

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

TRIBUTE

TO

Aldo MORO

Strasbourg, 11 May 1978

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Addresses delivered by:

Emilio COLOMBO
Ludwig FELLERMAIER
Egon Alfred KLEPSCH
Carlo MEINTZ
Michael B. YEATS
James SCOTT-HOPKINS
Renato SANDRI
Roy Harris JENKINS
Luigi GRANELLI

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This brochure contains the texts of the addresses delivered on 11 May 1978, during the session of the European Parliament, as a tribute to the memory of Mr Aldo MORO, by Messrs

Emilio COLOMBO,
President of the European Parliament;

Ludwig FELLERMAIER,
Chairman of the Socialist Group of the European Parliament;

Egon Alfred KLEPSCH,
Chairman of the Christian-Democratic Group of the European Parliament;

Carlo MEINTZ,
Vice-President of the European Parliament;

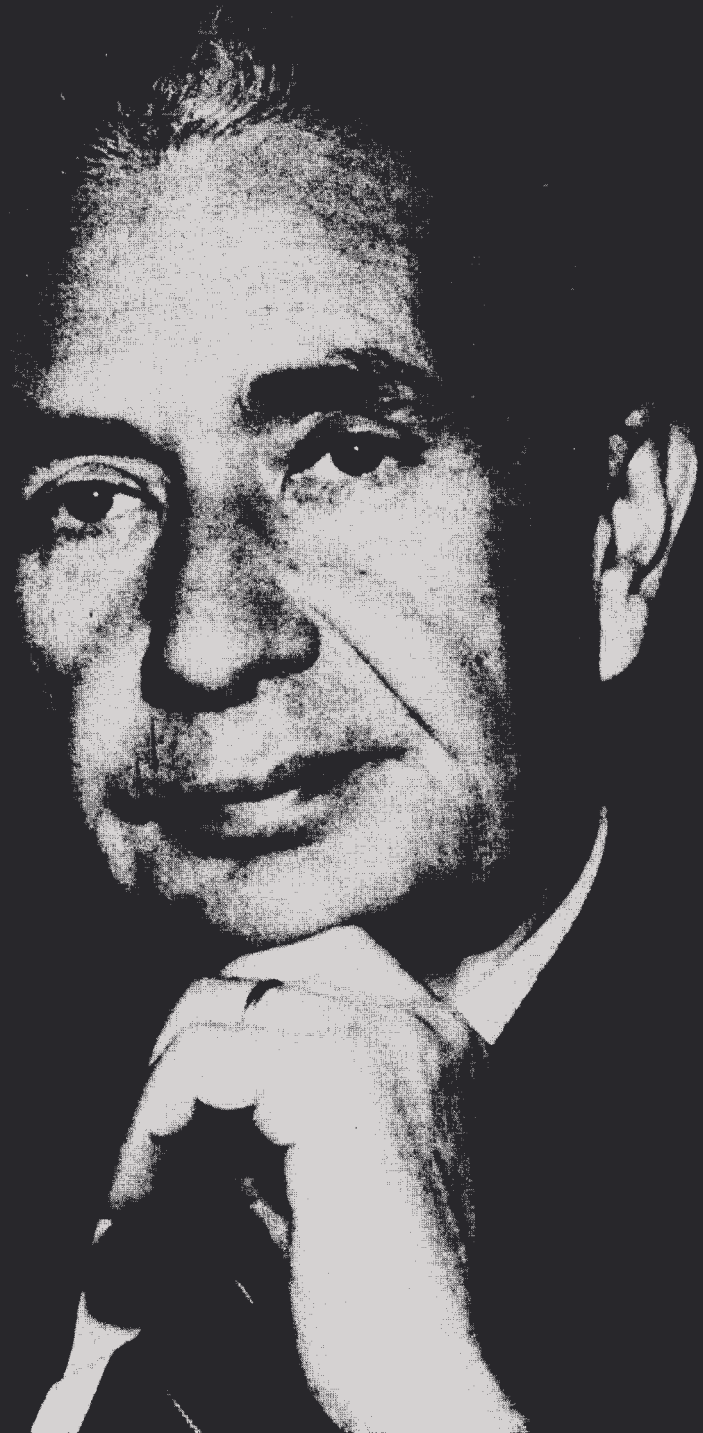
Michael B. YEATS,
Vice-President of the European Parliament;

James SCOTT-HOPKINS,
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Renato SANDRI,
Member of the European Parliament;

Roy Harris JENKINS,
President of the Commission of the European Communities;

Luigi GRANELLI,
Member of the European Parliament.



