

The Bournemouth Speech

Speech to the European Foundation meeting at the Conservative Party Conference 11th October 1994

BILL CASH has just mentioned the document prepared by the German ruling parties, the CDU and the CSU, which gives their vision of Europe and their strategy for the 1996 Inter-Governmental Conference. As you know, just about the only good thing in Maastricht was the fact that it states that in 1996 we must look at the whole thing again.

What do they say? Firstly they state quite clearly that they seek a federal state. They want the European Parliament to be what they call a 'genuine lawmaking body'. In other words, a Parliament like any national Parliament. They want the Council - and you will remember that the Council currently consists of the elected heads of state - to be converted into a second chamber of Parliament, like a Senate and they plan to convert the Commission, which consists of unelected technocrats, into a European Government. So the policy is extremely clear - a federal state, with a Parliament, an upper house and a Government: in other words, one state.

They go on to say in this report, 'It is essential', and I'm quoting extracts, 'that no country should be allowed to use its right of veto to block the efforts of other countries to deepen integration.' In other words, no right of veto during the creation of the core unitary state. They also say that if European integration were not to progress, Germany might - listen to this - I'm quoting extracts again, 'try to effect the stabilisation of Eastern Europe on its own and in the traditional way'. They go on to say, I'm not joking, this is in the document - they go on to say, 'the notion of the unsunderable sovereignty of the nation state still carries weight, although this sovereignty has long since become an empty shell'. That is the policy document proposed last month by Germany's ruling parties.

It should be obvious that we, who are opposed to Maastricht, are the true Europeans. We are the ones who want a family of nations, a Europe built on its constituent nations. But the others keep saying that they are the pro-Europeans and that we are anti-European. The people who want Maastricht, the sort of state that I've just described are the ones who are guaranteeing that centrifugal forces will be unleashed which will destroy Europe, rip it apart. So, let it be clear - we are the Europeans, they are the ones who will destroy the hopes for Europe and the European community of nations. We can already see this. If you look at the elections during the past few days, in Austria, in Belgium, you see the emergence of the far right and of separatist movements. How can it be otherwise? How can one possibly expect that there will not be a reaction, a nationalist reaction, by people who want to protect the identity, and the culture, of their nations? It's obvious, but these people can't see that. I think it was George Orwell who said that the peculiarity of intellectuals is that they can never recognise the burning passion of the day. But everywhere throughout the world the burning passion of today is that people want to keep their national identity. And that is what these people want to destroy.

So, apparently sovereignty is an empty shell. How did we get there? How have we reached the position where all of a sudden we are told that sovereignty has gone, and that already it is an empty shell? We reached it secretly. You must understand that Europe on purpose, was built in secret.

This was made quite clear by the French ex-Foreign Secretary, who subsequently became a European Commissioner, one of the technocrats. He is a decent man, a sort of Roy Jenkins type of socialist. His name is Claude Cheysson. He gave an interview to the French newspaper, *Le Figaro* in May of this year. And in it he explained it all. He said that we couldn't have constructed the Europe of Maastricht except in the absence of democracy - his words. And he said the problems that we are now facing are caused by the fact that we allowed a democratic debate to take place during the referendum in France. This illustrates the extraordinary divorce that exists between the political and economic elites, which, of course, are pro-Maastricht, pro an integrated federal state - and society as a whole which

rejects it. You can see it in the opinion polls. There was an opinion poll published not long ago which showed in the twelve European nations only thirty per cent, three out of ten, wanted Maastricht. The majority still wants a European Community of nations but only three out of ten wanted Maastricht.

Here is another example of organised secrecy. Repetitively at successive European Summits the heads of state kept on talking about transparency, openness, documents being made available informing us about how decisions were taken etc. And then, The Guardian wanted some information which was refused. The Guardian took the European Council, the Council of Ministers, before the European Court of Justice. And this is what the lawyers for the European Council- not the lawyers for The Guardian - said to the judges. They started off by saying that there was no principle of Community law which gives citizens the right to European Union documents - thereby once again demonstrating the belief that citizens are no more than an encumbrance and that only a tiny elite should be entitled to know what is going on. They also went on to say, and these are the astounding words, 'although heads of government have repeatedly called for more openness, their declarations', I continue to quote, 'were of an eminently political nature and therefore not binding on Community institutions'. That, ladies and gentlemen, explains politics in the briefest and shortest number of words that I can imagine.

