there had been discussions in London of a "European continent," the Turkish had opposed to such wording in Paris. The discussions ended with an agreement on the expression "Supreme Allied Commander Europe area" with the exclusion of North Africa from U.S. naval forces in the Mediterranean and British forces in Malta¹⁸⁴.

As for Minister Taviani, he first noted that "¹⁸⁵we must not lose sight of the underlying problem". The London Conference was a success in this regard because after the collapse of the EDC, "it saved what could be saved and achieved German participation in the defence of Europe." However, many problems remained. In particular, the need for the European Union and Italian military requirements. Concerning the latter, Minister Taviani pointed out that it was in Italy's interest to integrate as little as possible while concerning the former, Minister Taviani showed scepticism towards the possibility that the Brussels pact could become anything more than a political-military alliance. If that was the case, it came the question whether to avoid a military integration to which other integrations did not correspond¹⁸⁶.

After mentioning the serious aspects deriving from the financing of Italian defence, Minister Taviani expressed the opinion that in Paris the Italian Delegation should have followed a line of resistance by avoiding supporting the French demands, opposing the attempt to centralize in the Brussels Organization the distribution of aid, and trying to diminish the possibilities of controls as much as possible. Furthermore, it was extremely important to

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid; ""occorre non perdere di vista il problema di fondo".

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

achieve the acceptance of the rotation criterion in the leadership of the Control Agency as well as to safeguard autonomy as much as possible even according to the Danish formula. It was also necessary to understand how to set the problem of the Standing Group, establishing as an absolute condition the Italian admission in case of German admission. Regarding the problem of the possible admission of new states such as Turkey or the Scandinavian states, he stressed the importance of maintaining a geographical balance, while from a strictly military perspective, it would have been in Italian interest to have Yugoslavia join the Brussels Organization¹⁸⁷.

The Head of the Representation before the Atlantic Council, Alessandrini, referred¹⁸⁸ to Martino that the work of the preparation of the Paris Conference occurred in an atmosphere that was certainly affected by the sense of relief that spread in Western circles after the London Agreement was reached. They were, however, influenced by perplexities and concerns of the Representatives of the various countries, especially with regard to the defence of individual national interests. Indeed, while concordantly admitting the need to ensure the respect of the London Accords, each Delegation - with the exception of the three Benelux States - followed its own plan and sought to achieve its own end. Concerning the direction of the work, that was essentially and exclusively British. Elected chairman on the obviously agreed proposal of Canada, Ambassador Steel immediately took, and maintained throughout the course of the work, a directorial attitude, intolerant of all relief and interference. He installed, unsolicited, an English Chairman in every Commission and in every Working Group and proceeded, from the first day, to present non-agreed drafts from pure English sources. According to Alessandrini, the persistence of the British decision to hold the leadership of the new European Organization appeared clearly throughout the proceedings and at every level. At the same time, the British delegation showed its full determination to achieve the success of the work undertaken¹⁸⁹.

As far as the French attitude was concerned, Alessandrini recognized that it had always been extremely cautious. There was the general impression that the conduct of Couve de Murville demonstrated his willingness to try to come on his own initiative, to the aid of others while evidently being instructed to satisfy French interests by obtaining: a) the greatest possible control not only over armament levels but also over production processes; b) the least

¹⁸⁷ Ibid;

¹⁸⁸ Documenti sulla politica internazionale dell'Italia, DD n° 164; From the Head of Representation to the Atlantic, Alessandrini, to Council to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

possible obligations, and all possible exceptions, in favour of French overseas forces and their armaments. However, French requests and refusals, on the basis of the two aforementioned criteria, were incessantly present and they often came to block fundamental decisions. In this regard, Alessandrini highlighted that the texts of the Protocols prepared were full of French reservations or reservations of other countries provoked by French demands which would have certainly represented a burden for the conference at the Ministerial level¹⁹⁰. Despite this French effort to achieve in technical terms the greatest possible advantages in favour of its own intentions, it could be perceived the French desire to avoid an unsuccessful work. In this sense, it must be noted that Mendès-France, through its representatives, took extreme care not only to affirm, on the one hand, those principles that are classic of French national interests, but also, to keep open, on the other hand, “all doors and all windows for a European composition¹⁹¹”. French conciliatory tendency had indeed manifested itself tangibly and with the concurrence of public opinion. At the same time, the Italian Delegation demonstrated once again a cautious attitude towards the French, as to avoid hindering the French which still found itself in a precarious position at the public opinion level. Except, therefore, for a few occasions, on which the French evidently tended to exaggerate, the Italian delegation maintained a sympathetic line in regard to French attitudes¹⁹².

As far as the German conduct was concerned, the Germans' conduct was calm, flat and constantly receptive. The interventions of the German delegation were rare, and their reservations limited. Its main goal was to bring the Paris conferences to positive results and to obtain ratification of those results, postponing to a following moment the emergence of possible issues. On a few essential points, however, the Delegation was likely to commit itself in that moment: on the location of the Agency, for example, for which the Germans wanted to avoid the choice of Paris as to limit French influence. In this endeavour German tendencies could be identified with British ones. In other areas, such as controls, for example, German tendencies seems to be in parallel with the Italian ones¹⁹³.

The Americans had been, and remained, silent while “witnessing, almost with resignation, the attempt, as much British as French, to exclude America from direct participation in European affairs”. Nevertheless, in Alessandrini’s opinion, American would have accepted and adapted to the creation, alongside NATO, of the new WEU, from which they were excluded. However, a discontent attitude characterised all American

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid; “tutte le porte e tutte le finestre per una composizione europea”.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

Representatives and agents in Paris and therefore, as Alessandrini highlighted, it was important that the Italian Delegation took any opportunity to testify to the Americans, during the coming days, Italian fundamental loyalty to the Atlantic Organization. The Canadian attitude had been almost analogous to the American one¹⁹⁴.

The leading positions were held in this context, as in London, by the Benelux countries who were largely active in defending the legacy of the EDC and attempting to oppose positions of French privilege as much as possible. Toward the end of the proceedings a certain détente was noted, but it was quite evident that Spaak and Beyen would have, during the coming conferences, returned on the several issues that were still left under reserve¹⁹⁵.

The Italian overall conduct was intermediate as it could be expected. More precisely, it had been marked by the necessary firmness on certain issues that were fundamental to national interests. These last ones were satisfied on such basic points as those of the level of forces and the preconditions for fair representation in the new bodies. In some points the Italian Delegation associated itself with Belgian-Dutch statements and reservations, especially when French positions went at the detriment of Italian interests. Generally, the aspects on which the Italian Delegation felt unable to revendicate its own interests were the same points on which the other countries were not able to either because, in most cases, of the reservations and referrals at the Ministerial level. The most relevant among such matters are those relating to: (a) the seat of the WEU Council; (b) the seat and composition of the Agency; (c) the appropriateness or otherwise of establishing, as was originally planned and as some countries reserved the right to propose again, an "Armaments Commission" as an intermediate body between the Council and the Agency; (d) the project for a "Working Group" designed to prepare proposals for the production and standardization of armaments; (e) the determination of force levels and their publicity; (f) the competence of the Agency; and (g) the attributions to Supreme Allied Commander Europe¹⁹⁶.

With regard to the first point, the choice seemed to be, at that point, London, which corresponded not only to the general interest but also to that of Italy, because of a certain parallelism between the Italian conceptions and those of England. Indeed, placing NATO and the WEU in two different locations could favour their differentiation and limit, to some extent, a certain degree of duplication, in part inevitable. Regarding the second point, it seemed to be convenient, contrary to Germans' preference, for the Agency to be based in Paris in order to

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

enhance a close and necessary cooperation with NATO as envisaged by the various protocols. On the controversial question of the "Armaments Commission" invented by Steel and hitherto opposed by the Foreign Office, it was in the Italian interest to obtain its approval. Indeed, if the Agency was not based in London, its functioning would have been more difficult without having the possibility of referring regularly, for matters, of medium and small importance, to a body invested locally with the necessary powers. Furthermore, it seemed to be evident that the existence of the Commission would have ensured the presence of one of the Italian Representatives in the immediate direction of the Agency's guidelines¹⁹⁷. In terms of the proposal for the establishment of a "Working Group", that was identified with the well-known French project of an armaments pool. This question was certainly a complex one and will be tackled again in a later paragraph; the perspective that appeared the most convenient for Italian interests was to avoid European directorates in the field of armaments production which would have not provided the country with guarantees and holdings similar to those obtained by the Coal and Steel Community. Concerning the level of forces, Italy had obtained its desired ones; however, the question of the publicity to be given to the figures adopted remained unresolved. Already, as a result of these interventions, the figures relating to manpower had been deleted while only the figures relating to divisions to aircraft remained, which seemed to represent a step in the direction desired by the Italian Delegation. Regarding the competence of the Agency, they were full of reservations, some of them fundamental and directed to prevent excessive control and interference in the Italian industries and production processes. Certainly, the Italian main goal was to arrive, in this delicate field, at final determinations that were not too burdensome for its autonomy in the military field and for its protection in the industrial field¹⁹⁸.

However, according to Alessandrini, the most serious question was that related to the existence and coexistence of the two Western Organizations, NATO and WEU: a coexistence which was certainly not easy. To testify this, Lord Ismay wrote to Eden pointing out all the flaws and drawbacks inherent in the creation of two "duplicates" having more or less the same tasks, even if those tasks were considered as the "minimum" for NATO, and the "maximum" for the WEU, in the effort of the various countries for common defence. Lord Ismay, and with him Steel, were immediately called to order by the Foreign Office, and were immediately appeased. However, it was a fact that the two mechanisms could appear interfering, and sometimes even contradictory. Therefore, future disputes, misunderstandings, and conflicts of

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

competence could be expected between the two Organizations. If, however, the two Organizations could, despite the obvious shortcomings that their simultaneous existence entailed, ultimately ensure the welding together of Western forces, the possible inconveniences could be even regulated. In this context, Italy had certainly interest to make its own contribution to solve inconveniences and difficulties in both Organizations. In fact, on the one hand, the creation of the WEU was an undeniable new step toward that European integrative process which had been and continued to be a constant goal of Italian foreign policy; on the other hand, the strengthening of NATO was relevant as it intended to ensure the continued cooperation of the Americans, who directed their policy and hopes on the Atlantic Organization viewed as the certain basis and supreme guarantee of Western security¹⁹⁹.

There were still several points that needed to be submitted to the Conference of Nine on October 21 and the Atlantic Council on the 22nd for consideration. The documents on which there was no agreement were those on control over the Armaments Agency. Regarding Annex IV of Protocol No. III concerning Arms Control, Alessandrini highlighted that the complete list of all categories of armaments that had to be subject to the control of the Agency was one of the most relevant issues and was still open. The failure to reach agreement was mainly due to the persistent disagreement between the French Delegation, which insisted on extending as much as possible the categories of armaments to be subjected to control, and the other Delegations, which instead argued in favour of a much narrower list. However, the acceptance of the French Delegation's viewpoint implied a possible loss in terms of the effectiveness of the control itself and also extending controls to areas where it was difficult if not impossible to make a separation between civilian and military production (e.g., in the field of explosives or aviation engines), and that control over machinery, as requested by the French Delegation, would have meant a serious hindrance to civilian industry in the member countries as well as a practically unlimited extension of Agency controls. Finally, it was noted that the control over firearms made the control over ammunition and explosives superfluous. Italy proposed to reduce the list, insisting, in particular that the 90-caliber categories and jet aviation engines were removed from the controls, given the interest of these items for Italy's industry. Regarding Protocol No. IV on the Western European Union Arms Control Agency, the Ambassador pointed out the importance of the choice of the Agency's location at the ministerial meeting, about which there was an almost unanimous implicit agreement for that location to be Paris, which was certainly favourable from an organizational viewpoint given

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

the tasks it was called upon to perform exclusively on the Continent and given its constant liaison with the military authorities and the NATO Secretariat. Under these conditions, it would have been convenient, again from an organizational point of view, to set up in the same location as the Agency what was destined to be the Council's political directive on the Agency (the Armaments Commission). As already mentioned, the relations that the new organization would have had with NATO was certainly an extremely controversial question, whose dimension was largely political; while some recommended the strengthening of the WEU through a concentration of its organs in a location other than NATO (such as London), others recommended, on the other hand, to avoid a dangerous weakening of NATO (and a release of American interest), as a consequence of a loosening of ties, including geographical ones, between them and the European Organization. In terms of the Agency's functions, Alessandrini observed that, with regard to the Agency's the text of paragraph (a) of No. 1 of Art. 7 contained a sentence on which it had not been possible to reach agreement, and which was precisely intended to specify that the Agency, in that control function, had to turn its attention exclusively to finished products and not already also to manufacturing processes. This was requested by the majority of the Delegations that believed in the appropriateness of enshrining this principle explicitly in order to avoid undue interference with manufacturing processes in countries that had made commitments not to manufacture certain categories of armaments and not to create discrimination between them and other countries that had not made such commitments. The French Delegation, while stating that it agreed in substance, insisted instead that this principle should have not been explicitly mentioned citing reasons of "presentation" to the French public and Parliament. The issue was therefore complex, and Italy had all interest to maintain the sentence contained in the text of the paragraph. As a final point, Alessandrini suggested to secure an appropriate qualitative position in the bodies of the Agency given the extensive powers provided for it. Another question was certainly that related to the inclusion of a clause allowing the admission of new members of the Atlantic Community to the new Brussels pact. This was for instance advanced by Turkey²⁰⁰.

When it came to the Atlantic Council, Minister Martino²⁰¹ considered it appropriate to give a brief account of the agreements that Italy had reached for Trieste, highlighting that these protocols put an end to a long and bitter controversy and to a dangerous state of tension between Italy and Yugoslavia, which undoubtedly constituted causes of weakness, and even

²⁰⁰ DP II, DD n° 166, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», Note of the conversation between the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino, and the Turkish Ambassador to Rome.

²⁰¹ DP II, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 167, Declaration of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino.

risk, for the Atlantic Alliance itself. This occurred in the hope to pave the way for a new phase in relations between Italy and Yugoslavia. Minister Martino also stressed, as a final point, that the reception that the Soviet Union had given to the agreements, in contrast to the line of conduct constantly followed for years, could be interpreted as a proof of the effectiveness of the Atlantic method, consisting in the patient and tenacious search for solutions based on fairness and reason²⁰².