Address delivered

by

Emilio COLOMBO
President of the European Parliament

Ladies and gentlemen,

We now pay due tribute to Mr Aldo Moro, who has been so barbarously murdered.

(The House rose to listen to the President)

We wish to pay tribute without indulging in any rhetoric, and with the simplicity appropriate to the great and tragic events of human affairs and to personalities who have made a deep impression on the history of our own times.

During the weeks which followed the massacre of five young men and the kidnapping of Mr Moro we always hoped – in fact believed – that reason and humanity would prevail and that Aldo Moro's life would be saved, for the sake above all of his family, but also of Italy and of the European Community, of which he was a convinced supporter and architect.

Instead cold, calculating and incomprehensible brutality has prevailed, transforming imprisonment into sacrifice and martyrdom, and hope grief, emptiness and the distressing

realization that our society can still witness such displays of savagery and total denial of human rights and life.

This Parliament, which is the Parliament of a community of peoples who have chosen to cooperate precisely in order to safeguard the basis of peace and democratic society, must once more make its voice heard and call upon the governments of the Member States to unite and work together to eradicate terrorism and every form of violence.

It is the very foundations of our Community which are being undermined – nor is it apposite to point out that these evils manifest themselves only in some countries and not in others, for the laborious experience of living together and looking together to the future teaches us that our misfortunes are shared.

Aldo Moro was murdered precisely because of the ideals which he fought to defend throughout his long and industrious career – which often encountered opposition but was certainly fruitful – as teacher, politician and statesman.

In 32 years as a parliamentarian, he was elected eight times to the Chamber of Deputies, was Prime Minister in five governments, Minister of Education from 1955 to 1959, Foreign Minister from 1969 to 1974, for a long time political secretary of the Italian Christian-Democratic Party, and latterly its President.

The Italian Constitution, particularly the section which guarantees basic human rights and those of the citizen in a democratic society, bears the imprint of that Christian individualism upon which he based his vision of man,

society and the State. This vision had its roots in, and drew strength from, a profound religious conviction consistently applied in everyday life.

He was at the helm of Italian politics in some of its most delicate and difficult moments – such as the transition from the centre coalition governments to those of the centre-left, i.e. to cooperation with the Socialist Party. More recently, just before the captivity which subjected him – in his own words – to ‘total and unchecked domination’ and led to his death he was faced with Italy’s serious problems, including precisely that of suppressing violence, and succeeded in defining the scope for agreement among diverse political parties with a view to guaranteeing a wider consensus as a basis for government action, while at the same time safeguarding the individual identity of each of the parties and our pluralist concept of democracy.

He did not conceive of politics as static and empirical administration, but as a permanent readiness to foresee changes, to interpret them and to translate them into an overall political vision. A patient and able architect of political agreements he did not practise compromise for its own sake, but always managed to bring out the common ground of essential principles and values, foremost among which were the concept of the State, liberty, and the rule of law; and it was precisely the awareness of this common ground which made him a point of reference even for those who criticized some of his political choices.

His caution was often regarded as slowness, and his realism sometimes interpreted by the impatient as uncertainty, and by the over-cautious as acquiescence in foolhardy plans.

Aldo Moro regarded his readiness to hear out his opponent or his critic as a means of enriching his personality, a practical expression of tolerance, and as a mark of his respect for the opinions of others, which he countered with the lucidity and convincing force of his logic.

He was undoubtedly, a major figure on the world stage. In this House we wish particularly to commemorate Aldo Moro as a European. It was not merely occasional attention in the fulfilment of his duties as Foreign Minister and Prime Minister which he devoted to the European cause, but his own European beliefs which were an essential part of his political concept.

To recount his activity at European level would be going beyond the purpose of this tribute. I should like simply to recall that he had a vision of European integration which was neither opportunist, nor narrow, but central and wide-ranging.

Let us listen to his own words. In a speech to the Italian Chamber of Deputies, he said:

Europe is the salvation of our countries, but it will also be of help for the balance of power in the world and for an effective policy of détente and peace ... Such a balance requires the unity of Western Europe and will benefit both others and us.

