Hansen, Peo, and Stefan Jonsson. "Making Europe in Africa: The First Postwar Decade." *Eurafrica: The Untold History of European Integration and Colonialism*. : Bloomsbury Academic, 2014. 71–146. *Bloomsbury Collections*. Web. 26 Apr. 2023. <<http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781472544506.ch-003>>.

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Making Europe in Africa: The First Postwar Decade

Immediately after World War II the quest for European integration and unity would make a strong comeback. Equally immediately, though, this mission for unity would have to cope with a divided continent and the ignominious fact that Europe had come under the spell of a rapidly escalating conflict between what were now the world's two lone superpowers. It goes without saying, then, that the evolving Cold War and, with it, the demotion of a world order centred in Europe would function as a formative structure for the ideas and initiatives that drove (Western) European integration in the postwar era. But contrary to the impression given by the great majority of accounts within EU studies, this was not the only such formative framework. For while a war-ravaged and divided Europe was besieged by a superpower conflict largely out of its control, and while its various empires to the east were coming undone, Europeans continued to be in sole control of the African landmass and its enormous wealth of still largely untapped natural resources. Up until 1956, when the Treaty of Rome negotiations commenced, only five African countries (including South Africa and Egypt, where Britain still had troops stationed) had achieved independence. The remainder, which consisted of some 120 million people, was either under direct European colonial rule or indirectly governed by European states as Trust Territories of the United Nations. France and Britain were the main actors; but Belgium and Portugal also possessed considerable areas, whereas Italy and Spain, in particular, played minor roles.

In continuity with the ideational climate during the interwar period, these two formative structures (of superpower preeminence

and Europe's African hegemony) would be revived as mutually constituted in the postwar period. Echoing the Kalgarian dictum, the gravity of the threat posed by the Soviet and American geopolitical clout would, post-1945, also be conceived as standing in direct proportion to Europe's ability, or inability, to make common cause over its African hinterland. In the minds of many postwar European statesmen, a squeeze from the East and West could be eased through Europe's North-South extension into a Eurafrican Third Force in world politics. Again, many asserted that it was through colonial cooperation, even integration, rather than going it alone, that the exhausted colonial powers in Western Europe were to infuse new energy into their terribly underfinanced empires and so redeem Europe's global stamina.

But for all the ideational continuity, the concrete international and global terrain onto which Eurafrica was to be relaunched had, of course, been radically altered as a result of World War II. Indeed, the starkly more acute sense of international weakness on the part of the Western European powers – a humiliating condition that leaders were to vent almost ad nauseam in the first postwar decade – became much more accentuated as Eurafrica's most potent and tenacious *raison d'être*. As we demonstrate here and in the following chapter, this radical transformation would also bring about a modification of Eurafrica's chief incentives and legitimizing claims. Most of all, it would moderate the utopian impulse and desire that had characterized many of the interwar plans for Eurafrica. As we also show, while Eurafrica clearly reflected a deep-seated ambition to preserve and re-establish pre-war forms of colonial domination, it also harboured a strategy and vision to both accommodate and proactively shape a new world order. As part of the latter, Eurafrica, or a joint European management of the colonial territories, was often sold as reforming, even transcending, traditional and increasingly ill-reputed colonial relations.

As already noted, the viability of the Eurafrican momentum largely rested on the fact that Western European powers, after the war, felt certain that they could remain in uncontested control of the African continent for the foreseeable future. Indeed, in 1945 the British Colonial

Office expected the sub-Saharan Empire to last into the twenty-first century.¹ This stood in diametrical contrast to the developments in Asia where commanding anti-colonial independence movements had already formed and struggles erupted well in advance of the war's end. This resulted in India and Pakistan gaining independence in 1947, followed a year later by Burma and Ceylon, at the same time as emergency was declared in Malaya. The Netherlands' brutal suppression of Indonesian independence, first declared by Achmad Sukarno in 1945, was defeated in 1949, while France's equally atrocious war in Indochina – launched in 1946, as a result of Paris' refusal to accept Cambodia's, Laos' and Vietnam's independence declarations in 1945 – would ravage on for another five years.