Furthermore, in a secret telegram²⁰³ that Martino sent to Scelba, the former provided a synthesis of the achievements obtained during the Conference of Nine and the Atlantic Council, that, in his opinion, were both held in a relaxed atmosphere in which issues left unresolved by the Expert Commissions were easily resolved. Regarding the Conference of Nine, the Western European Union Council Headquarters were established in London where, until the ratification, the Representatives of the seven Powers would have constituted an Interim Committee. The Control Agency headquarters, instead, were established in Paris but no plans had been made yet to constitute the Paris Armaments Commission. For the maximum force tables, there was a general formula referring to levels and characteristics of the special EDC agreement, establishing for Italy a maximum aircraft level equal to 1350. Regarding the material lists to be subject to control, there was an agreement on some categories thanks to a reduced French insistence. On the issue of armament production instead, plans and standardization, following new French pressure the planned exchange of letters was changed to a resolution setting January 17 as the starting date for the activity of the working group charged with studying the issue. Finally, as regards to the Director Control Agency, Martino's intervention in favour of establishing the rotation principle by nationality enhance the non-re-election of the Director²⁰⁴.

Regarding the achievements obtained during the Atlantic Council, there was a resolution increasing the powers of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe approved in terms agreed by the working group and all countries associated themselves to the tripartite security statement made in London. The approval of the protocol inviting Germany to join NATO greeted with general sympathetic statements. At end of brief session Dulles recognized that the US Government followed with satisfaction the results achieved²⁰⁵.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 168, Secret Telegram from the Minister of Foreign Affairs Martino, to the Minister of the Council, Scelba.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

The chargé d'affaires in Washington, Lucioli, referred to Martino²⁰⁶ that the Paris Accords were received with lively satisfaction in the American Government circles. To mark his satisfaction President Eisenhower, contrary to his established practice, went to meet Dulles at the airport. The Secretary of State, in a brief statement to the journalists, stressed the importance of the spirit of cooperation that had arisen in Europe from the new agreements. The press, which had been following the negotiations assiduously, also registered the importance of the goals achieved. However, some comments denounced some concern about the dilatory effects that the new Soviet initiative could have on the ratification as well as the possible repercussions of the solution for Sarre, which was really putting pressure on the parties and the public opinion in Germany²⁰⁷.

The General Director of International Cooperation, Magistrati, in a reserved note²⁰⁸, synthesized the main points of the Paris Conference; according to his perspective, the "historical fact" that really characterized these Paris meetings was the entry of the Federal Republic of Germany on an equal footing, at least formally, in terms of rights and duties, into the ranks of the Western array and, consequently, into the Atlantic Organization. Such a "fact" could be certainly considered a major success in the achievement of which the moderation and restraint which Chancellor Adenauer and his collaborators had consistently shown, especially in very recent times, undoubtedly contributed and which had seen Germany choosing to resume the path of Western European cooperation. Time, moreover, seemed to be working rather for Germany, including on the Sarrese question, and thus Germanic intemperance and precipitation were not productive²⁰⁹.

However, not all countries accepted, with true enthusiasm, this reestablishment, in fact and in law, of Germany's powers. Characteristic, in this regard, was the circumstance that not all countries wished to make express mention, at the time of the Conference's adoption of the Protocol of Accession, of their feelings of satisfaction. The Danish Representative, for example, even wished to insist, at the very moment when Chancellor Adenauer was sitting, for the first time, albeit as a mere observer, at the Atlantic table, on the inferior conditions in which the Danish minorities found themselves in the German territory of Schleswig-

²⁰⁶ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 170, Secret Telegram from the Chargé d'Affaires in Washington, Lucioli, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 171, Secret note of the General Director of International Cooperation, Magistrati.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

Holstein²¹⁰. Moreover, it must be acknowledged that Mendès-France was making a remarkable effort for the formation, albeit on different bases and with new directions, of a certain Western European consciousness. The fact, in addition, that the government in Paris really wanted to demonstrate its intention to give an effective new beginning also to the direct and serious problems, political and economic as well as historical and psychological, of Franco-Germany, was certainly a positive fact to consider. As for England, it seemed to be concretely moving forward on the path of cooperation with the Western European continent, assuming, in a certain way, the responsibility of leadership: a situation which may still raise questions and even distrusts as to the ultimate aims, but which undoubtedly made it possible to draw Europe out of the serious position of last summer. Washington government, though still sensitive to the "hand burnings" brought back by the failure of the EDC and the fear of repeating the mistake of identifying its position and intentions with the developments of an "all too purely European policy", appeared to be evolving and again inclined to imagine its own action of cooperation and assistance toward Europe²¹¹. Italy, on its part, appeared to take considerable advantage of a certain position of greater relief and freedom of movement due, especially, to the agreements reached on the Trieste question and to its ability to have, without delay, understood what the terms and beginnings of the new forms of European cooperation were. The Italian Delegate was thus able to develop that conciliatory action between the opposing theses which had already been outlined during the previous London Conference; an action which made it possible to obtain explicit recognition both from the German side (Minister Martino received greetings from Adenauer for expressing Italian satisfaction at seeing the German nation return to the Atlantic Alliance) and from the French side (President Mendès-France emphasized the spirit of understanding and sympathy shown, with regard to French action, by the Italian Representative). Italy, moreover, had, by its initiative with regard to the adoption of European parliamentary controls on the action of the WEU, testified that that it fully endorsed the general principles, for a pro-European start-up, which had been the hallmark of the international action of the Government of Rome in recent years²¹². In this sense, the prompt adhesion, given by Italy to the initiative aimed at facilitating the first studies regarding a planned and possible "pool" for the production of armaments showed how Italy, on the one hand was aware of the political and economic importance of such an element and, on the other hand, wished from the first moment, to affirm the absolute internationality of projects of such a nature. The Benelux countries gave their more complete adherence to the

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Ibid.

new positions and renounced certain polemical approaches that had characterized the action of their Representatives during the London Conference, especially against France²¹³. As for Belgium, the London Accords were received in the country with satisfaction, tempered by concern about the possibility of a too close Franco-German agreement and its prevalent interest for the economic integration²¹⁴. Certainly, new contrasts could still emerge on the issue of arms production controls when the relevant bodies of the Western European Union would have started to operate. Ultimately, according to Magistrati²¹⁵, the Paris Accords constituted an important positive "sticking point" for new developments of Western cooperation, especially considering the situation that occurred just some months before.

The chargé d'affaires in Washington, Lucioli admitted to Martino²¹⁶ to recognise that the European situation had not returned exactly to where it was a year or two ago. There was in fact, at that moment, greater diversification in the position of individual European countries in relation to the United States. Britain, since the London conference, seemed to have taken a more active and in some respects distinct part in European affairs from that of the United States. France was certainly a factor of uncertainty rather than firmness. Germany reappeared on Europe as a sovereign nation, highly respected by the United States and perhaps ready to be tomorrow as bold in demanding as it has been hitherto in renouncing and in waiting. Therefore, in a long-term perspective, Italy could face itself with the need to move in a relatively fluid situation where its action could be guided by two basic directives: fidelity to European federalist ideals, which had already inspired its action in the past, and the ever-increasing development of political, economic and military collaboration with the United States²¹⁷. Certainly, recent events such as the Italian attitude in the conferences, which corrected, at least for practical purposes, the effects of the non-ratification of the EDC and the signing of the "facilities" agreement could lead of strengthening of the cooperation between Italy and the United States, even with hope for American support for the Italian government's plans to consolidate the national economy. However, according to the United States, after the

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 172, Telespr. from the Ambassador to Brussels, Grazi, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

²¹⁵ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 171, Secret note of the General Director of International Cooperation, Magistrati.

²¹⁶ DPII, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 173, Report from the Chargé d'Affaires, Lucioli, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

resolution of the question of Trieste, there was still the need to enhance a vigorous action against the Communist party to enable the country to take a substantial step forward on the road to democratic rebirth. In addition, nothing better could be done than to rapidly initiate, with prospects of prompt conclusion, the procedure for the ratification of the WEU²¹⁸.

The General Directorate of International Cooperation reported in a note²¹⁹, on October 29, the following aspects that had been so far achieved; the United States, France, and the United Kingdom had reached an agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany for the restoration of West German sovereignty and the termination of the occupation regime. Moreover, Italy and the Federal Republic of Germany joined the new Western European Union. However, this accession was linked to the stipulation and acceptance by the participating countries, of four Special Protocols: (a) Protocol concerning the changes made to the text of the old Brussels Treaty (abandonment of any mention of a possible policy of aggression on the part of Germany and a commitment to take the necessary measures in order to "promote the unity and encourage the progressive integration of Europe"); (b) Protocol on the definition of the maximum military forces of the participating countries. For the former EDC Treaty countries, the limits provided for in the special agreement were set, with some slight modifications, and for the United Kingdom the forces that were permanently deployed on the European continent. The following were provided: for Italy 16 and a half divisions, for France 18 divisions, for Germany 12; (c) Protocol on Arms Control. This Protocol concerned the interdiction of the manufacture by Germany, in accordance with the commitment voluntarily made by the Bonn Government, of atomic, bacteriological and chemical weapons and the surveillance to be exercised over armaments considered heavy (missiles, warships of more than 3000 tons, submarines, strategic bombers, tanks, guns and mortars the calibre of which exceeds 90 mm.)²²⁰. This protocol also contained in detail and in special annexes the lists of armaments, differentiating Germany's more restrictive position from that of other countries; (d) Protocol on the Establishment of a Special Agency Arms Control. This Protocol contained the terms for the collection by the Agency of statistical and financial elements and for the carrying out of the practical measures of controls, visits and inspections in the workshops, in the special facilities. The activity of the Agency was limited to the European continent and had to concern only finished materials with the exception of production intended

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ DP II, Volume «Conferenza di Londra e UEO», DD n° 175, Note of the General Directorate of International Cooperation, Office I.

²²⁰ Ibid.

for civilian purposes. In these four protocols, the Western European Union could find the basis for its activity, having as its governing body a Council of Ministers and its own headquarters in the British capital, where the Brussels Pact organization already resided, while the Control Agency was instead to be based in Paris for the purpose of having direct links with NATO²²¹. Finally, the Federal Republic of Germany joined NATO. By a special Protocol signed by the 14 Foreign Ministers and in the likeness of the earlier accession of Greece and Turkey, the accession of the Federal Republic to the Atlantic Alliance was decided. The Representatives of NATO member countries then adopted a resolution designed to strengthen the existing system of collective defence through an increase in the powers of the Supreme Allied Commander²²².

Therefore, to synthesize, three conferences followed each other. The first, in which all members of the NATO and West Germany determined the adherence of Bonn to the Atlantic Pact; the second, which involved the members of the Brussels alliance, plus the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy, led to the creation of the Western European Union (WEU); the third meeting, limited to the three victorious Western powers of the Second World War and the German representatives, marked the return to the Bonn government of full sovereignty, excluding the territory of West Berlin²²³. The WEU solution immediately appeared and became a point of convergence among the various signatory states. It, in fact, guaranteed Europe the American support and the British participation, and at the same time, it ensured to the United States the reintegration of federal Germany into the Atlantic bloc, as well as the promotion of a control system of the armaments. Therefore, the new body seemed to satisfy the demands posed within the Western sphere in the period 1950-1953²²⁴.

3.2 The new Italian Foreign Policy: The Opening to the left and the Neo-Atlantism

Despite several difficulties, between late 1954 and early 1955, the agreements signed in Paris on October 23, 1954, were ratified by the adhering countries. This certainly provided an important contribution to the completion of the Western defensive system and the stabilization of the balance in Europe, which was based, inter alia, on a lasting division of

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ivi, p. 125.

²²⁴ Cavallaro, M. E. *La nascita dell'Unione europea occidentale: una parentesi o un passo in avanti nel processo di costruzione europea?*, La nascita dell'Unione europea occidentale, p.5, 2007.

Germany into two states²²⁵. As regards to Italy, it ratified the WEU very rapidly. The only Parliament that initially posed difficulties was the French Parliament which rejected by 280 votes (against 259) the Article 1 of the draft law related to the modifications carried out to the Brussels treaty and Germany's entrance into NATO. Subsequently, thanks to the executive's choice to place the question of confidence, the National Assembly changed this decision. The most relevant aspect, from the perspective of international balances, was that the WEU, by allowing Germany's entry into NATO, brought the Atlantic alliance out of the period of uncertainty that it was facing. Regarding the reception of the Paris Accords in Italy, the main embassies unanimously revealed how much the failure of the EDC rose to symbolize the waning of a season and they argued for the strategic utility of British involvement in the new project. From Paris, Quaroni pointed out that the burial of the ECD brought with it the demise of Europeanist projects based on the creation of specialized supranational agencies and saw as a possible *solution de rechange* the enlarged Brussels Pact following the proposal put forward by Eden²²⁶; from Bonn, Babuscio Rizzo supported the British initiative of a new European institution for defensive purposes since he believed Italy could use this opportunity to increase its political weight within the new body; from Washington, as already seen, Tarchiani reported to Palazzo Chigi the American interest in having enough support towards the British formula in the Italian parliament²²⁷.

Grasping the point well, the Italian diplomatic representation suggested to restart the European construction, following an alternative path, "capable of inventing a new formula" that did not contemplate federalist objectives "since projects on the EDC model would no longer be successful." Although support for the WEU disappointed proponents of the community approach, the associative formula inherent in the new defence body was also considered a "positive starting point" by the Foreign Ministry's director of political affairs, Magistrati. If Europe, with the WEU, sought to fill the vacuum determined by the failure of the EDC, Italy, in particular, could certainly take advantage of this new body and the new situation that derived from it. Indeed, while it had missed an opportunity to demonstrate its independence in decision-making by subordinating parliamentary ratification of the EDC to that of France; the WEU, in the sphere of foreign policy, represented at that moment another chance to recover its status of "equality and parity" with the victorious powers of World War

²²⁵ On the significance of these events for the European balance see W. Loth. *The Division of the World 1941-1955*, Routledge, London 1988, pp. 282-311.

²²⁶ Cavallaro, M. E. *La nascita dell'Unione europea occidentale: una parentesi o un passo in avanti nel processo di costruzione europea?*, La nascita dell'Unione europea occidentale, pp. 5-6, 2007.

²²⁷ Ivi, p. 6.

II. In the domestic sphere, the new body could have served to demonstrate the insubstantiality of the offensive launched by the "extreme wings" of both the right and the left already against the EDC and would have indirectly strengthened the stability of the renewed centrist balance of the Scelba government. The hypothesis of the domestic and international consequences just described was kept in mind during the approval of the WEU Treaty²²⁸.