In another speech he said:

As to the basic aims of European integration, it can be said that European Union must have a quintessentially political character and must concern itself with the problems and everyday life of the peoples which make it up, as benefits a group of unified peoples striving for political unity and with a common resolve to speak with a single voice.

On another occasion, at the European Council meeting in Luxembourg, he said:

Italy accepts the stage of European Union as a milestone in progress towards ... 'true' ... 'political and economic' ... unification. The Union cannot in fact be envisaged as the coexistence of parallel and disparate political and economic structures, but must be seen as a concept inspired by principles of conciliation and balance. If these are negated the uncertainties of the future cannot be resolved, nor the fruits of this Union harvested.

This far-seeing vision of a reality which is still far from us, but which is firmly rooted in the faith and the hopes of the founding fathers of Europe, and in a truly crusading Europeanism, reminds us here in this House that we must continue resolutely towards a Community of States in which, to borrow once more Aldo Moro's words, 'our cultures, our economies and our political conceptions must advance together, directed by the inalienable conviction shared by all Europeans that man is the true protagonist of civilization and history'.

Ladies and gentlemen, Italy mourns over the barbarous murder of one of its most influential leaders; Europe has lost one of its most convinced and authoritative architects; the Moro family has been irremediably afflicted.

I am sure I speak for the entire House in expressing to Aldo Moro's family our respectful and discreet, although profound and sincere sympathy in the grief which they are bearing with calm fortitude. And to Italy, which has experienced in its highest institutions, in its political and social forces, and in its most widespread popular feeling, the dramatic episode of the firm defence of its constitution

and laws against terrorist attack and of the loss of such an eminent leader, we express our heartfelt solidarity and the hope that, both in Italy and in Europe, terrorism and violence will be firmly combated and defeated, and that the values of Christian humanism which are the basis of European civilization will be strengthened.

Address delivered

by

**Ludwig FELLERMAIER
Chairman of the Socialist Group
of the European Parliament**

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen,

The Socialist Group in the European Parliament mourns the loss of Aldo Moro. It extends its sympathy at this difficult time to his long-suffering family, his colleagues and the whole Italian people. We all mourn the passing of an internationally highly-esteemed statesman and politician, who made a decisive and unforgettable contribution to the political life of his country and to the international political scene over a period of many years and in numerous positions of responsibility. Above all, though, we mourn the death of a human being who was a committed European politician and a democrat to the very depth of his soul. We, and all democrats, are united in our indignation at this cold-blooded murder.

The Rome kidnapping and murders were directed in the first instance at their immediate victims, but at the same time against our liberal society as a whole – indeed, against any form of human society – and as such are directed against every single one of us. Nothing could be more erroneous than to regard the murder of Aldo Moro and his bodyguards as a purely Italian matter. We know that