These colonial conflicts walked hand in hand with Asia's rapid transformation into a major theatre of the early Cold War, climaxing with the communist victory in China in 1949 and the Korean War shortly thereafter (1950–3). At the same time, developments in the Middle East and Iran were moving in a similar direction, with colonial and Cold War struggles often inextricably intertwined. Given Africa's (with the crucial exception of Egypt and North Africa in general) relative distance from this nexus of Cold War and anti-colonial struggles, many Europeans thus believed that Eurafrica – or any collaborative effort to reinforce Europe's African possessions – would serve to prevent the push for decolonization in Asia from gaining a foothold on the African continent. In so doing, this would also keep the superpowers at arm's length from African affairs, thereby preventing the Cold War logic from infiltrating Africa.

All these factors contributed significantly to Eurafrica's postwar momentum; they also help explain why the colonial question and

¹ Anthony Adamthwaite, 'Britain, France, the United States and Euro-Africa, 1945–1949', in Marie-Thérèse Bitsch and Gérard Bossuat (eds), *L'Europe unie et l'Afrique: De l'idée d'Eurafrrique à la convention de Lomé I* (Brussels: Bruylant, 2005), p. 121. For more on this perception of sub-Saharan Africa, see Sally Marks, *The Ebbing of European Ascendancy: An International History of the World 1914–1945* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2002), p. 151; and Martin Shipway, *Decolonization and its Impact: A Comparative Approach to the End of the Colonial Empires* (Malden: Blackwell, 2008), p. 116.

Africa were to figure prominently on the agendas of practically all the postwar organizations and institutions of European integration. As historian Yves Montarsolo puts it, 'each time a new "European" institution saw the day, Africa was always at the heart of all concerns'.² These new institutions included the European Movement (officially founded in 1948), the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC/OECD, 1948), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO, 1949, seen at the time as an organization of European integration³), the Council of Europe (1949), the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC, 1951), the abortive European Defence Community and appurtenant European Political Community (the EDC Treaty was signed in 1952) and, finally, the European Economic Community (EEC, 1957), which will be the focus of the next chapter.

Such solid high-level organizational and institutional embeddedness stood in sharp contrast to Eurafrica's career in the nebulous organizational landscape of the interwar period. This also combined to relocate much, although by no means all, of the Eurafrican project from its visionary and rather utopian terrain onto a much more practical and hands-on platform. International, intergovernmental and supranational organizational and institutional muscle now both reflected and facilitated a more effective mobilization of political support for European colonial cooperation in Africa. In addition, the issues involved could be subjected to systematic studies and rigorous assessments, addressing and disseminating the imminent and future benefits, as well as the potential pitfalls and trying financial requirements for colonial investments that had to be collectively secured. Besides providing ways of resolving Europe's general geopolitical predicaments, such a problem-solving atmosphere was also conducive to establish the logical and realistic links between colonial cooperation

² Yves Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique – contrepoint de l'idée d'Europe: Le cas français de la fin de la deuxième guerre mondiale aux négociations des Traités de Rome* (Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l'Université de Provence, 2010), p. 91.

³ A. H. Robertson, *European Institutions* (The London Institute of World Affairs, London: Stevens & Sons, 1959).

and the resolution of a number of particular predicaments, including Western Europe's dollar deficit, its great demand for raw materials, energy shortage and demographic imbalances.

Later we discuss the ways in which colonial cooperation in Africa was intended to offset such both general and particular problems that Western Europe faced in the immediate postwar period. Setting out by briefly outlining the general developments relating to European colonial empires during the first postwar years, mainly focusing on the Asian scene, we then focus more closely on the two main colonial powers, Britain and France, attending particularly to the increasing importance that they would come to assign to Africa as well as to their attempt at Eurafrican collaboration. Third and finally, we examine how the organizations mentioned earlier, which worked to advance European integration, dealt with the colonial question – especially as it pertained to Africa. As such, this chapter explores the main background and developments that would prepare the ground for Eurafrica's subsequent and successful incorporation into the EEC, which is the topic of the next chapter.