In addition, a further relevant element that indirectly influenced Italian policy was the role played by the American support towards the British plan. Transcending its concrete value, the approval of the WEU was transformed for Italy first of all into one of the instruments that could be used by the Scelba government to mend relations with Washington, in exchange for a decisive commitment in favour of the resolution of the "Trieste question." Secondly, it laid the basis for the request for American economic aid for the country's rehabilitation and played in favour of the reclassification of Italy's role in NATO. Especially the latter goal was central to Italian foreign policy in 1954-1955. To this purpose, in the course of the negotiations, Foreign Minister Martino advocated the assignment of greater powers to the WEU Assembly in order to emphasize the political and economic potential that the constituent organization could develop in such a way as not to limit its activities to the military sphere itself, as had happened in 1948 with the Brussels Pact²²⁹.

As regards to the broader international context, these events, while pushing the Soviet Union to encourage the creation of a military alliance opposed to NATO, the Warsaw Pact, induced the Soviet leaders to a new "peace offensive" which resulted in the signing of the Austrian State Treaty and the neutralisation of the Alpine country. As for the Western Front, Moscow's action and the implementation of the Paris agreements convinced Eden, who had succeeded Churchill in leading the British government, to act as the promoter of a summit conference in which the leaders of the four great powers would have reunited in Geneva in July. Beyond the poor concrete results of the meeting, for some time the conviction that a new phase in East-West relations, characterized by the desire for dialogue, the so-called "spirit of Geneva"²³⁰, seemed to prevail.

It must be specified, however, that the change in the international context not only concerned relations between the two superpowers, but also those between the North and the South of the world, with the emergence of the movement of the non-aligned countries and,

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ivi, p.7.

²³⁰ On the Geneva Conference see G. Bischof, S. Dockrill (a cura di), *Cold War Respite. The Geneva Summit of 1955*, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge 2000.

above all, the intensification of the decolonization process that caused increasing the difficulties for London and Paris even in the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern chessboard²³¹. The presence of such major changes on the international stage did not leave indifferent Italian political and diplomatic authorities, who precisely at this stage were responding to new stimuli coming from some circles of the Christian Democrats, capable of influencing Italy's position in both the continental and international contexts and more generally its foreign policy, in particular the European choice. The rapid evolution of international events was a counterpoint to a phase of fluidity in internal political balances: if the centrist formula had continued to characterize the governments of the second legislature, there would have been a growing sense of the inadequacy of this political choice; particularly in the DC, also as a consequence of the emergence of a new generation of political leaders, of whom Amintore Fanfani was the most representative. In other words, the prospect of a dialogue with the PSI began to be considered, albeit in a contradictory way. The symbol of this transformation was the election, in May 1955, to the Presidency of the Republic of Giovanni Gronchi, destined, among other things, to play a leading role in the definition of Italian foreign policy²³². Thus emerged the political line that was defined as "neoatlantism". Although the characteristics of this policy have often appeared vague, it is possible to argue that the neo-atlanticists on the one hand aimed at a reform of the Atlantic Alliance, with the intention of emphasizing the political aspects in such a way as to create an even closer relationship between Rome and Washington, on the other hand they aimed to exploit the growing weakness of the British and French empires, as well as an alleged Italian-American special relationship, to strengthen the position of Italy in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. This led to the inauguration of a policy of sympathy and understanding towards the aspirations for full independence of the countries of the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern area. This aspiration apparently clashed with the European choice of Degasperian origin that, on the contrary, had been based on a relationship of full collaboration with some of the major western partners of Italy: France, but also Great Britain, with whom the Trentino leaders had always intended to maintain good relations²³³.

In reality, the Italian position was more complex than this somewhat simplistic representation based on the hypothesis of a sharp contrast between European commitment and the country's "Mediterranean vocation". First, it should be remembered that despite Italy did

²³¹ E. Calandri, *il Mediterraneo e la difesa dell'Occidente 1947-1956. Eredità imperiali e logiche di guerra fredda*, il Maestrale, Firenze 1997, pp. 217.

²³² E. Martelli, *L'altro atlantismo. Fanfani e la politica estera italiana (1958-1963)*, Guerini, Milano, 2008, p. 23.

²³³ See for instance A. Varsori, *La Gran Bretagna e l'Italia di De Gasperi (1945-1953)*, in "Ventunesimo Secolo", n. 5, marzo 2004, pp. 241-246.

not play a prominent role in the events that characterized the first *détente*, the softening of the contrast between East and West had an immediate positive consequence: in fact, the Soviet veto on the Italian candidacy to the UN ceased and, in 1955, Italy thus became part of the international organization; the country, at this point, was fully integrated into all the cooperation bodies of the Western and Western European system - from the ECSC to NATO, from the Council of Europe to the WEU - and into the United Nations Organization in all its forms, having already been co-opted in various specialised agencies. All this represented a useful starting point because as, at least on the formal level, it could be said that the phase linked to the Second World War and the defeat had been fully overcome²³⁴.

As for the European context, in the aftermath of the Paris agreements, Italy showed for some time an uncertain position. On the one hand, there was an attempt to strengthen bilateral relations with the major allies, for example, with a visit by Mendès-France to Italy in January 1955 and a mission by Martino to London in the spring of that year. These were also opportunities to ascertain the positions of the continental partners on the fate of European integration. The Italian authorities always seemed convinced of the value of developing close forms of cooperation, if not integration, and the economic dimension seemed to be one in which fewer difficulties would have been encountered. However, it was not easy to understand in which exact field to take an initiative. In this regard, vague polls were made to use the instrument represented by the OEEC, which had survived the end of the ERP and offered the advantage of involving Great Britain.

3.3 “The pool of armaments”: a sign of inconsistency

Another aspect on which the Italian authorities concentrated their attention, between the end of 1954 and the first months of 1955, was the hypothesis, advanced with the establishment of the WEU about an arms control agency was created. This aspect was already tackled in previous paragraphs, but it certainly deserves mention as it is relevant to capture the further development of the WEU experience. This initiative had been largely discussed and it was supported especially by the French Government, for which limiting and controlling armaments had always been a key issue and where the plan for the armaments pool had obtained widespread support in Parliament, each group being intention to use it to promote its own

²³⁴ A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d'Europa?* cit., p. 127.

interests²³⁵. Mendès-France certainly needed to monitor with great attention the domestic mood which could compromise both the survival of his government and the ratification of the forthcoming Paris Agreements. More precisely, the French government intended to use this initiative to exercise some form of control over the German rearmament despite Adenauer had publicly declared that the Federal Republic of Germany had renounced the use of nuclear weapons, as well as bacteriological and chemical weapons, in West Germany. The project, soon renamed the "armaments pool", seemed to imply strong coordination in the production of war between the WEU member states.

Until the bilateral meeting of La Celle St Clouse between Adenauer and Mendès-France, the other European governments and the US government mainly regarded, and largely criticized, the armaments pool as instrument that the French used for discriminating Germany and defending their national industrial interests²³⁶. That meeting was in fact a turning point in bilateral relations of these two countries as the conversations touched upon the topics singled out in previous months at the French Foreign Ministry as suitable for a productive long-term cooperation. The two leaders settled the Saar question (extremely relevant for German public opinion), signed minor but symbolic agreements on cultural cooperation, war graves and deportation victims and set the scene for far-reaching economic relations. Therefore, France's German policy moved away from military security to also embrace the economic sphere. This rapprochement with Bonn corresponded with Mendès France's prior aim which was to readdress France's economic situation²³⁷.

However, this perception changed and the Italian Government, on its part, started to acquire concerns because of the apparent Franco-German rapprochement and the shadow of a potential cartel between their heavy industries. It was the Ministry for Industry and Commerce that first noted the situation. Indeed, as external, i.e., American financial participation in the pool's operations was not authorized, Italy risked finding itself confined, due its financial weakness, to a marginal and subordinate position, which together with national specialization and technical backwardness would have produced a negative impact on Italian heavy industry. Furthermore, the industrialization of French North Africa would create competition for Italian products in the Mediterranean²³⁸.

²³⁵ E. Calandri, *The Western European Union Armaments Pool: France's Quest for Security and European Cooperation in Transition 1951-1955*, in "Journal of European Integration History", n. 1, 1995, pp. 45-48.

²³⁶ Ivi, p. 48.

²³⁷ Ivi, p. 47.

²³⁸ Ivi, p. 50.

Besides the economic worries, the Foreign Ministry considered that the exclusion from a Paris-Bonn axis would have been as dangerous as getting involved in a French autonomist manoeuvre which would have annoyed the United States. Hence, it sought a broad discussion of Franco-Italian relations with Mendès-France, which, as previously mentioned, was scheduled for January 1955. In this regard, instructions sent to Quaroni on December 3 recommended a balanced approach which, trying to protect Italy's European image by proposing that the project's integration features be strengthened, would have cautiously established a three-power dialogue while firmly revindicating Italy's economic demands and requests for political equality²³⁹. The aim was to attribute a supranational character to the "armaments pool" while underling its economic implications. Rome's positions seemed to find a positive response in the politics expressed by Paris.

However, the project was soon confronted with Britain's hostility to any supranational agreement and its willingness to retain her economic leadership in Europe. France was indeed considered a great obstacle on the way towards economic liberalization in Europe and London had been closely observed the turn taken by French economic policy since the beginning of 1954²⁴⁰. In this sense, despite the agreement on French agricultural supplies to Germany, agreed upon at la Celle-Saint-Cloud, had been intended to come into force after the liberalization of 80% of both countries' external commerce, the authorities in London suspected the presence of protectionist and bilateral tendencies in the relations between the two countries²⁴¹. As a further point, French action was influenced by the fall of the Mendès-France government and the appointment of a new cabinet led by Edgar Faure.

What can be drawn from this is that the armaments agency played a dual role in French policy; initially and until March 1955, the French leaders maintained this body on the agenda for domestic consumption. However, they assumed extremist positions that were clearly unacceptable for their partners, using supranationalism as the extreme guarantee against the German "threat" and even involving renowned European activists such as Lapie²⁴².

On the international level, however, the plan and the Paris negotiations helped foster the move towards de facto integration of French and German armaments production which it had not been possible to impose by treaty. During a visit of Mendès-France to Adenauer at Baden-Baden in early January of 1955, on the eve of the ad hoc conference, it became evident that

²³⁹ Ivi, p. 49.

²⁴⁰ Ivi, p. 50.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Ivi, p. 62.

what really mattered was not the agency itself but rather economic cooperation. Indeed, by the time the WEU came into life the spectre of a sudden, massive and uncontrolled shift of Germany's industrial capacity towards armaments production was no longer at the core of French concerns, which, in a few weeks' time, started to show an attitude of impatience at Germany's reluctance to embark upon armaments production²⁴³.

Unsurprisingly all the West European countries, strongly supported by Washington and seconded by London, resisted what they considered to be simply a French attempt to secure a privileged position in armaments production through diplomatic means or technical devices. Germany had obtained equality. Britain was able to defend not just her insularity but especially her commercial interests while Italy and the Benelux countries avoided a situation in which they would have been marginalized by the Franco-German initiative²⁴⁴.

To conclude, the solutions identified in the spring of 1955 had a reduced importance and the uncertain Italian hopes to ensure the revival of the European construction through the "arms pool" progressively disappeared; the WEU was revealing to be a mere instrument intended to encourage the German involvement of NATO. In the spring of 1955, on the other hand, the Italian authorities showed a particular interest in verifying the extent of the East-West dialogue, trying to capture the role that Italy could have played and to verify whether such development would have affected the domestic political balances. In this context, little attention was addressed to a series of projects that were maturing in some European environments and that would have led to what would be called "the relaunch of Europe"²⁴⁵.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d'Europa?* cit., p. 130.

Chapter 4: From the military to the economic sphere: Italy and the “relaunch of Europe”

4.1 A different image of Italy and the beginning of a different kind of integration

It was soon realized that the WEU, which had appeared as the best “replacement solution” in Europe to cope with the changing international environment after the failure of the EDC, was not destined to play a major role in the European and international context. The attempt to create an effective WEU was gradually proving ephemeral, as was the latest effort to resume integration on the military level which was progressively set aside in favour of the economic sphere. The transition from the community formula of the EDC to the associational formula of the WEU, as envisioned in the Eden Plan could be interpreted more as an attempt to facilitate Germany's entry into NATO and showed that it was still NATO itself that predominantly mattered in the military sphere. Such a perspective certainly reflected American interests, which had supported the Paris Accords and aimed at a European integration more economically oriented rather than on the military²⁴⁶.

Meanwhile, Italy was acquiring a different image; the end of an era gave way to the beginning of a new one that seemed to offer Italy and its ruling class the opportunity to definitively achieve the goal of a middle power role. As previously mentioned, on April 29, 1955, Giovanni Gronchi was elected President of the Republic. With his appointment, a different political season began, being characterized by the search for the so-called “opening to the left,” that is, the dialogue between Catholics and Socialists, which only in December 1963 would have found its highest expression with the formation of the first “organic centre-left” government, led by Aldo Moro. The long and tormented process of elaborating this political formula found its motivations, among other things, in the crisis of the degasperian centrist experience, in the economic and social transformations that characterized the country in these same years, and in the emergence of new personalities on the political scene: in addition to the aforementioned Gronchi and Moro, a central role was played, within Christian Democracy, by Amintore Fanfani, without neglecting figures such as Antonio Segni, Giulio Andreotti, and Mariano Rumor, as well as exponents of other parties such as Ugo La Malfa for the Italian Republican Party, Giuseppe Saragat, for the Italian Social Democratic Party,

²⁴⁶ E. Calandri, *The Western European Union Armaments Pool: France’s Quest for Security and European Cooperation in Transition 1951-1955*, in “*Journal of European Integration History*”, n. 1, 1995, pp. 61-63.

while already well-known politicians such as Giovanni Malagodi for the Italian Liberal Party and Pietro Nenni for the Italian Socialist Party distinguished themselves for the evolution of their positions: the former in harsh opposition to the new political formula whereas the latter in gradual support of the "centre-left."²⁴⁷

Among the factors that contributed the most to shape this new image of Italy a great role was certainly played by the real economic and social transformation that the country experienced in the late 1950s and early 1960s. This change was the consequence of, among other things, precise political choices that found expression not only domestically, but also in the international context. With regard to the latter, fundamental was certainly the Italian participation in the process, which became known as the "relaunch of Europe," that led from the Messina Conference of 1955 to the signing of the Rome Treaties of March 1957 with the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom)²⁴⁸. For a long time, general studies on the history of European construction offered a reductive view of the role played by Italian authorities in these two important years, as if Italy's function had been limited to host the most important conferences in well-known tourist attractions, from Messina, actually Taormina, to Venice and Rome. However, the recently published diplomatic documentation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs allows to provide a largely different reconstruction and interpretation, whereby, although the Italian government did not have a function comparable to that of the governments of Paris and Bonn, it was able to act keeping in mind the defence of national interests and it also succeeded in achieving some important results within this framework²⁴⁹; it is therefore worthwhile to dwell on this aspect.