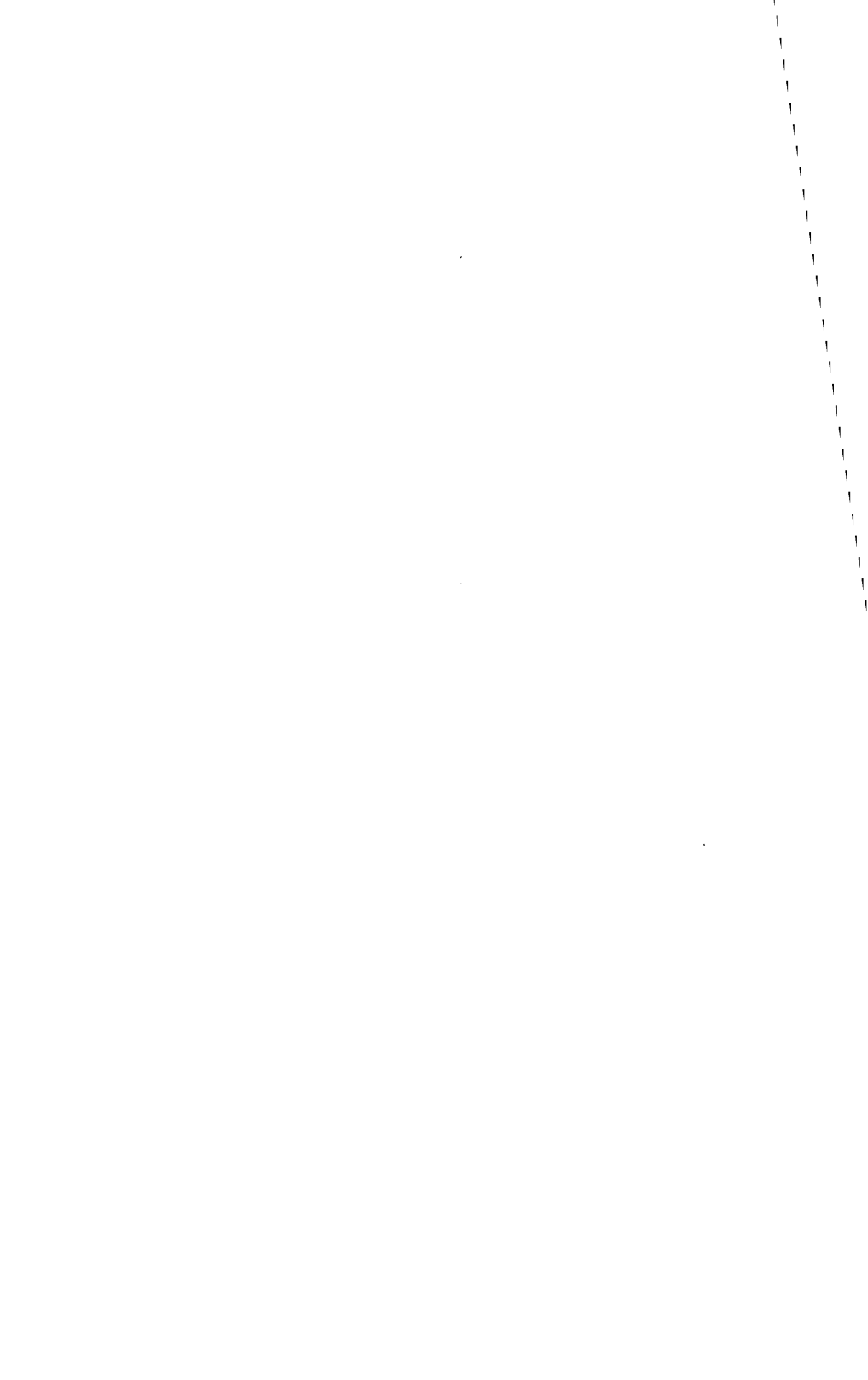
terrorism is nowadays organized and carried out on an international basis, and at the very time when Europe is embarking on the laborious process of unification, the Rome murders are meant to strike at and weaken our whole democratic society. There can be no doubt – and let us be quite honest about this – that all our countries and societies have many, many weaknesses and often give cause for justified criticism. This is also true of Italy. But let us state just as forcefully that murder and imposing one's demands by violent means, cynically allowing for the loss of human life, can never be justified, no matter what the circumstances and no matter what the stated aims. In the long term, international terrorism stands no chance, because it is opposed not only by the will of governments, but also by the will of the democratic, international community. Governments, which the terrorists regard as impotent and which they aim to undermine, are by no means helpless and paralysed with fear. Ultimately they will defeat terrorism, because our peoples are united in their abhorrence of this terrorism.

At this time of mourning, however, we must disregard all philosophical and party political barriers and spurn terrorists and demagogues, to show that the unity of all democrats in the European Community and beyond is stronger than this cowardly, cold-blooded murder.

In the last few weeks, while we and all our fellow-citizens in our various countries have shared the same hopes and fears about the life of Aldo Moro, the consciences of those in responsible positions in Italy have been sorely tried. We felt and still feel a sense of absolute solidarity with all of them, from the ordinary policeman to the country's top politicians. The general feeling of insecurity resulting from these acts of terrorism is liable to lead to either extreme

anger or a profound sense of helplessness. We therefore declare our commitment to the solidarity of all European democrats in the face of the terrorist threat. The Socialists of Europe will play their part in all the Member States of the European Community and accept their share of the responsibility, so that whatever steps are necessary can be taken in the fight against international terrorism.

The European Parliament, the parliaments of our Member States and our governments, acting as the representatives of a free and democratic Europe, can do no more in this ceremony of remembrance here in Strasbourg than to solemnly commit themselves to do everything in their power to ensure that Aldo Moro and the murderer's other victims did not die in vain. Solidarity in mourning must grow into solidarity in action in the face of the terrorist threat. The death of Aldo Moro places all of us under a lasting obligation.