Anti-colonial momentum: Consolidating empires after the war

Strong anti-colonial sentiments and independence movements had been brewing in Asia and the Middle East since well before the war had ended with Japan's defeat in August 1945. As noted in the previous chapter, numerous such movements had formed already in the wake of World War I and its Wilsonian moment, which, at first, had seemed to elevate national self-determination to a universal principle and thus produced the impression 'that a window of opportunity had opened and thrust the issue of colonial liberation to the fore.'⁴ While this turned

⁴ Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 220.

out to be a deceptive impression, it served to galvanize and radicalize anti-colonial movements vowing not to let the moment slip a second time once the window reopened in 1945.⁵

Knowing full well what was in the offing, colonial powers were equally engaged in preparing for the opposite development of stemming the tide of independence movements in Asia and the Middle East⁶ – and also in North Africa, where anti-colonial uprisings in the Algerian cities of Guelma and Sétif on VE (Victory in Europe) day set off a French military assault that resulted in the killing of somewhere between eight and forty-five thousand Algerians. As Britain's foreign secretary Ernest Bevin declared in the House of Commons in February 1946, echoing Churchill's previous assertion on the matter: 'When I say I am not prepared to sacrifice the British Empire what do I mean? I know that if the British Empire fell, the greatest collection of free nations would go into the limbo of the past, or it would be a disaster.'⁷ Britain's initial imperial consolidation in 1945 and 1946 actually effectuated a significant imperial expansion in Asia. For their part, France and the Netherlands were determined to regain the colonial possessions in Southeast Asia that had been occupied by Japan.⁸ Up until 1950, moreover, Italy also aspired to regain part of its African empire that Britain had wrested from Mussolini during the war.⁹

Most important, given the focus of this study, is that the pro-colonial preparations also occasioned forceful collaborative actions on the part

⁵ Ibid., pp. 224–5.

⁶ A. J. Stockwell, 'Imperialism and nationalism in South-East Asia', in Judith M. Brown and Wm. Roger Louis (eds), *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Volume IV: The Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 476–80.

⁷ Quoted in John Saville, *The Politics of Continuity: British Foreign Policy and the Labour Government, 1945–46* (London: Verso, 1993), p. 4.

⁸ For a full account of the developments in Britain's Asian Empire between 1945 and 1949, see Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper, *Forgotten Wars: The End of Britain's Asian Empire* (London: Allen Lane, 2007). For an in-depth, comparative study of the fate of Europe's colonial empires and their respective attempts at restoration in the immediate postwar period, see Shipway, *Decolonization and its Impact*.

⁹ Antonio Varsori, 'Italy in the International System: From Great Power Illusion to the Reality of a Middle Rank Power: 1945–57', in Michael Dockrill (ed.), *Europe within the Global System 1938–1960: Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany: From Great Powers to Regional Powers* (Bochum: Universitätsverlag Dr N. Brockmeyer, 1995).

of European powers. A case in point is Britain's military interventions in both Vietnam (Indochina) and Indonesia (Netherlands East Indies) in 1945.¹⁰ These were conducted to pave the way for France's and the Netherlands' restoration of the colonial control that had been lost during the war. Viewed with scepticism in Washington, Britain's decision rested with the firm belief that the rebuilding of the French and Dutch empires in Asia would be imperative for Britain's ability to hold on to its own Asian possessions – the lifeline of dollar earnings coming from Malaya's rubber and tin production, for one, could simply not be lost at this critical hour.¹¹ 'The frontiers of Malaya,' said Britain's ambassador to Thailand, 'are on the Mekong.'¹²

It was thus absolutely necessary to swiftly establish a common Western front in Asia, capable of thwarting the general momentum of anti-colonial movements that were already receiving important boosts from the approaching Indian independence and the communist struggle in China. But the unswerving commitment to France's reacquisition of Indochina was equally determined by London's conviction that its postwar aims inside Europe itself, but also, as we shall see later, in Africa, only could be realized if a strong compact with France was upheld. In 1947, for instance, Britain and France signed the Treaty of Dunkirk, which established a defensive pact to safeguard against any future German aggression and to promote cooperation in the economic sphere. From the British perspective, then, Western unity in Asia and unity in Western Europe were, quite strictly, two sides of the same strategic and economic coin.¹³

Due to Britain and France's dire financial situation (by now relying on US assistance) and their already terribly overstretched armed forces,

¹⁰ For an in-depth account, see Bayly and Harper, *Forgotten Wars*, Ch. 4. See also Marilyn B. Young, *The Vietnam Wars 1945–1990* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1991), pp. 11–12.