As recalled, the failure of the EDC and the EPC, as well as the Paris Accords of October 1954, seemed to mark a new phase of European construction, characterized by the presence of intergovernmental organizations, a renewed Franco-British *entente cordiale* and which implied, however, the end of the "functionalist" perspective pursued by Jean Monnet and strongly supported by statesmen such as Schuman, Adenauer, and De Gasperi. It was no accident that the President of the High Authority, Jean Monnet, decided to resign from this body, no longer enjoying, among other things, the confidence of much of the French political world. He later returned to this choice, but his political fate now appeared compromised, and it was unlikely that he could maintain his function in Luxembourg. Nevertheless, before being

²⁴⁷ A. Varsori, *Dalla Rinascita al Declino*, cit., pp. 187-188.

²⁴⁸ See E. Serra (a cura di), *Il rilancio dell'Europa e i trattati di Roma*, Bruylant/Giuffrè/LGDJ/Nomos, Bruxelles/Milano/Paris/Baden-Baden, 1989.

²⁴⁹ A. Varsori, *Dalla Rinascita al Declino*, cit., p. 193.

permanently sidelined, Monnet launched an initiative that led to the establishment in 1955 of an influential pressure group, the Action Committee for the United States of Europe, intended to gather the membership of European politicians and trade unionists of Catholic, socialist and liberal-democratic persuasion; for Italy, prominent personalities such as Ugo La Malfa, Giovanni Malagodi, and Amintore Fanfani, among others, joined it. Monnet was, moreover, convinced that his "method" was the correct one and that the EDC had failed because it had dealt with an issue as sensitive as defence; it was therefore appropriate to start again from the economic sphere through the project of a new specialized community as in the case of the ECSC. His attention thus focused on the exploitation of nuclear energy; this appeared in those years to be the energy resource of the future, and it was no coincidence that the United States and the USSR, after its use for military purposes, were experimenting its use for peaceful purposes. This goal required heavy investments that could be possible thanks to the effort of several countries; moreover, there were no pre-constituted interests to defend; finally, this could enhance the promotion of the economic development of Western Europe through an alternative source of energy to oil, whose production was controlled by nations that were gaining full independence from the European imperial powers²⁵⁰. In early 1955 Monnet then drafted the plan for a European atomic energy community of which he discussed with the Benelux leaders. The latter, in turn, had remained of the idea about the validity of European construction with supranational characters and had returned to the hypothesis of a broad customs union, a project which had already been advanced with the Beyen Plan in 1952²⁵¹.

4.2 The first steps toward an expansion of ECSC's powers

This intention was progressively communicated to other leaders; in this regard, during a conversation²⁵² in Brussels on April 2, 1955, between the Belgian Foreign Minister Spaak and Giuseppe Pella, who was the President of the Joint Assembly of the ECSC, the former informed the Italian leader of his intention to propose, on behalf of the Benelux countries, to extend the Community's powers to other energy sources (such as electricity, oil, etc.) and transport. More precisely, he intended to make his proposal on the occasion of the meeting of the special Council of Ministers of the ECSC, which was expected to take place on April 24

²⁵⁰ Ivi, pp. 193-194.

²⁵¹ Ivi, p. 194.

²⁵² Documenti sulla Politica Internazionale dell'Italia, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il "rilancio dell'Europa" dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (2 aprile 1955-25 marzo 1957)», DD n° 1, Note of the conversation between the President of the Joint Assembly of the ECSC, Scelba, with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, Spaak.

or 25, at Foreign Minister level, to appoint the new President of the High Authority. Spaak also informed the Italian leader that he had spoken to the British Ambassador in Brussels on this matter, who, having informed the Foreign Office, replied that the London government had taken note of this intention. Spaak interpreted this reply as meaning that London did not represent an obstacle, although he did not want to take any stance that could appear too forward. Spaak also expressed his willingness to contact the British government again before the meeting, making clear that, unless a contrary position from the British side, he would have certainly presented his proposal. Spaak and Pella concluded this conversation by agreeing that the latter would have briefly informed the Italian government of Spaak's project on his return to Rome²⁵³.

In those same days, Ambassador Quaroni informed²⁵⁴ the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the French domestic context, especially in light of the proposal that Spaak was intended to make. Having ratified the Paris Accords the question that spontaneously arose was: "What next²⁵⁵?"; the resignation of Monnet as President of the High Authority created a complex situation for the French government as it appeared extremely difficult for France to retain, at least under certain circumstances, the presidency of the ECSC. Indeed, there were few probabilities that Ramadier's candidature for such presidency could be accepted at the international level. Furthermore, the difficulties that the French government had to overcome in order to obtain the ratification of the WEU by the French Senate certainly did not favour the idea of further developments in the European direction of the institution; therefore, proposing or even accepting a commitment to enhance further European integration in a supranational sense in the field of transport and energy seemed quite complex, all the more so taking into account the short time available before the Council of Ministers meeting on April 23. Nor did the Quai d'Orsay believe that a declaration, even of a less demanding nature, could be made in the following weeks as to enable Monnet to withdraw the resignation he offered. Under these conditions, the French government considered that the only viable path was that of accepting the changed situation and the consequences of the "impulsive gesture

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il "rilancio dell'Europa" dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n° 2, Telespr. From the Ambassador to Paris, Quaroni, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

²⁵⁵ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il "rilancio dell'Europa" dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n° 4, Reserved report From the Ambassador to Paris, Quaroni, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino.

made at the time by Monnet²⁵⁶”, while making all efforts towards finding a new candidate, instead of Ramadier, for the appointment of the presidency of the Community²⁵⁷.

In the meantime, there was a formula that was circulating in France, namely the need to revive the European idea but with different ideas on the matter²⁵⁸. Nevertheless, two main currents of thought could be identified: on the one side, it was affirmed the necessity to take the maximum advantage of the Treaty of Paris in an integrative sense; on the other hand, some argued that the treaty did not offer real possibilities for development in an integrative sense, therefore it needed to be dropped as it was not possible to reject it, while enhancing the revival of the European idea through other ways. About the possible paths to take, there were again different opinions: (a) there were those who wanted to revive the European idea by trying to revive in some form the Political Community; (b) there were those who wanted instead to revive it by entrusting the ECSC with new functions and new attributions²⁵⁹.

It can be argued, however, that all these currents and undercurrents had a common denominator, namely supranationality, which implied reviving the Europe of six, that is, without Great Britain. However, Quaroni demonstrated his scepticism about the possibility that, at least in the near future, this revival of the European idea would have occurred through French governmental initiatives. Pinay's thinking seemed to be evolving toward the idea of entrusting the ECSC with new functions and attributions, an idea which was originally formulated by Jean Monnet. However, Pinay could not, by himself, make proposals on behalf of the French government, and it was very difficult for him to have the support of the French government for proposals of this kind. On the contrary, it was much more likely that some proposal would have been advanced in Luxembourg, through that ECSC Assembly. As for the Italian conduct, Quaroni suggested to endorse, at all levels, both governmental and parliamentary, the utmost caution in the face of any proposal that could come forward²⁶⁰. From an international perspective, Quaroni recognised the wisdom of the Americans in managing the whole situation while demanding whether the Americans were intended or not to withdraw from the Europe of six, thus eliminating the British neo-leadership. In this sense, he noted that, as soon as the ratification of the Treaty of Paris was over, the numerous American

²⁵⁶ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il “rilancio dell’Europa” dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n° 2, Telespr. From the Ambassador to Paris, Quaroni, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; “il gesto impulsivo fatto a suo tempo da Monnet”.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il “rilancio dell’Europa” dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n° 4, Reserved report From the Ambassador to Paris, Quaroni, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

spokespersons in France had all set about the revival of the Europe of six: and even more so were all the French most notoriously connected with the Americans. This element certainly needed attention. However, the internal French situation was still too fluid. In that sense, Quaroni's words were quite straightforward; having lost their main objective, which was to prevent German rearmament, a large part of French population was having what he called “une prise de conscience²⁶¹” and many were wondering whether it had really been appropriate to oppose the EDC so strongly. In other words, the French Parliament, was beginning to acquire a certain European vocation. This could appear as a positive and comforting element, but only on the condition of going very slowly and understanding precisely on which level France was ready to proceed with the integration process. In this sense, according to Quaroni's perspective, economic integration, in whatever form, was not the ideal path for France; by contrast, political integration could be adequate as all parties and men, except the most markedly pro-communist, had not taken a stand against it. However, once again, he insisted on the necessity to proceed with extreme calm and caution as “if one wants to force the pace, the risk is to destroy what might one day bear fruit²⁶²”. The European idea, and even the idea of European integration, could be revived in France but it had to be taken up by relatively new men. As far as the case of Monnet was concerned, it undoubtedly represented a sensitive issue among the French, which should have solved internally²⁶³.

The question of Monnet's resignation as President of the High Authority of the ECSC and the attempt to relaunch the European ideal were tackled also by Spaak in a letter addressed to Martino²⁶⁴. In Spaak's idea the two things were linked; thus, he believed that the best solution would have been to keep Monnet as President of the High Authority. However, to achieve this, a new development was necessary. More specifically, according to Spaak, it would have been necessary for the Ministers of Foreign Affairs to make it publicly known their will to relaunch the European idea by extending the competences of the ECSC. This extension of the Community could be applied to all the current energy forces (electricity, gas and fuels) and to the means of transport (railways, inland navigation, road and air transport). The pooling of efforts for the development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes could also be entrusted to an organization which would have depended on the ECSC²⁶⁵. In order to achieve this

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Ibid; “se si vogliono forzare i tempi, si rischia di distruggere quello che potrebbe un giorno fruttificare”.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il “rilancio dell'Europa” dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n° 6, Letter from the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, Spaak, to the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

extension, it seemed appropriate to organize an international conference where the idea would have been examined in detail and whose goal would have been the drafting of a treaty. The presidency of this conference could undoubtedly be entrusted to Monnet, whose experience in this matter was real. Therefore, if the foreign ministers agreed on this policy, they could have informed Monnet that his resignation was no longer justified, since the policy that he had advocated was to be continued. If things could be settled in this way, Spaak was quite optimistic to believe that Monnet would have reconsidered his decision and thus two problems could have been solved at once: that of the Presidency of the High Authority and that of the revival of the European idea. The Benelux countries seemed to be ready to develop such ideas whereas, by contrary, the information that Spaak received from Germany and France were less encouraging. In Germany, for instance, it seemed that Erhardt, the Minister of Economic Affairs, was hostile to this concept of building Europe by sector as he preferred the creation of a common market. His hostility could certainly make the Chancellor's position more difficult. On the French side, Pinay indicated his general agreement with the ideas that Spaak presented to him, however there was no doubt that he would have encountered difficulties to propose such ideas within his government. Nevertheless, Spaak believed in the successful outcome of an initiative proposed by the Benelux countries and supported by Italy²⁶⁶.

A country about which there were inevitably questions regarding the process of European integration was Great Britain; particular attention to it was given during a meeting between the Italian Undersecretary for foreign affairs, Lodovico Benvenuti, and Chancellor Adenauer, in Bonn²⁶⁷. When dealing with to the role of Great Britain, however, the Chancellor's view seemed optimistic and yet evasive; in fact, on the one hand, he did not directly answer the question as to whether Great Britain was really prepared, even after the "grand gesture" made with its membership of the WEU, to support the formation of a smaller continental core exactly within the WEU framework. On the other hand, instead, the Chancellor expressed his confidence that England would have itself gradually joined the continental countries in the integration process, stressing that "not once but several times²⁶⁸", the term "integration" was used in the WEU treaties and that this represented a major commitment for Great Britain. He also insisted that Great Britain's special position vis-à-vis Europe and other English-speaking countries had to be always kept in mind. According to Benvenuti, however, it seemed that no

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il "rilancio dell'Europa" dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n°3, Note of the Undersecretary for foreign affairs, Benvenuti, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino.

²⁶⁸ Ibid; "non una ma parecchie volte".

special initiatives in the sense of an only “continental” policy could be expected from the German side for the time being, meaning that it was quite unrealistic that in Germany there could be a political figure willing to take new initiatives in the sense of the ECSC or the ECD model. Evidently, “the long quarantine in which Germany has been kept²⁶⁹” and above all the French government's rejection of the EDC - which took no account of the Chancellor's convinced and combative commitment to bring the ratifications to a successful conclusion in a reasonable amount of time - had influenced the Chancellor's caution. This prudence towards “continental politics” was justified by the increasing weight of the Federal Republic of Germany in the assessment of the new great European ally, Great Britain, with which Adenauer evidently aimed at tightening rather than loosening ties. This implied for Germany the effort not to undermine the framework of the seven-party alliance with a rapid return to the six-party policy. The working group of the Constitutional Commission of the Ad Hoc Assembly was another element that revealed, to some extent, the German position towards European unification; at the meeting of the Working Group on March 28, the Belgian and Dutch delegations argued that, although the Working Group could rightly no longer place a financial burden on the governments, it should have legally survived for a few more months (without expenditure) until it had, in a certain sense, passed on its political legacy to the new bodies intended to deal with the European problem. Lodovico Benvenuti supported this thesis by proposing the old formula of inherence law: “Le mort saisit le vif²⁷⁰”. In this case, a lively one existed or was about to come into being because the Common Assembly, with the agreement of President Pella, was about to set up a special Commission with the aim of studying the possible enlargement of the competences of the ECSC and the related legal-constitutional problems that would have arisen for the Community and the six continental adhering states. This solution would have provided an obvious advantage: that of keeping the Europeanist initiative in parliamentary hands with a certain personal union between the old and the new parliamentary body. It would have also saved the continuity of the policy of the six countries with respect to the original Luxembourg resolution of September 10, 1952²⁷¹.