Now, why do all these European nations want, or rather why do their elites want to create this federal state? I am sort of a travelling salesman because I am trying to help create coalitions in each European country, coalitions which in 1996 will fight against this project. I was in Sweden the week before last and I saw the people who were involved in the anti-Maastricht campaign, and then I dined with a number of establishment businessmen and I said to them, 'Why do you want to join this mess?' And they said, 'Well, look at Sweden, our debt is equal to ninety per cent of our GNP, it's growing at a rate of about 14 per cent', I think was the figure, 'of GNP every year; our level of unemployment is immense; and we have a socialist government again; we have no way of solving our problems'. I answered, 'Therefore, you want to go into Europe, like many others do, because you prefer to be in the dustbin of Brussels rather than attempt to solve your own problems'. And that, I am afraid, is the principal motivation of many nations. Better let a Brussels bureaucrat handle their problems than their own politicians.

So, the question now is - how do we turn the tide? What can we do? That really is the only interesting thing. I can describe our plans. We have formed a group in the European Parliament called 'Europe of Nations', to which we have attracted political groupings from a number of nations. And we are going to prepare a project which will be an alternative to that of the centre right/centre left establishment. The Socialists and the Christian Democrats - I hate to say this in Bournemouth today but among whom are the British Conservatives - share the same project and it is very similar to the CDU/CSU plan that I described earlier. We are going to prepare a project of a quite different kind. According to our plan Europe will be built on the strengths, cultures and heritage of its nations, based on true subsidiarity and that means that everything that can be done by the family, the locality, the region and the nation should be done accordingly, and only those things that cannot be decentralised, should be re-grouped at the European level. Those are, principally: the co-ordination of defence; the environment, because environmental crises respect no frontiers; and maintaining a free internal market within Europe. To carry out these functions we believe the principal institution should be the democratic one, the Council of Ministers, in which elected heads of state or their representatives would sit. But with one difference. There should be an appointed Vice-President because, at the moment the President, who changes every six months is more interested in what's going on back home and that is how a vacuum was created, which was filled by the Commission. That must not happen again. So there would be an appointed Vice-President who would report to the members of the European Council of Ministers. The Commission for its part would be converted into an administrative secretariat and stripped of all executive and legislative powers. It would be expected to work in the efficient and disciplined manner which democracy is entitled to expect from its functionaries.

Insofar as defence is concerned, there should be a relatively supple system. Nations must not be forced into military initiatives against their will. So our present belief is that we should have some sort of European Security Council in which the main military nations of Europe would be the key members - Britain, France, Germany, Italy. Decisions would be taken in this forum, but any nation could opt out of a particular military operation. There would be no Euro Corps, no mixing of the armies. The European Security Council would be able to draw on those armed forces offered by each nation.

As for the European Parliament, I finally discovered why it's there. It's obvious once you see it. At the moment you have the Commission consisting of unelected technocrats, and the Council re-grouping elected heads of state. So when there is a conflict between the Commission and the Council, it is embarrassingly obvious that it is a conflict between the technocrats, with no popular mandate, and elected national leaders. That's an embarrassing position. So the Commission needed a democratic disguise. And that is what the Parliament supplies. The Parliament is dominated by the Christian Democrats and the Socialists - and they both share the same objectives with the Commission, that of creating a supranational state. And they have the same enemies, the democratic institutions of the nations. That is because the power of the Commission and that of the European Parliament is in inverse proportion to the power of the democratic institutions of the nations. If the national parliaments are strong, then the European Parliament supranational institutions are weak and vice-versa. That is why the Commission and the European Parliament work together in a symbiosis so as to weaken and humiliate the democratic institutions within the nations. They need each other because the Commission has executive and legislative power, and the Parliament looks like a democratic institution.

But we do need one other institution. If we succeed in establishing a Community of nations, we must avoid the disease which occurs in most organisations. As they grow older, they become more bureaucratic and the bureaucrats do everything to increase centralisation of power. When the Founding Fathers created America it was supposed to be a free association of states built on what we have come to know as the principle of subsidiarity. That was James Madison's idea. But as the US grew older it became more and more centralised as is now painfully obvious in Washington. So we must have an institution which guards against this, and whose only function is to prohibit centralisation of power.

That is the sort of project that we are working on so as to establish as much common ground as possible. We will consult like-minded people in each European nation as we did in France. We will attempt to form broad coalitions of citizens, not just politicians although politicians will also be welcome. Our purpose will be to militate for one thing: not that our plan be adopted. But that the public be given the right to vote by referendum on the future of Europe.