¹¹ See Mark Atwood Lawrence, 'Forging the "Great Combination": Britain and the Indochina Problem, 1945–1950,' in Mark Atwood Lawrence and Fredrik Logevall (eds), *The First Vietnam War: Colonial Conflict and Cold War Crisis* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007). See also Fredrik Logevall, *Embers of War: The Fall of an Empire and the Making of America's Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 2012), pp. 112–15.

¹² Quoted in Lawrence, 'Forging the "Great Combination"', p. 122.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 108–9.

it was equally clear that the long-term viability of such a Western front in Asia depended on the US lending its wholehearted commitment to the endeavour. To achieve this, which turned out to be a difficult task, Britain and France did everything they could to frame the colonial problematic in Cold War terms of a communist plot to oust Western powers from Southeast Asia. 'Our aim', Bevin declared in a parliamentary debate in September 1948, 'is to provide every estate with the maximum number of trained and armed defenders. It will be a terrific task to put an end to these terrorist gangs. The trouble is due mainly to Chinese Communists, who have been specially assigned to go into the country and organize trouble.' In what could hardly be read as anything but a plea for US assistance, Bevin went on to warn that '[i]f this policy of stirring up civil war goes on as it has been going on ever since the war ended, first in one territory and then in another, no one can foresee the end to which it will lead those that promote it'.¹⁴

Following years of arduous work of persuasion, London and Paris finally succeeded in having Washington embark on what would soon turn out to be an American bankrolling of the French war in Indochina.¹⁵ But the breakthrough with the Americans came only in the autumn of 1949, four years into the war, and Washington's formal recognition of the French puppet regime under Emperor Bao Dai took until February 1950. As late as spring 1949 the US State Department had expressed strong misgivings about the US embroiling itself on the side of the French in Indochina, pointing to the Bao Dai government as a mere pawn and the war as almost certainly a futile and extremely wasteful enterprise.¹⁶ Due to the wait, Britain had to sustain much of what it least wanted – namely, sharp and persistent criticism from Asian national movements and leaders for supporting the brutal colonial regimes of France and the Netherlands, Nehru going as far as comparing Britain's

¹⁴ 'Bevin for 3d force as world balance', *The New York Times*, 16 September 1948.

¹⁵ For an in-depth account of the US involvement in the French war in Indochina 1950–1954, see e.g. Irwin Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); and Logevall, *Embers of War*.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

military intervention on behalf of France in Vietnam to Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy's intervention in the Spanish civil war. Increasingly, moreover, anti-colonial forces in Asia were working in concert. In January 1949, nineteen Asian countries organized what was, according to *The New York Times*, 'the first official all-Asian political conference in history', representing 'more than half of the world's population'. Rallying in support of Indonesian independence from the Dutch onslaught and resoundingly condemning European colonialism, the conference was regarded by many in the West as 'the first step in the development of an Asian bloc'.¹⁷

In London, such strident criticism was seen as potentially indicating that its Asian strategy was in jeopardy. The strategy in question aimed to nurture friendly future relations with those Asian countries (mainly India) that were gaining independence from Britain – so as to preserve a certain amount of postcolonial leverage – while simultaneously making sure not to stir anti-colonial nationalism in those Southeast Asian colonies that Britain was determined to keep, mainly Malaya, Singapore and Hong Kong. Since Britain's backing of France in Indochina, despite attempts at a low profile, was there for everyone to see, its backfiring impact on the larger strategy made it imperative for London to recede swiftly into a back-seat role once Washington had assumed the driver's seat. Being able to rest assured that Washington was fully committed to the task in Indochina, Whitehall was now, as Mark Lawrence puts it, finally 'free to give highest priority to its anxieties about antagonizing Asian opinion', with Bevin henceforth hard at work to tone down any indications of a Western accord on Indochina.¹⁸ By January 1950 Britain had dispensed with US policy and had gone ahead and recognized Communist China as a precautionary move to protect Hong Kong. During the Battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954, where the conclusive Vietminh victory would come to decide the subsequent and rapid French departure from Indochina,

¹⁷ 'Indonesia issue spreads', *The New York Times*, 23 January 1949.