However, this thesis, although supported by the representatives of three of the five countries present, did not result in any concrete resolution. The working group closed its last session on a different and attenuated level; one concept remained firmly accepted by both the President of the Joint Assembly and the governments, namely that, if the governments wished

²⁶⁹ Ibid; “la lunga quarantena in cui si è tenuta la Germania”.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

to make use of the members of the Working Group for further studies on European constitutional matters, they would have provided the means for any further meetings of the Working Group on a case-by-case basis²⁷². With this, the initiative reverted back to the governments: in other words, nothing concrete had been done to keep alive the system that was born on September 10, 1952, out of the Luxembourg declarations and that had led to the creation of the ad hoc Assembly, to the deposit of the draft constitution in the hands of the six governments and the subsequent Baden Baden, Rome and Hague Conferences, as well as to the survival of the Working Group as a recognised parliamentary body, charged with stimulating the development of the Europe of six. This occurred in spite of the fact that some members of the Working Group, who were particularly well versed in the law, had put forward the thesis that the fall of the EDC and the consequent fall of Article 38 could not represent the emptying of the mandate conferred to the ad hoc Assembly on September 10, 1952; by contrast, this mandate still subsisted on the basis of that resolution insofar as “it essentially referred to the common will of the six countries to merge and weld their common interests with or without the EDC and Article 38²⁷³”. Moreover, the French representatives present in Bonn seemed especially interested in the problem of the bilateral Franco-German relations, so that in a certain sense the French and Germans, for different reasons, seemed to agree in not considering it the right moment for a concrete relaunch of the continental integration policy²⁷⁴.

In addition, Lodovico Benvenuti largely highlighted the cautious and prudent attitude demonstrated by Bonn with regard to the development of the “six-party” policy: this caution was due, above all, to the emergence of a sovereign Germany, not subject to supranational bodies, equal in law to the seven countries of the WEU, stronger in fact than the five continental countries which made it more similar to the new great British ally rather than to the old continental allies. Nevertheless, if this situation denoted a certain new course in Germany's European policy, this did not imply that the Chancellor's enthusiasm and pro-European faith had diminished. On the contrary, he argued for the continuation of the European unification policy “with youthful enthusiasm and conviction²⁷⁵”, by insisting, in particular, on two points: firstly, every country, even the strongest, had to be increasingly convinced of the impossibility to live in isolation and autarky; secondly, Adenauer complained (addressing the pro-Europeans) about the insufficient work done in the area of persuading

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Ibid.; “essa si richiama essenzialmente alla volontà comune dei sei paesi di fondere e saldare i loro comuni interessi con o senza la C.E.D. e l'art. 38”.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.; “con slancio e con convinzione giovanile”.

popular opinion. In this regard, he pointed out that what happened in France could have been perhaps avoided if the federalist organisations had worked more effectively²⁷⁶.

For his part, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, von Brentano, admitted that in Germany there could be some people who, driven by strictly economic visions, aimed above all at a free German economic expansion beyond the European borders: however, as long as Adenauer, and himself in his eventual capacity as Foreign Minister, would have had the decisive say in German foreign policy, they would have never allowed Germany to break away from its European allies. They were indeed extremely aware that a major economic or political crisis in France or Italy would have provoked negative repercussions also to Germany. Moreover, he clarified that there was minor support in the country in favour of European initiatives aimed at sectoral integration. This idea not only reflected projects such as the “armaments pool”; by contrast, it reflected a more general problem that the Minister addressed in these precise words: “Germany can no longer lose itself in the vicissitudes of small, restricted pools intended only to artificially block the development of the German economy in favour of the less developed and less competitive French economy²⁷⁷”. However, he also specified, with a certain dose of emphasis, that Germany would have welcomed, at any time, proposals for a genuine, complete (albeit progressive) economic integration of continental Europe, even aimed at creating a single market. The Minister also made clear that the problem of the eastern frontiers, though unsolved, would have never become the prerequisite for a war. He also added that not a single Nazi who filled positions of responsibility in the old regime occupied, in that moment, positions of responsibility in Federal Germany. In this context, it appeared therefore necessary that the Chancellor Adenauer's stature and the European passion of his collaborators were put at the disposal of this new task: that of inducing the German people to sacrifice again, on the altar of European integration, certain advantages that the fate wanted them to derive, at least in part, from the very rejection of the EDC, namely, recovered national sovereignty, military autonomy, political strengthening and direct alliance as equals with Great Britain (WEU) and the United States (NATO)²⁷⁸.

The Italian Ambassador to Brussels, Scammacca del Murgo²⁷⁹, referred to the Ministry

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.; “«La Germania non può più perdersi nei viottoli dei piccoli pool ristretti intesi soltanto a bloccare artificialmente lo sviluppo dell'economia tedesca a favore della meno sviluppata e meno competitiva economia francese».

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il “rilancio dell'Europa” dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n°7, Telespr. from the Ambassador to Brussels, Scammacca del Murgo, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

of Foreign Affairs, that, in the past few days, all the Belgian press had been reporting that the governments of the Benelux would have intended to resume, as soon as possible, the Beyen Plan of 1952 of a European common market, based on a customs union and a European tariff authority. This plan, which had been recalled in principle at the meeting of Rome in 1953, where it had encountered French opposition, would have been resurrected and proposed to the other Western European governments as the time appeared propitious for the resumption of European integration initiatives. Some agencies, in breaking the news, added that the Belgian government was already in agreement and that the new initiative would have even been named the "Spaak-Beyen Plan"²⁸⁰. Later in the week, however, Belgian newspapers denied this news, publishing a rather dry statement from this Foreign Ministry that stated that it was not the intention of the Belgian government to propose, at the present time, a project of horizontal integration; it was added that it seemed instead preferable to submit, within the framework of the ECSC, proposals for the integration of new sectors (electricity, transport and perhaps nuclear energy). Behind these conflicting reports, the context was the following: the Dutch Minister Beyen had returned to advocate his old project of European integration with the idea of the common market and asked for the support of the Belgians to "revive" the idea. Spaak, however, was resolutely opposed to it, at least at the present time, and while retaining all sympathy for the more ambitious projects of political and economic integration, he believed that there was very little chance of obtaining the consent of the other "partners" and therefore, he preferred to concentrate all his efforts on the realization of the three new areas to be integrated through the ECSC. He realized that, already for this much more limited program, the difficulties to be overcome were considerable and would have risked becoming even insuperable if the Dutch project was added to it. As can be seen, thus, the agreement among the Benelux governments was not complete on the possibilities of action in the European field, although the ultimate aims were the same: it seemed that it was mainly for this reason that Spaak was intended to travel to The Hague the following week to have personal contacts with Beyen²⁸¹.

Meanwhile the Ambassador to London, Zoppi, referred²⁸² to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that he had received confirmation that the Foreign Office was not intended to raise difficulties or create obstacles to Spaak's announced initiative to extend the competencies of

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il "rilancio dell'Europa" dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n°8, Telespr. from the Ambassador to London, Zoppi, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

the ECSC to transportation and other energy sources. However, the responsible official clarified that any possible development in this direction could in the least commit the British government since the relations that bound it to the Community, through the recently signed agreement, concerned only the coal and steel sector while establishing obligations that had to be contained within well-defined limits. In reality, Spaak's idea was welcomed with some surprise in Great Britain with some surprise and did not fail to raise some perplexities²⁸³. It was certainly recognized the importance to the Community of the problems related to transportation and the production of energy, but it was also argued that there was already an organization that worked among the competent transport administrations of various European countries, whereas for electricity the OEEC was already taking care of it. According to this perspective, there was therefore a risk of duplication that had to be avoided²⁸⁴.

Concerning the OEEC, the head of the Italian representation at this institution, Vitetti, referred²⁸⁵ to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that initial surveys of the Secretariat and the main delegations indicated that in the OEEC circles, Spaak's project to raise, at the next session of the Council of Ministers of the ECSC, the problem of extending the sphere of competence of the High Authority to matters of transportation and energy was perceived as a move of a prevalent, if not exclusive, political character. Moreover, it was noted in this regard that, among other aspects, the project did not seem to have been preceded by adequate economic, technical and legal studies. Some argued that the German industrial and technical circles could judge not positively Spaak's intention, while not excluding that Adenauer, considering them from a political angle, could be of a different opinion. The attitudes of other countries, relevant in the transport and energy sectors, such as Switzerland, Austria and Scandinavian countries, appeared to be inspired by a certain mistrust toward solutions that would have matured in instances in which they did not participate. In this regard, the British government proved its willingness to discuss with other OEEC member countries about the conclusions and the directions that would have emerged from the report, including the part devoted to nuclear energy from the standpoint of its economic utilization²⁸⁶.

Vitetti clarified²⁸⁷ even further that Spaak's ideas of extending the competence of the

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il "rilancio dell'Europa" dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n° 10, Telegram from the Head of the Italian Representation at the OEEC, Vitetti, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il "rilancio dell'Europa" dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n° 12, Report from the Head of the Italian Representation at the OEEC, Vitetti, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino.

Community itself to the general fields of energy and transport were not accepted in the OEEC circles with much favour, but rather with scepticism and concern. This could be expected being a body in which the majority of its member states were not members of the ECSC; therefore, initiatives that concerned only a few members, in fields such as energy and transport, that were of general interest, could be difficultly accepted²⁸⁸. Furthermore, in the OEEC there was necessarily a tendency to consider problems in their technical aspects, and to give less importance to political approaches. The initiative attributed to Spaak raised very complex and serious issues when it was considered from the technical point of view; moreover, it was too vague and too nebulous to be studied objectively. It appeared above all, a political initiative, which had not been preceded by a thorough examination. Nor did it certainly help the argument according to which the enlargement of the competencies of the ECSC was the only way by which it was possible to persuade Monnet to retain his office. Other countries, Switzerland for example, probably viewed with concern the possibility of a narrow approach to energy and transportation problems and that of accentuating the centrifugal forces that threatened the strengthening and the development of the OEEC. This could be especially true for Great Britain, where enthusiasm for intra-European cooperation was not very pronounced and could be further weakened if this cooperation was to be accentuated in fields in which the country found itself excluded. Nevertheless, as already stressed, it was mainly in technical aspects that the Spaak initiative raised the greatest perplexity, not seeing quite how it is possible to reduce to unity problems as complex and diverse as those of transportation and the various forms of energy²⁸⁹.

As far as transportation was concerned, various forms of European cooperation were in place. The most recent one was summarized in the European Conference of Ministers of Transport, attended by ministers from all continental countries on the Western side of the iron curtain (including Great Britain, Spain and Yugoslavia), and which expressed itself in a series of agreements of various kinds, including financial ones. Such agreements, being for the most part technical and administrative in scope, did not need parliamentary sanction. In general terms, it can be argued that it was certainly not the pre-existence of this European cooperation body that could suffice to rule out the advisability of such cooperation being intensified by submitting it to a supranational authority. However, two points had to be considered before making a decision to establish a single transport ministry for the six countries: the first

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

concerned the absence of Switzerland, a country through which most of the major lines connecting rails and roads between the West and Southeast Europe passed. It is difficult to see how real coordination in terms of continental transport could take place without the active participation of the Swiss Confederation: in this sense, the Swiss government had never hidden the fact that it was not possible for it to join the ECSC precisely because of its supranational character²⁹⁰.

As for energy, the issue appeared even more complex, given its varied forms and its sources. In particular, the key point to take into consideration was the nature of energy (except for coal, which was already entirely within the competence of the ECSC), which was quite different from that of the other matters subject to the Luxembourg Community. The other traditional forms of energy, which would have been annexed to the ECSC, were not giving rise to intense intra-European trade, except in marginal cases. The task of the ECSC so far had been to establish, secure and maintain a common market, in a large area of Europe, for coal, iron and steel. It appeared difficult to hypothesize the elaboration of a common market for other forms of energy²⁹¹.

Moreover, electricity connections and exchanges already existed among various countries; mainly around the Alpine arc and they had been established through agreements among the several producing companies. They concerned, however, a minimal amount compared to that produced in Europe and this marginal character of the exchanges seemed destined to persist in the foreseeable future. It was certainly possible to think of some major joint work to be realized with "European" financing (some already took place, by agreement of various countries and with partial financing from the International Bank). However, it could be foreseen that, in this case, the High Authority could wish to apply to the electric kW the precedent of the financial levy applied to the ton of coal and steel. This led to mention the problem of tariffs, which the Italian Government had so far considered to be within its jealous jurisdiction: a problem that existed, of course, for other sources of energy as well²⁹².

Regarding oil, it can be stated that there was no crude oil trade among the six ECSC countries because indigenous European production was minimal, although there were well-founded hopes that it could have increased. The crude oil trade was evidently in the hands of the international oil cartel; this implied that the price of it was more or less identical in all European ports whereas in some cases it could be higher than necessary. Thus, it was hard to

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² Ibid.

theorize what the Community could have done about it. As for refined, instead, there was some certain intra-European trade, which went essentially from countries that had exuberant refining capacity to those that had scarcity. Generally, this commerce took pace according to the normal commercial rules, and with a somewhat active competition, that was substantially directed by the large international Companies, to which belonged many of the refineries and distribution networks. The OEEC tried, with little success, to conceive a control over new refinery facilities, such that refining capacity in Europe was already probably exuberant; in any case, oil was not, for the moment, a European commodity, but rather it was a non-European one. This point was largely stressed in the circles of the American Delegation²⁹³.

Finally, a great interest was certainly devoted to the new form of energy, namely nuclear energy, which was just in its infancy even in the most developed countries. Prominent in this field was certainly the position of Great Britain, which had already vigorously acted in order to exploit it economically, as reflected in the "White Paper," which had been the subject of careful examination and favourable comments by the relevant technical offices of the Secretariat of the OEEC. It appeared thus to be clear that international cooperation in this area, without British participation or input, would have had little basis, especially given the technical expertise that it could have placed at disposal. The way in which a possible supranational authority in the field of nuclear energy would have connected with the proposed International Atomic Authority, with the ongoing network of bilateral agreements between the US and continental countries (to which Washington's preferences probably went) and with Great Britain's progress (and with its plan to supply Europe with material and machinery) remained to be seen, requiring a careful study. A great object of study had to be, first of all, the actual possibilities of a common European market of basic raw materials (fissile and moderating) if it was limited to the six countries. It was also necessary to see whether uranium and thorium on the one hand, graphite on the other (as well as heavy water production) were predominantly non-European things. Therefore, while it was difficult to define the terms of the problem of a common market of the countries of the ECSC, as far as oil was concerned, it did not appear at first glance easy either to define them with regard to the basic raw materials for nuclear energy. Hence the difficulty of evaluating the Spaak proposal in concrete terms, which was added to the difficulty of practically conceiving a European body designed to regulate nuclear energy, without Britain's participation²⁹⁴.