Address delivered

by

Egon Alfred KLEPSCH
Chairman of the Christian-Democratic Group
of the European Parliament

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Christian-Democratic Group, the Group of the European People's Party in this House, deeply mourns the death of Aldo Moro. Aldo Moro was one of us, and we thank all those who – like us – see in him a common symbol of the principles of liberty and democracy, who honour his memory and who mourn his passing.

For us, Aldo Moro personified in exemplary fashion the ideals on which our political thinking is based. He was a man of reconciliation, peace and rapprochement, and was blessed with the unusual gift of being able to bring people together and to find solutions even in difficult and critical situations, solutions which were marked by the spirit of reconciliation in the interests of peace and stability.

Aldo Moro always took an unerring stand for the principle and practice of human rights and for the protection and preservation of human dignity. It is all the more shocking, that it was he who fell victim in such a terrible way to the fact that in our peaceful – but only superficially peaceful – society there are still elements for whom the whole idea of

respect for the individual and for human dignity is utterly meaningless. The suffering he had to endure and his murder clearly show how far we still have to go before this basic principle is universally recognized.

Aldo Moro regarded the unification of Europe as a lasting solution to problems of this kind and he did an enormous amount to further this cause. He was a statesman of historic dimensions. Not only Italy, but also the peoples and states of Europe and the European Community will derive lasting benefit from the work to which he contributed and which he initiated and directed.

His death is, for us, the kind of martyrdom that a politician must suffer for his convictions. He stood up for the cause of the Italian people, for his own ideas and for his colleagues both in his own country and on the international scene, and his sufferings were a direct consequence of this commitment. That is why he was picked out, kidnapped and murdered – because he was and will remain such a steadfast symbol of respect for a free society and the desire to maintain and further develop it.

This means that it is now incumbent on us to work in close conjunction with all democratic groups and all democratic parties in the European Community to uphold freedom and democracy and to honour his memory by committing ourselves to the cause of peace, rapprochement and reconciliation.

Our peoples, our citizens therefore also expect us to take a determined stand against this terrible blow which has been struck by international terrorism and certain groups whose

aim is the destruction of society as we know it. With their support we shall spare no effort to be worthy of Aldo Moro's legacy.

The memory of this great figure will help to point the way forward to a better future.

Address delivered

by

Carlo MEINTZ
Vice-President of the European Parliament

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a saddened and appalled Liberal and Democratic Group which joins in the tribute to Aldo Moro and in the unqualified condemnation of this cruel act of terrorism.

By an unfortunate coincidence Aldo Moro's kidnapping and barbarous execution both took place while the European Parliament was sitting. This brought to our notice most brutally the European dimension of this tragedy, for it is not merely Italy which has been attacked in the person of one of its most influential leaders, but the whole Community. From now on, no-one is safe from the fury of terrorism, and this realization must spur us to develop closer links across our national frontiers and transcending our ideological differences, to create a European judicial area and to organize the fight against terrorism. This realization must also stimulate us to pursue with greater commitment the goal of European Union, for in this field, as in many others, our success, indeed our salvation, depends on a genuine feeling of solidarity among our peoples, coordination of our national efforts and harmonization of our laws.

My Group hopes that Aldo Moro's martyrdom will prove a decisive factor in bringing about this qualitative leap. It would certainly be the best tribute we could pay to him and the best way of ensuring that his martyrdom was not in vain. We pay tribute to the determination and courage which the Italian Christian-Democratic Party, government and people have shown in facing this harsh ordeal.

The Liberal and Democratic Group pays tribute to Aldo Moro, a great European whom the Community counted among its most eminent Presidents-in-Office and one of those who showed most respect for constitutional and parliamentary rules. We offer our most sincere condolences to his family.