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

Meanwhile Martino, in a letter²⁹⁵ addressed to Spaak, reassured the Belgian leader to have carefully pondered the considerations regarding the appointment of the President of the High Authority. Great attention to that matter was inevitable as long as the evolution of Europe's economic integration had always constituted one of the cornerstones of Italian policy and therefore any effort tending toward closer forms of European cooperation had always been viewed in Italy in a very favourable manner. The Italian Government therefore regarded with the greatest sympathy, on the general level, a development of such cooperation also on the lines that the Belgian leader had envisaged; however, it was not yet in a position to define its own point of view on such a complex problem as that of the extension of the Community's competences, especially with regard to such technical areas as energy sources and transport. A more thorough examination of the problem could have perhaps enabled the Minister of Foreign Affairs to specify, in the near future, the attitude of the Italian government in this regard. Ambassador Quaroni²⁹⁶, in a very frank way, admitted that “all this seems to me very unreal, but also very dangerous”. Indeed, Spaak, speaking with Pella, seemed to have gotten the impression that the British were not unfavourable to his plans to extend the competence of the ECSC. However, it was certain that, in the OEEC, the British immediately set themselves in motion, with skill and energy, to torpedo these possible initiatives. This already represented an element that could suggest to the Italian Delegation, among the various international bodies, some caution. There were evident tendencies of Great Britain's intention to leave the European Payments Union, which would have compromised the existence of the body itself. On the basis of this, Quaroni argued that it was difficult to establish to what extent it was “political” to push toward other supranational-type integrations as that could have encouraged England's isolationist tendencies²⁹⁷.

Quaroni also referred about his conversation with the French President of the Council, Faure on the ECSC argument.²⁹⁸ About the various agencies proposed by Spaak, Faure admitted that he had no difficulty in considering new areas of European integration (he had, after all, proposed two new ones himself, namely transportation and nuclear energy), but that

²⁹⁵ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il “rilancio dell'Europa” dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n°13, Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino, to the Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Belgium, Spaak.

²⁹⁶ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il “rilancio dell'Europa” dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n°14, Report from the Ambassador to Paris Quaroni, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il “rilancio dell'Europa” dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n°15, Telespr. from the Ambassador to Paris, Quaroni, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

he could not, for governmental and parliamentary reasons, even consider that these new integrations could take place in the form of an extension of the powers of the ECSC. He pointed out, with regard to transport, for example, the need to have Switzerland in the mix, otherwise integration would have not acquired a practical sense. As far as the presidency of the ECSC was concerned, he confirmed the withdrawal of the Ramadier candidacy, adding that he was personally considering the candidacy of René Mayer²⁹⁹. The issue about which, however, Edgar Faure was more than categorical was that of Monnet: "I do not accept under any circumstances that Monnet be the President of the ECSC: if foreigners want to intrigue to impose him on me, I will take France out of the ECSC: I will lose some of my Cabinet ministers, but I will become the most popular Prime Minister of France³⁰⁰".

Following the reunion of the Heads of Delegations, which the President of the Council Sir Hugh Ellis-Rees had convened for an exchange of ideas on the problems of intra-European cooperation in the field of energy and transport, some relevant points emerged³⁰¹; press reports about the initiative that Spaak would have taken at the meeting of the Council of Ministers of the ECSC to propose an enlargement of the competences of this Community to the more general field of all energy sources arouse considerable perplexity and a certain amount of concern in the OEEC circles, and, as was clear in the statements Sir Hugh Ellis-Rees. His intention was to demonstrate his willingness to discuss with the other countries of Europe the problem of cooperation on the economic utilization of atomic energy, but he was likely to do so only within the OEEC framework. By this statement, the London government evidently intended to forestall the six ECSC countries that, whether the problem of intra-European cooperation in the field of atomic energy was set elsewhere, it could not rely on British cooperation. In addition, according to this perspective, the lack of British cooperation could not be blamed, in this eventuality, on Great Britain itself, but on those countries that had wanted to take the problem of atomic energy away from the OEEC and established a form of cooperation among them. In this intent, Ellis-Rees had the full support of the German Delegation, and, as was to be expected, that of the Delegates from the countries outside the ECSC, particularly that of Switzerland, which sharply criticized the tendency toward the formation of economic blocs within Western Europe as these blocs, far from fostering the

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Ibid; "Non accetto in nessun caso che Monnet sia il Presidente della C.E.C.A.: se gli stranieri vorranno intrigare per impormelo, farò uscire la Francia dalla C.E.C.A.: perderò alcuni Ministri del mio Gabinetto, ma diventerò il Presidente del Consiglio più popolare di Francia".

³⁰¹ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il "rilancio dell'Europa" dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n° 16, Report from the Head of Italian Representation at the OEEC, Vitetti, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino.

formation of a system of progressive cooperation among the countries of Europe, tended to multiply barriers and ultimately caused the disintegration of Europe³⁰². As Delegate of the United Kingdom, Sir Hugh Ellis-Rees recalled the various forms of international cooperation in the field of nuclear energy, and, in particular, the U.N. Agency and the upcoming Geneva Conference, of which the UK was a "joint-sponsor". According to his perspective, the Armand Report, could not be complete if it did not also consider this form of energy and its economic and trade implications for Europe. The OEEC should have had a thorough discussion on this subject, and in Great Britain was ready to "to play a full part" in it, because it believed that the OEEC was the "appropriate forum" to discuss such issues³⁰³.

With regard specifically to transport, Ellis-Rees recalled the existence of the European Conference of Ministers, with an autonomous statute but which provided for the necessary links with the OEEC, as evidenced by its first annual report to be discussed at the Council by May. The British Delegate also clarified his desirability of avoiding a repetition of those "institutional disputes" that had already occurred in the past, with obvious allusion to the precedents of the Pool Green and Transport themselves³⁰⁴. It is interesting to consider that the Delegate of Belgium intervened at this point to emphasize the great importance of the statement made by Sir Hugh Ellis-Rees on behalf of the British Government and about the general good disposition of the United Kingdom to participate in forms of cooperation in the field of atomic energy in the OEEC. The Belgian Delegate, Minister Ockrent also asked whether such cooperation also included investment in facilities and the exploitation of atomic energy; to this question Ellis-Rees replied that he could not be able to give precise clarification, but that after discussion of the Armand report all problems pertaining to nuclear energy could have been tackled at the OEEC. The Delegate of Germany began by confessing that he was not capable of giving an answer about the reasons why there was a tendency to integrate the energy and transport. While stating that he could not commit his government at that stage, he recalled German reticence toward sectoral integrations, and his government's inclination to consider instead the whole of the economy, partly to avoid dangers of "cartelization"; this way of thinking was shared by industrialists themselves. Continental Europe, indeed, was called to become competitive with other areas; moreover, the newly established forms of cooperation, for example with Yugoslavia and with Spain, would have suffered if cooperation shifted to a narrower scope. Ambassador Werkmeister then criticized the possibility of limited

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

institutional integrations in the fields of energy and transport on technical grounds. As already mentioned, the oil was not a European production; natural gas was produced only in a few countries and had national absorption while for electricity, there was already the possible limited trade and the problems of tariffs had irrepressible implications of domestic budget. As for atomic energy, it was inconceivable that it could have been handled by a European organization of which Great Britain was not a member³⁰⁵. These were areas that presented more economic than technical problems, which was the reason why the OEEC was the appropriate forum for close cooperation, also taking into account the fact that several of its members were not members of the ECSC. The Delegate of Germany concluded by expressing his satisfaction with the attitude of Great Britain and that the OEEC precisely represented the most adequate framework in which such issues could be discussed. Ellis-Rees, as chairman, concluded the discussion by hoping that Armand would have completed his report promptly and that it would have given rise to a thorough discussion, including on its technical aspects. It also urged all present to inform their respective governments on the OEEC's work program, so that the decisions were made in “full knowledge of the facts³⁰⁶”. By analysing the interventions of these two very influential delegations, it could be argued that Great Britain was averse to the idea of an extension of the powers of the ECSC, and in order to avoid such an extension was willing to deal with the problem of energy sources in the OEEC, going further than it had done so far. This was certainly a remarkable fact. More remarkable was the full and firm German support for the position taken by Great Britain. Even considering that the German Delegate premised that he was speaking in a personal capacity, and perhaps he accentuated Germany's aversion to the idea of extending the sphere of competence of the ECSC, it was difficult to imagine that he could have taken such a firm and definite position unless he had been authorized by his government³⁰⁷.

It is also important to underline the cautious way the Delegate of Belgium, who was especially keen to mark the persistent interest of the Benelux Government in the OEEC, limited himself not to exclude, but neither to support, the greater usefulness of solutions elsewhere and methods that were different from those of the OEEC. He maintained a vague attitude which did not give the impression that Spaak had already decided which direction to give to his ideas. The marked importance he attributed to the English statement gave the feeling that in this statement he wanted to detect a new fact of which his government would

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ Ibid; “in modo che qualsiasi decisione sia presa in piena cognizione di causa”.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

have undoubtedly taken the greatest account. Nevertheless, wanting to draw the balance, the relevant fact was the decisive opposition shown by the German Delegate to the idea of extending the competence of the ECSC to other fields. Moreover, this German position was not contradicted in fact by that of France, which, from the statements of the Delegate Valery, appeared indecisive and wavering, giving rise to much perplexity about the possibility that the "revival" of the pro-European idea could take place on the basis of an extension of the competence of the ECSC³⁰⁸.

4.3 From the Messina Conference to the Treaties of Rome

In the half of May, Martino communicated³⁰⁹ to the Italian Embassies in Paris, Bonn, the Hague and Brussels and to the Legation in Luxemburg, that the Council of Ministers of the ECSC would have taken place in Messina (precisely in Taormina), on June 1, despite being originally planned in Brussels. This venue was agreed upon in Paris, at the occasion of the Atlantic Council among foreign ministers of the ECSC countries and it was suggested by Martino, partly for reasons related to the Sicilian regional elections. Gaetano Martino, born in 1900, belonged to a well-known family in Messina; his father, a member of Liberal Italy, had been mayor of the city; Gaetano, who had graduated in medicine, had embarked on an academic career, becoming a full professor and then chancellor of the Messina university between 1943 and 1954; after the war he had joined the Liberal Party, becoming a leading exponent of it in the 1950s. After a brief period at the head of the Ministry of Education under the Scelba government, he had been appointed by the latter to head the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the resignation of Piccioni; a charge that Martino held until 1957 and through which he gained so much European experience that in 1964, in recognition of his efforts, he was elected president of the European Parliament. The original purpose of the conference was the appointment of René Mayer, an exponent of the Radical Party, as the new President of the High Authority of the ECSC, replacing therefore Monnet. Nevertheless, during the conference, the Monnet and the Benelux hypothesis, previously analysed, were merged into a single memorandum, which in the spring of 1955 Spaak, Beyen and Bech intended to present for the attention of the other ECSC members at the meeting of the "six" foreign ministers³¹⁰.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

³⁰⁹ DPII, Serie A Europa Occidentale e Unione Europea, Volume «il "rilancio dell'Europa" dalla Conferenza di Messina ai Trattati di Roma (1955- 1957)», DD n° 24, Secret Telegram from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martino, to the Embassies in Paris, Bonn, The Hague and Brussels and the Legation in Luxembourg.

³¹⁰ A. Varsori, *Dalla Rinascita al Declino*, cit., p. 194.

The Benelux project had been considered in the Italian internal context in early May in a document that the General Director of Economic Affairs at Palazzo Chigi, Attilio Cattani, addressed to Quaroni. From this period onwards, Cattani began to play a significant role in the development of Italy's European policy and his name would have been recalled more than once. In his note, he outlined the hypotheses that had been at the core of the recent discussions, in particular the hypothesis of Monnet regarding a specialized energy community and that of a common market. According to the diplomat, Italy had to show support for both, particularly for the second one, which was coherent and linked to the Italian program of economic development designed to resolve the problems of employment and economic balance between North and South. Cattani referred precisely to the ten-year Vanoni Development Plan which had been launched during that period. Furthermore, it was certainly significant how the diplomat suggested that the Italian government should have not, however, neglected two other areas in which it was possible to enhance the integration process, namely the OEEC and the WEU, showing particular attention the presence of Great Britain in a possible revival of European construction³¹¹.

The attitude that Italy should have taken at the Messina meeting was debated during a meeting held at the Foreign Ministry on May 24 under Cattani's presidency: the meeting was attended, in addition to a number of diplomats, by senior officials from various ministries, from Industry and Trade to Foreign Trade, Finance, Public Works, Merchant Marine, and Agriculture and Forestry. In this context, Cattani pointed to the desirability of examining, on the one hand, the hypothesis of specialized communities in the energy and transport sectors and, on the other, that of a common market. The discussion on the first point turned out to be general; there were few references to nuclear energy, while it was objected from several quarters that other forms of international organization already existed, especially for the electricity sector, as it has been discussed in the previous paragraphs. In fact, when it came to the subject of the common market, the only one to express himself clearly was Cattani himself, who stressed his favour; at the same time, however, he did not ignore the enormous problems that this project would have raised, such as for Italy the problem related to the balance between the market for industrial products and that for agricultural production. He finally declared himself an advocate of an intermediate approach between the federalist and the intergovernmental approaches³¹².

³¹¹ Ivi, p. 195.

³¹² Ivi, p. 195.

It must be argued that, of greater significance was a further inter-ministerial meeting held late in the afternoon of the 26th, which was attended by the top officials of Palazzo Chigi, such as Martino, the Foreign Trade Minister Martinelli, and the Budget Minister Vanoni. The officials of Foreign Affairs briefly explained the two hypotheses that would have been presented by the Benelux Ministers. The common market project aroused the immediate interest of Vanoni, who expressed a positive view of it. This view was reinforced by the assessments of Cattani, who reiterated his scepticism about the specialized communities, while nevertheless emphasizing the financial aspects of the customs union hypothesis, particularly the need for the "reconversion funds"³¹³. In the course of the discussion Cattani himself ended up arguing that the only area of "vertical integration that can be studied is nuclear energy"³¹⁴. The discussion actually ended without there being a final decision partly because of the emergence of doubts around the ability of the "six" to enhance the process of integration, as well as questions about the British attitude and the role of existing organizations such as the WEU and the OEEC. It was clear how the Italian position was inspired by great prudence stemming from the failure of the EDC and the difficulties that the ECSC was encountering at that time. Indeed, from a general perspective, the concept of prudence had been already reiterated among the various Italian representatives. However, the Italian positions were specified in a note from the Directorate of Economic Affairs, which devoted ample space to the future of the ECSC. Regarding the Benelux project, interest in the common market plan was confirmed, but caution was suggested once again so as not to arouse excessive enthusiasm; moreover, the desirability of the "six" initiative being open to Great Britain, as well as to countries such as Austria, Switzerland and Spain, was stressed. It was concluded stressing how it was necessary not to weaken the already existing organisms, in particular the OEEC³¹⁵.

In any case, the memorandum that the Italian delegation presented in Messina was more pointed and articulate. It confirmed interest in the common market project, stressing that it should have taken into consideration the social dimension, the free movement of labour, the presence of readjustment funds, which was absolutely (necessary for an economy such as Italy's that was developing, but conditioned by regional imbalances), and finally for a policy aimed at expanding investment, especially relevant for nations lacking capital. The document also emphasized Italian attention towards a specialized community in the nuclear sector, an area towards which the attention of Italian scientists, senior officials and entrepreneurs had

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid; "l'unico settore di integrazione "verticale che possa essere studiato è quello dell'energia nucleare".

³¹⁵ Ivi, p. 196.

been focused for some years. This note was particularly important because, albeit still in a general way, it indicated the objectives by which Italian action would have been guided throughout the following negotiations³¹⁶.

After the opening of the proceedings of the Messina Conference, which occurred on the afternoon of June 1, discussions continued the next day and concluded on the afternoon of the 3rd at the San Domenico Hotel in Taormina. The discussion was characterized by the central role played by Spaak and Beyen, while Martino intervened only rarely. However, the conference came to the decision to create a committee of experts that, under Spaak's chairmanship, would have examined the two projects. In a brief note to Martino, the General Director of Political Affairs, Magistrati, demonstrated to be moderately satisfied with the outcomes of the meeting and noted how all the participants had agreed about British involvement in the discussions. This assessment was confirmed in a document from the General Director for Economic Affairs, where it was emphasized how the London government had decided to participate with a delegation of "observers" in the initiative³¹⁷.

On July 9, the work of the Spaak Committee opened in Brussels; at the head the Italian delegation there was Lodovico Benvenuti, who, as it was previously assessed, was certainly a firm supporter of European integration, close to De Gasperi and particularly active in the EPC project. The available documentation does not allow to assess the influence exerted by individual Italian experts at this early stage, although the defence of the objectives outlined in the memorandum presented in Messina can be detected. In addition, the activities of the Spaak Committee did not prevent Italian diplomacy from taking into account other European bodies, particularly the OEEC, whose role was considered particularly relevant. A meeting of the foreign ministers of the "six" was scheduled for early September for an initial review of the work of the Spaak Committee; in a note by the Deputy Director of Economic Affairs, Roberto Ducci, another diplomat destined to play an influential role in the country's foreign politics, moderate satisfaction was expressed in particular about the common market project where the various delegations had moved pragmatically and in a spirit of cooperation; some points that pressed Italy such as the free movement of labour and the encouragement of investment with the hypothesis of a European bank had also been touched upon, while little progress had been made about the nuclear energy community³¹⁸.

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Ivi, p. 197.

The foreign ministers of the "six" met on September 6 in Nordwijk in the Netherlands, At the centre of the meeting was a lengthy report by Spaak on what had been done by the committee of experts. The Belgian leader's interlocutors appreciated the work accomplished and agreed that the committee should have continued its activities until the end of the year. Martino in his speech confirmed Italy's support for the common market project and expressed himself positively about the presence of the delegation of British observers at the Spaak Committee's operations. In a note drafted in the aftermath of the meetings, Magistrati, while noting the cautiousness of all the conference participants, declared himself convinced of the validity of the process initiated in Messina, which represented "an anchor point and a starting platform worthy [...] of attention³¹⁹". The work of the Spaak Committee then resumed in Brussels; among other things, some important issues related to the common market project were addressed, such as when and how to implement the customs union and the establishment of a common external tariff. On these points, the Italian delegation held intermediate positions between the Benelux and French theses, declaring itself in favour, for example, of implementing the single market within a decade for all products, as well as an external "average tariff," in line with the GATT indications. Significant was the Italian delegation's interest about the establishment of safeguard clauses through a possible Investment Fund and its support for the German hypothesis for the creation of a permanent collegial body made up of a few independent personalities, whose functions would have been conciliation, propulsion, advice and possibly arbitration; it would have gradually received wider powers, including decision-making powers. The Italian side also continued to indicate the necessary attention to labour mobility and to the problem of depressed areas and support for the Development Plan foreshadowed by Vanoni, through the establishment of a special European Fund³²⁰.

. As for the hypothesis of a community for nuclear energy, the Italian government could not overlook how, particularly at the urging of the British, the OEEC had begun to discuss it in a concrete way, but in spite of Rome's interest in not breaking the link between the "six" and London, by the end of 1955 it seemed to prevail in support of an institution arising out of the Brussels negotiations. It was evident how for a country poor, if not devoid of energy sources, a nuclear community could represent an additional factor of economic development. Moreover, in the sector of nuclear physics Italy possessed a strong tradition of studies stemming from the so-called "School of Via Panisperna," which in the 1930s had seen active

³¹⁹ Ibid.; "un punto di ancoraggio ed una pedana di partenza degni [...] di attenzione".

³²⁰ See E. Serra (a cura di), *Il rilancio dell'Europa e i trattati di Roma*, Bruylant/Giuffrè/LGDJ/Nomos, Bruxelles/Milano/Paris/Baden-Baden, 1989.

personalities such as Ettore Majorana and Enrico Fermi; this tradition was confirmed in the post-war period thanks to Edoardo Amaldi, creator of the Research Centre for Nuclear Energy, and Felice Ippolito³²¹.

In November 1955, the Spaak Committee decided to halt its work, which would have resumed in January of the new year so that it could then present a final document to the foreign ministers of the "six." In commenting on the progress of the negotiations, the Italian foreign ministry was relatively optimistic, while noting the distance that often separated the German and French positions, especially with regard to the common market. Mention was also made of the important work conducted by a select committee of experts, created by Spaak and consisting of Pierre Uri, formerly a close associate of Monnet, the German von der Groeben, the Belgian Snoy et d'Oppuers, and for Italy Giulio Guazzugli Marini, director of the secretariat of the ECSC Council of Ministers.

Meanwhile in early January 1956 general elections were held in France; a government led by the socialist Guy Mollet was formed. Although he was an advocate of European integration and a member of the Action Committee for the United States of Europe, led by Monnet, the internal French situation remained difficult and deeply affected by the escalating conflict in Algeria. This raised concerns among France's partners about the development of the European "relaunch" initiated in Messina. These issues, along with others, were addressed in early February 1956 in Bonn at a meeting of Prime Minister Segni, who had meanwhile replaced Scelba, and Martino with Adenauer and with the Foreign Minister Von Brentano. Martino and Adenauer substantially agreed on their respective countries' support for both the European community project and the nuclear community project, with Martino stressing the centrality of horizontal integration³²². As for France's position, Martino went so far as to consider it possible for the "five" to proceed even without French participation, but the two German exponents emphasized the need for Paris's presence as a condition for the European "relaunch," hoping for firm action by Spaak with Italian support. No precise decisions were made, but positive elements emerged from the talks: a substantial convergence of a general nature between Rome and Bonn, the understanding between Segni and Adenauer as well as on the German side, the intention to support the Italian projects for the economic development of the country. However, Italian emerging pessimism about the French attitude appeared to be confirmed by Quaroni's evaluations following a conversation with the French Foreign Minister

³²¹ See S. Labbate, *Il governo dell'energia. L'Italia dal petrolio al nucleare (1945-1975)*, Firenze, Le Monnier, 2010, pp. 34-51.

³²² Varsori, *Dalla Rinascita al Declino*, cit., pp. 198-199.

Christian Pineau where the Italian Ambassador realized that there was not the slightest chance that any common market would have passed before the French parliament, even a largely reduced one. On February 11 and 12, the foreign ministers of the "six" met in Brussels. Spaak outlined the results of the work of the committee he chaired. It is interesting to notice that a significant focus was dedicated to the nuclear community project, particularly about the node represented by the use for military purposes of atomic energy³²³. Spaak proposed a declaration by the "six" about renouncing the wartime use of the atom energy, which was to be placed within a "European" framework. This hypothesis, however, raised the perplexity of several ministers, including Martino, who pointed out that it was not the case to renounce at that stage to the possibility to use the new weapons for the defence of Europe. Martino also reiterated how, for Italy, the European economic community project was to be a step toward political integration.

Although no concrete decisions were taken, the meeting allowed the Spaak Committee to make further progress especially regarding the objectives and institutional structure of the common market, while the question of the relationship between the atomic community and the military dimension remained to be solved. In this same period, on the British side, there was an attempt to bring the discussions on cooperation in the nuclear energy sector within the framework of the ongoing talks in the OEEC on this issue; the response of the "six" was negative, a position fully shared by Italy, which, at this point, while not wishing to interrupt the talks with London, confirmed as a priority objective the conclusion of the negotiations undertaken by the "six". For Italian diplomacy, indeed, the two projects had to progress hand in hand because this would have perhaps enabled French reticence about the common market to be overcome, and it was hoped that an intergovernmental conference would be convened as soon as the final report on the Spaak Committee's activities had been completed³²⁴.

This working group in March succeeded in identifying a compromise formula about the use for military purposes of atomic energy, under which the governments of the "six" would have declared a three-four-year renunciation of atomic weapons construction with a view to a general disarmament negotiation, which, if destined to fail, would have allowed individual countries to act freely. This time frame in fact corresponded to the time frame envisaged for the realization of an atomic weapon by Paris, which since 1954, under the Mendès-France Government, had planned to achieve that purpose. Finally, in April, the Spaak Committee concluded its work by presenting a report that would have been the subject of discussion. The

³²³ Ivi, p. 199.

³²⁴ Ibid., p. 200.

Italian authorities, while evaluating this document positively, did not fail, through Lodovico Benvenuti, to stress the need to achieve a clear link between the objectives of the economic community and the Italian development program, to which the question of the Mezzogiorno of the peninsula and its progress was closely linked. At the end of April, the President of the Republic Gronchi, accompanied by Martino, made an official visit to Paris. The topics addressed were numerous: from disarmament to the situation in the Middle East, from the future of NATO to the United Nations, as well as the integration process. In a conversation between Martino and Pineau, the latter recalled the serious difficulties that would have arisen in the National Assembly when faced with the prospect of approving the common market and the Euratom, particularly if these two organizations were supranational in nature. This was something that, as previously mentioned, Quaroni had rightly foreseen. Martino, on his part, replied by arguing that both communities could contribute to solve the problems affecting France at the time, in particular the Algerian question, and that if there was no progress in the European construction, the ECSC would have also eventually declined. Nevertheless, Pineau did not seem convinced even though it appeared clear that for Paris the greatest obstacle was the economic community. Two days later at the Elysée Palace there was a new meeting, attended by the two presidents, the French René Coty and Gronchi, as well as the Prime Minister Mollet, the Foreign Ministers Pineau and Martino, Ambassador Quaroni and the French Ambassador to Rome Fouques-Duparc. It was Gronchi who raised the issue of European integration. During the conversation, the French representatives reiterated their misgivings and fear to repeat of what had occurred with the EDC. Their attention focused on Euratom, and Pineau was harshly critical of the Spaak report because, in his opinion, it should have specified that the nuclear community was for peaceful purposes only, thus leaving each country the freedom of action in the military field. As for Mollet, he admitted that in the French Parliament, albeit there could one any chance for the approval of Euratom, there was none for the common market; in this sense, he stressed that the best solution was a step-by-step progress on the model of the ECSC. For his part, Martino reiterated that for Italy's perspective, the first purpose was the political integration, of which Euratom was only a tool; furthermore, the economic community had to be preferred over the integration by sectors. However, in front of the French statements, feelings of scepticism and disillusionment prevailed among the Italian representatives, to the point that Quaroni wrote, on May 8, to Martino about the impossibility that one of these two projects could pass before the French parliament³²⁵.

³²⁵ Ivi, p. 201.

Nevertheless, the situation underwent a sudden improvement. At the end of May, a conference of the foreign ministers of the "six" was scheduled to take place in Venice to examine the Spaak rapport; on the eve of the meeting the Italian Foreign Ministry was less pessimistic about the French position, and it was considered possible to convene an intergovernmental conference. The ministerial-level meeting, held on May 29 and 30 at the Cini Foundation on the island of St. George, approved the initiation, by June, of an intergovernmental conference starting with the Spaak report. As could be expected, there were different opinions among the six delegations, particularly on the stages of implementation of the common market, on the homogenization of monetary, financial and trade policies and on the problem of the use of atomic energy for military purposes. Pineau reiterated the French interest in a harmonization of social charges, which were stronger and more costly in France; the French minister also put forward a request for a further concession represented by the inclusion in the European Community of the overseas territories of the countries of the future Community: this testified the French interest in ensuring that the future Community would have contributed contribute to the development of the French colonies in sub-Saharan Africa. As for Martino, he confirmed the exigence for a wider circulation of labour and the necessity for the Italian development plan to be taken into account, with its implications relating to the Mezzogiorno.³²⁶

At the end of June 1956, the intergovernmental conference aimed at drafting treaties on Euratom, and the common market opened at the Château de Val Duchesse, near Brussels: Benvenuti was at the head of the Italian delegation, whereas Roberto Ducci was given the important chairmanship of the Committee for the drafting and coordination of the texts. In mid-July the French National Assembly approved a resolution in which France accepted a moratorium period about the production of a nuclear weapon pending developments in the international debate on disarmament; if this was unsuccessful, Paris would have considered itself free to acquire the atomic weapon on a national basis. This stance left the way open for the implementation of Euratom, whose objectives were for exclusively peaceful purposes. Major difficulties arose on the draft economic community, with the Italian delegation tending toward an opera of mediation. The greatest difficulties continued to be created by the French delegation, which demanded a series of concessions for the common market, particularly about the already mentioned social charges, the wage levels and the possibility of public support for industry. These positions were not seen as insurmountable obstacles by Benvenuti, who

³²⁶ Ivi, p. 201.

believed that any concessions to Paris would have allowed Italy to strengthen its Italian demands for an Investment Fund and the free movement of capital.