Address delivered

by

Michael B. YEATS
Vice-President of the European Parliament

Mr President,

On behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats I also wish to offer our deep regret at the tragic death of Aldo Moro. We all knew Premier Moro as one of the great figures of world democracy. He was loved and respected, not merely in Italy, but also in those numerous countries that he visited during his long and distinguished career. What is one to say, Mr President, of those who would commit such a deed? They fight for no cause. They seek the achievement of no ideal. They do not aim to advance in any way the cause of humanity. Their sole ambition is destruction. Those characteristics of Aldo Moro that made him such a beloved figure, his nobility, his idealism, his total dedication to the democratic cause, these were the very characteristics that impelled his enemies to destroy him. At this sad moment one sympathizes deeply with the family of Aldo Moro and with the Italian people as a whole. Their loss is an irreparable one. We know that nothing can replace this great man who has gone from us but perhaps, even from this tragic event, some ultimate good may come. The killing of Aldo Moro was an attack on the democratic

way of life, not merely in Italy, but in Europe as a whole. We can best honour the life and work of Aldo Moro by pledging ourselves anew to that democratic cause to which he himself devoted his entire life, and for which this week he died.

Address delivered

by

James SCOTT-HOPKINS
Vice-President of the European Parliament

Mr President,

I wish to follow others in extending our profoundest sympathy to the family of Aldo Moro, to his country and to his party. I did not have the honour of knowing Aldo Moro — that was my loss — but I do know of his reputation, as a statesman, as a politician, and of the great benefits that he has brought to his country over the years during which he has worked assiduously, for the furthering of democracy and freedom throughout Europe. With his death, Italian politics have suffered a grievous loss at a critical time; so indeed, have European politics. His career has stretched back over these crucial years, in which he has been one of the leading representatives of his country. We can only hope that Italy's leaders will maintain successfully the spirit of cooperation which he fostered so well. A great English writer in the 17th century, John Donne, once wrote, 'Never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee'.

This crime in Italy concerns more than just the Italian people: it touches the whole civilized world. It will be remembered as one of the dark events of our twentieth century. And for us here now, it stands as an important

reminder that, no matter what technological advances, no matter what social and economic improvements we may take pride in, our society, our European society, is still one in which primitive and violent elements are at large. The death of this great man, Aldo Moro, is one of those, I hope, rare events which remind us of the distance we still have to travel before men cease to resort to violence as a means of changing society.

I ask myself, Sir, what can we do to commemorate Aldo Moro. I would suggest two things. First, we can in our own countries, support all efforts to combat terrorism – this monster of our twentieth century and the international disease of our time. Secondly, we as Parliamentarians, can do our utmost to ensure that political violence never succeeds and that its perpetrators are severely punished. Sir, we mourn with you, and we join with you in sending our condolences to the family of Aldo Moro, to his party and to his country.

Address delivered

by

Renato SANDRI
Member of the European Parliament

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen,

Following the call for simplicity which you, Mr President, addressed to us, we should like only to express to this august assembly the strong feelings, considered thoughts and commitment of the Italian Communists and of our Group.

We have bowed and we bow once more to the memory of a great statesman whose work left its mark, first and foremost, on the 30 years of Italian history through his involvement in the drafting of the republican constitution and in many other ways up to the events of recent weeks.

Let us not be deceived by the rhetoric: he opposed us and we opposed him with mutual fairness for many years. But as an adversary he was open to the spirit of the age, to a sense of history and to the overriding needs of our country, our continent and the world.

The massacre of his escort and his kidnapping occurred – as you, Mr President, recalled – on 16 March, the day on which the Italian Parliament was to start the debate on, and sanction the formation of, a new majority extending from

the Christian Democrats to the Socialists, Communists, Social Democrats, and Republicans, which was intended to reflect the heightened awareness of national interests at a time such as the present – that board national majority which Aldo Moro, with his spirit of tolerance, his intelligence and his abilities as a mediator had sought to achieve.

I should like also to recall that his body was left with ferocious derision like a blind challenge only a short distance from the headquarters of the Christian-Democratic Party and from those of my own party – a ferocious and blind challenge to the mutual understanding and tolerance and to the national effort which are now required of the Italians.

Thus, ladies and gentlemen, we combine tribute to his memory with respectful sympathy for the suffering of his family, and sincere solidarity with the party which has lost its leader and which, during this time of crisis, to avoid any indecisiveness and thereby contributed, like the other constitutional forces and to a greater extent than they, to the dignity which the Italian Republic, although badly hit, was able to display by rejecting any negotiations with a gang of murderers.