As far as the position of Washington in the whole process was concerned, it is interesting to notice that, ever since the Messina Conference, Washington, while being supportive of the "European revitalization," had decided to assume a low-profile attitude lest open support for this process be seen as further American interference as in the case of the EDC, but as time went on, the Eisenhower administration had shown a growing interest in the nuclear community, with the hope that close cooperation between the United States and the "six" in this area would have further favoured American interests, through the establishment of the first contacts for future cooperation between the Atomic Energy Commission and the Euratom.

A new atmosphere was taking place, which seemed to have positive repercussions on Italian demands as well, particularly about a document that was to recognize the country's peculiar situation with regard to the objectives of the Vanoni Plan and the development of the Mezzogiorno; progress from the Italian point of view was also achieved on the hypothesis of an Investment Fund, while a willingness on the German side had already been manifested on the subject of the free movement of labour; this attitude on the part of Bonn was in response to a change in West German migration policies designed to encourage the influx of unskilled foreign workers. The Italian authorities were now optimistic about the outcome of the negotiations and probably satisfied with the prospects that seemed to be opening up for Italy. This was implicitly confirmed by the reaction to a British initiative launched at the end of November to the governments of the "six" to start negotiations between them and the OEEC; Martino's reply, indeed, confirmed Italy's willingness to continue expeditiously on the path of implementing the common market and nuclear community projects. Further final steps then led to the signing of the Treaties of Rome in July 1957, which from 1958 would create the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community. Although for Italy these Treaties represented more of a starting point than a point of arrival, it can be argued how they represented a compressively positive development for the country as part of "the relaunch of Europe", testifying once again that the process of European integration had now shifted away from the military sphere.

Conclusions

With the ratification of the Treaties of Rome in July 1957, an important phase of the process of the European integration was brought to fruition. The renewed image of Italy was characterised by a new political leadership and was promoted by some aspects such as the movie industry and mass tourism, being part of the economic miracle, which allowed Italy to become an industrial nation. This was relevant as Italy had finally the capability to be seen as a middle-rank power, not from a political but rather from an economic and diplomatic viewpoint. Italy became more modern and more European, and it entered the consumer society. This was also the starting moment of the Italian style in the design of country production. The Olympic games of Rome in 1960 represented, in this regard, a major spot and symbol for the country, also taking into account that it was the first edition followed by world television, sharing a different image of the country.

There was also a switch in the ambition of the national political class which understood that a more important role could be played in international relations, especially in the economic field. In this sense, a great role was played by Enrico Mattei's ENI. In addition, the end of some imperialistic ambitions of European countries like France left a space for expanding Italian influence over the Mediterranean area which the new political class wanted to fulfil. For doing this, Italy also tried to overcome its colonial past, favouring the decolonization process. The period between late 1950s and early 1960s was certainly the period in which Italy had the most assertive and active foreign policy before the 1980s³²⁷. Moreover, regarding the economic miracle, it is relevant to assess that the European Economic Community was important for the Italian economic boom; historiography does not tend to agree on this as there are historians who attribute more importance to the internal market, but it is inevitable to highlight the impact of its participation in the Community³²⁸.

The integration on the military plan seemed therefore to give way to a different type of process, based on the economic sphere; after all, integration on the military level had not brought the desired results, or at least, its effects were destined to play a secondary if not absent role compared to the real pillar of Western defence, namely NATO. This dissertation sought to trace the period from the failure of the EDC to the birth of the WEU, assessing the views and visions of both the various international players and leading figures within the domestic environment, thanks to a careful analysis of the diplomatic documentation on the matter. This dissertation

³²⁷ A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d'Europa?* cit., pp. 119-158.

³²⁸ For further analysis on the Italian economic miracle, see A. Cardini (a cura di), *Il miracolo economico italiano (1958-1963)*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2007.

started by tracing the various steps that led to the failure of the EDC and the conclusion of the phase of the "great hopes" of Monnet's European construction, particularly the arrival of Mendès-France and the French non-ratification of the Paris treaty. It then recalled the path which, starting from the Eden Plan and the conferences of London and Paris, led to the establishment of the WEU, with a special focus on the Italian Neo-Atlantism, the opening to the left and the question related to the "pool of armaments". A final chapter was dedicated to the period immediately following the brief parenthesis of the WEU, demonstrating how a new input to the integration process had been detected in the economic sphere, progressively arriving to the Treaties of Rome. Most of the European integration historians did not pay large attention to the Italian position in this process; thus, it seemed for some time that the Italian role in the "relaunch of Europe" was just the role of a host of important conferences. However, as was previously demonstrated, the diplomatic documents of the Italian Foreign Ministry illustrate a different story. Italy was very active; even before the Messina Conference, the Italians were able to single out a very definite goal, a realistic approach toward European integration; no longer the liberalist approach of De Gasperi's federalism. It was a very pragmatic approach, with very concrete goals, which were connected to the idea of Italy's economic development and, more broadly, the need to change the country's economic structure. Everything was also connected to the development of the Mezzogiorno and the so-called Vanoni plan. Furthermore, given the absence of energy resources, Italy demonstrated to be in favour of the EURATOM; atomic energy could indeed become the future energy and Italy had a strong tradition in terms of studying nuclear physics with Enrico Fermi being one of the most prominent figures in this field.

Regarding the European Economic Community, it can be argued that Italy's policy towards international trade changed in the early 1950s; Italy became in favour of the idea of free trade, opening the market and competition, dealing with the coal and steel community, and promoting the Italian steel industry. And once again, the idea of the Italian politicians was based on the possibility to accept the EEC subject to some conditions. First of all, it was introduced the idea that the future Economic Community had to develop a European Social Policy to help the less developed countries, which were economically weaker compared to others (and that was the Italian case). The Italian feared that opening to more robust industrial realities would have led to an increased unemployment rate, so the European community had to manage the redeployment of workers.

Secondly, Italy was characterised by a big problem, namely the Mezzogiorno, the South, which was less developed compared to France or Belgium or Germany. Thus, another condition was to set up a regional policy that would have helped the development of the less developed

areas of the European economic communities, as well as the real manpower mobility and the free movement of capital (especially in the direction of the South). There was also the idea of the creation of the European Investment Bank, which, according to Italy, could collect international capital markets and finance some big infrastructure projects in Southern Italy. It should not be forgotten that after the creation of the EEC, the President of the European Investment Bank was an Italian for a long period. And the commissioner, in the European Commission, in charge of social policies, was usually an Italian, at least until the late 1960s. As far as the regional policy was concerned, the story was a bit different. It took a long time to create a European regional fund, made only in 1975. However, there were some pilot projects that were launched in the mid-1960s, among which, for instance, those supporting the creation of the steel industry in Taranto.

Regarding the period under analysis of this paper, some final reflections can be made; the Eden plan stood in continuity with the goals set in 1951, presenting itself, after the failure of the EDC, as the best "replacement solution" in Europe to cope with the changing international environment. The WEU guaranteed the American defence of Europe, it allowed Britain to return to a major role in the old continent and satisfied the need posed - since June 1950 - by the United States to integrate federal Germany into NATO. With regards to Italy, from an international perspective, the new organization allowed it to re-emerge out of the wait-and-see attitude manifested at the time of the ratification of the EDC, whereas in a domestic perspective it was inscribed within the broader goal of the Christian Democracy to restore credibility to centrism. However, that formula of government had by then begun its irreversible decline and, although most of the political protagonists of the time did not have the foresight to grasp its significance, the point of no return had already been marked on June 7, 1953. At that time, in fact, the failure to reach the quorum required by the majority electoral law, passed a few months earlier in Parliament, did not trigger the majority prize for Christian Democracy and for the secular parties in the coalition³²⁹.

On the foreign policy side, the transition from the communitarian formula of the EDC to the associative one of the WEU, which occurred a few months after the consultations in the political elections, proved how the gradual demise of centrism was also carrying with it the federal project. The support that a Christian Democrat government continued to give to the WEU clearly indicated how federalism, promoted during the previous political season, had mainly a pragmatic character

³²⁹ Cavallaro M. E., *La nascita dell'Unione europea occidentale: una parentesi o un passo in avanti nel processo di costruzione europea?*. *La nascita dell'Unione europea occidentale*, Vol. 6 No. 14, 2007, pp. 17-44.

rather than an ideological one. The supranational approach in the context of defence and the expansion of federal powers in the event that the European Political Community would have been created, had been imposed by the rise of international tension brought about by the outbreak of the Korean War and the need to resolve the Trieste question. Once the prospect of a new conflict and the Memorandum of Understanding on Trieste was signed, the logic of the "first détente," already following the death of Stalin, the change of the American administration, as well as the signing of the armistice of the Korean War, had dispelled the urgency determined in that period and had also changed the instruments to be put in place for the realization of the European construction. The immediate acceptance of the WEU formula represents tangible evidence of the awareness of the Italian governing forces of the profound change in the international balances under way. Moreover, the WEU also testifies that in the summer of 1954 the problem of the approval of the EDC was no longer primarily related- as it had been in 1952 (at the time of the launch of the Pleven plan) - to the fear of the Germany's rearmament, as much as to the fear of the consequences of a federalist formula to which the EDC would have given rise. Federalism would have presumably ensured a gradual reduction of American dependence. Once that scenario had failed, the neo-Atlantic turn and the consequent renewal of Europeism within Atlanticism took over, determining also from the angle of bilateral relations with the United States, the usefulness of carrying out the ratification of a British project with full American support³³⁰.

To conclude, given that the issue of a European army is at the centre of nowadays' debates, it was certainly interesting to retrace the historical path of two, albeit different, attempts to give rise to a European army, showing how the military sphere lent itself poorly to boost the integration process and how the presence of NATO affected that scenario. This may be interpreted in line with today's reality, where defence still remains the sphere in which European Union member states are most reluctant to cede part of their sovereignty and where the creation of a real European army seems very hard to materialize.

³³⁰ Ibid.

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Summary

The issue concerning the creation and the development of a European army is one that is at the centre of international debates nowadays. The main objective of this dissertation is to trace the historical process that goes from the first attempt to give birth to a real European army, namely the EDC, to its failure and then it analyses the emergence of a second, albeit different, attempt to give incentive to the progress of European integration on a military level. This is a historical period that is often underestimated but is certainly useful in understanding subsequent developments in terms of European integration. This dissertation starts with a brief introduction recalling the first fundamental steps of European Integration. In particular, it mentions the Pleven Plan, whose negotiations were promoted by France and launched in February 1951, and which aimed at establishing the European Defence Community (EDC). Despite not being properly convinced of the project itself, Italy decided to participate in order to maintain good relations with France. The real change occurred in the spring of 1951 when Washington became the strongest supporter of the EDC, which, moreover, was part of the American policy of achieving full integration in Europe. The "Rapport intérimaire" approved by the "six" in the summer of 1951 presaged the possible creation of the EDC. Despite the prospect seemed to conflict with Italian interests for several reasons, the Italian authorities realized that it was impossible to oppose the creation of the EDC without risking of calling into questioning the relationship with the United States and the image of Italy as a nation committed to the integration process. These contradictions were resolved by De Gasperi who proposed to transform the EDC into the premise of a new phase of political integration with a federal character; this gave rise to the hypothesis of providing in the future EDC treaty a mechanism that should have almost automatically led to the birth of a European Political Community (EPC). The European commitment by De Gasperi, which was in a federalist sense, found a positive response from the representatives of the other nations involved in the Paris negotiations, particularly in Schuman and the German Chancellor Adenauer. Thanks to the Italian initiative, the founding treaty of the EDC, signed in May 1952, provided in Article 38 that, once the realization of the EDC would have been achieved, negotiations for the birth of the CPE would have been initiated. In the fall of that year De Gasperi obtained from the European partners that, without waiting for the entry into force of the Community, the appropriately enlarged Common Assembly of the ECSC - the so-called "Ad Hoc Assembly" - could begin the work intended for the drafting of the EPC treaty. Between late 1952 and early 1953, De Gasperi's project faced a series of obstacles, both on the national and international level whereas the approval of the agreement was encountering many difficulties and he felt unable to present the EDC treaty in Parliament. Starting from this period, this thesis intends to provide an analysis of

the historical path that led to the failure of the EDC and to the birth of the Western European Organization (hereinafter WEU); more precisely the first chapter deals with the Pella and Scelba governments and the increasing problems that were affecting the French ratification of the Treaty, in particular after the arrival of Mendès-France. Scelba stressed the importance of the resolution of the question of Trieste, which was fundamental in order to obtain a rapid ratification of the EDC in the Italian domestic framework, as well as to consolidate the level of democracy in the country itself. Meanwhile Italy was adopting a “wait and see” attitude in terms of the ratification. The second chapter deals with the period immediately following the failure of the EDC, stressing, in particular, on a new British initiative, namely the Eden Plan, which was strongly backed by the United States, and which envisaged, among other things, the creation of the Western European Organization (WEU). Three conferences in Paris followed and the birth of the WEU is officialised although there were some problems as for its ratification in France. The chapter also provides a specific analysis of the question of the “pool of armaments”, and the Italian Neo-Atlantism and turning to the left. The fourth and final chapter examines the period immediately following, where the WEU started to reveal as an ephemeral attempt to enhance the integration on the military side, as it the main purpose was the entrance of Germany into NATO. Meanwhile, a new front, the economic one, was beginning to be considered, as a tool to enhance integration, after the failure of the political and military dimensions. At the beginning it manifested as the willingness to increase the competences of the ECSC and then it led progressively to the Messina Conference and the subsequent Treaties of Rome in 1957. All these events produced a considerable change in the image of Italy, which became an industrial nation thanks to the economic growth and finally stabilized its role as a middle-rank power, which acts and tries to impose it-self through other means such as economics and diplomacy. The dissertation ends by mentioning the following development of Italy in the domestic and international context and providing some reflections on the events that led to the failure of the EDC and the birth of WEU, which however seemed more a brief parenthesis rather than a concrete step towards European integration.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Antonio Varsori, for his invaluable help and great understanding. I would also like to thank my parents who are my main point of reference.