What has occurred is too serious for us, the parties of government and of opposition, not to stop and consider – without mean attempts to derive political capital, without seeking to pass the buck, which would be intolerable – how such a thing could have happened in Italy, and what measures we must take on the one hand rigorously and severely to suppress crime, and on the other to get to the roots of the problem. These are undoubtedly specifically

Italian problems but, as all the preceding speakers have rightly said, they are not purely Italian, because a blow aimed at one country strikes at the whole Community; moreover, this sinister, obscure evil can spread and indeed is already spreading, and therefore requires consideration going beyond our borders, joint consideration by all our countries, naturally this is not the place or the time to try to begin such consideration. But allow us to express the commitment of our party. The immediate future in Italy will be difficult, as we know. Let us have no illusions: we are not dealing merely with an insensate but limited outbreak of criminality, we are dealing with a ruthlessly detailed plan to overthrow democracy. Therefore, at this time of grief, our commitment must be to fight to make the Italian people's democratic choice irreversible and to ensure that this evil is fought with the law and within the law, but without in any way condoning, tolerating or giving way to crime.

These tragic events represent a challenge. We have taken it up and intend to meet it, so that liberty may survive, so that our republic, the Italian Republic may also survive.

Address delivered

by

Roy Harris JENKINS

President of the Commission of the European Communities

Mr President,

This House is today united in its spontaneous desire to pay tribute to the life of President Aldo Moro, and at the same time to express our horror at the bestiality of his death. Over the last few years, terrorist incidents – some of them occurring in nearly all our Member States – have disfigured what is still, to a far greater extent than at most times in our history, the predominantly peaceful landscape of Europe. It is the very quality of this landscape which is resented by the perverted irrationalism of terrorism. We have occasionally, perhaps, been in danger of learning to live almost too easily with terrorism. That is not so today; of all the terrorist incidents which we have witnessed, none has so seized the shocked attention of the 260 million citizens of the Community as the extended tragedy of President Moro's suffering and murder. Out of that may come a new sense of unity and resolution.

We remember President Moro today as a man and as a statesman. In the profound sympathy which we send to his wife and his family, we underline his human qualities and human sympathy, in recalling his long and distinguished service to the Italian people, and his example, even in the tragedy of his death, of public duty. We mark our respect

for his political leadership, and we send a message of solidarity to the Italian nation, of which he was such a notable servant.

But he was also and at the same time a leader of European opinion, committed to the ideals and aims for which the Community stands. An ever closer union of the peoples of Europe cannot be simply founded on the prospect of mutual economic advance, but must also be founded in a lasting determination to preserve our democratic values and enhance the lives and liberties of our peoples. President Moro's murder challenges the Community to respond to the common courage and purpose so that out of the tragedy of his death can come a rallying point for the values for which he gave his life. All of us who cherish democracy and the rule of law, have a duty to ensure that these values do not perish.

Address delivered

by

Luigi GRANELLI
Member of the European Parliament

Mr President,

It is with deep emotion that I wish to say a few words on behalf of the Members belonging to the Italian Christian-Democratic Party, and of the Party as a whole, to express our thanks for the sympathy which you, Mr President, and all the political Groups have once more shown us at this time.

Our country is going through a difficult period. For months Italian society has been stained with the blood of innocent victims who have paid dearly for their devotion to the principles of social harmony and the rules of law, and I wish to commemorate here, not only the influential leader of our party Aldo Moro, who was an eminent statesman and a convinced European, but also the policemen who defend our institutions, the journalists, judges and all the free men in our country who have risked their lives to defend our common values.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we are sure of one thing – that in this battle Europe is with us and we are with Europe, and that only together can we face up to the explosion of irrationality, violence and barbarism which

motivates the perverse and destructive plans of the terrorists. They have struck down the man who was our most eminent leader, but not merely a political leader – a man who believed in tolerance and dialogue, who wanted a society of free men finding in liberty the justification for their diversity, as opposed to the kind of society desired by the terrorists, consisting of men living in enmity one against the other, all against all, so as to destroy the rules of social harmony.

I am convinced of one thing – that if we all wish to be worthy of the memory of Aldo Moro which we are honouring in this Parliament, we shall have to fight; barbarism, violence and terrorism may stain the daily life of our countries with blood, but they cannot survive and they cannot pass the test of history, which will be marked in Italy as in Europe by the values of legality, freedom, and that social harmony for which Aldo Moro fought and to which we shall continue to uphold our commitment.