¹⁸ Lawrence, 'Forging the "Great Combination"', p. 126.

it was thus only logical that London should decline Washington's bid to have Britain join an effort to come to the rescue of the battered French forces.¹⁹ That is to say, with a wholesale US commitment to Vietnam being clinched well in advance of the looming French collapse, Britain had already declared its mission accomplished and moved on to concentrate its diminishing resources and global reach on more pressing tasks.

A third world power: The British response

Looking into such tasks is also tantamount to sensing the centrality of Africa, in general, and Eurafrica, in particular, for Britain and France's handling of their weakening positions in Asia during the first postwar decade. Concurrently with Britain and France finding themselves forced to scale back their engagement in Southeast Asia and the Middle East, they began to perceive of Africa not only as a defensive fallback option but also, and most importantly, as a great opportunity to reinvigorate their respective colonial enterprises and hence their standings as great powers.

For the British postwar Labour government (under Clement Attlee and his dominant foreign secretary Ernest Bevin),²⁰ which assumed office in July 1945, the essential and, indeed, decisive importance of Africa was clear from the outset. By autumn 1945, Moscow's bid (later dropped), as part of the peace settlement, to be provided with a Mediterranean port in Tripolitania – the western half of British-occupied

¹⁹ Stockwell, 'Imperialism and nationalism in South-East Asia', p. 485; see also Edward Fursdon, *The European Defence Community: A History* (London: Macmillan, 1980), pp. 261–2; Kevin Ruane, *The Rise and Fall of the European Defence Community: Anglo-American Relations and the Crisis of European Defence, 1950–55* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 2000).

²⁰ According to David Dilks, 'Bevin enjoyed an initiative in the making of foreign policy which no Foreign Secretary since the days of Sir Edward Grey [who served 1905–1916] had exercised.' David Dilks, 'Britain and Europe, 1948–1950: The Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and the Cabinet', in Raymond Poidevin (ed.), *Origins of the European Integration (March 1948 – May 1950)* (Bruxelles: Bruylant et al., 1986), p. 391.

Libya (formerly under Italian colonial rule) – triggered deep suspicion in the Foreign Office, Bevin being certain that this signalled the Soviets' determination to convert the Mediterranean into a 'Russian lake' and then continue to seize a stake in the natural riches in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly the uranium in the Belgian Congo.²¹

Such fears were aggravated by the realization shortly thereafter that Britain's two pivotal military installations in the Middle East – Palestine and the Canal Zone in Egypt – could no longer be considered safe bets. Should a withdrawal from these base sites come to pass, both political and military leaders agreed, the Russians would waste no time establishing themselves in Egypt and Palestine. Since such a reversal would leave the door to the entire African continent wide open, it was impossible, from a British standpoint, to exaggerate the cataclysmal consequences it would entail. Russian control over Egypt and Palestine, the British Chiefs of Staff warned in April 1946, 'would prejudice our position both in North-West Africa [...] and in the Indian Ocean. It would be the first step in a direct threat to our main support area of Southern Africa.'²² Besides Britain, the Commonwealth as a whole shared this grave concern. At the Commonwealth's Prime Minister's meeting in London in the spring of 1948 the bottom line agreement was crystal clear: 'Russia should be excluded from Africa at whatever cost.'²³

When British troops withdrew from Palestine in April 1948 (the founding of the State of Israel being proclaimed a month later) this just served to strengthen London's resolve to stay put in the Canal Zone. However, and most importantly, it also served to intensify the ongoing search for alternative base sites and strategies, including alternatives to the Canal Zone itself. Practically all of this centred on Africa, and,

²¹ Geoffrey Parker, *Western Geopolitical Thought in the Twentieth Century* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), pp. 136–7; Wm. Roger Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East 1945–1951: Arab Nationalism, The United States, and Postwar Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 29, 271.

²² Quoted in Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East*, p. 28.

²³ Alan Bullock, *Ernest Bevin: Foreign Secretary, 1945–1951* (London: Heinemann, 1983), p. 235.

as Louis puts it, much of it echoed the spirit of the late nineteenth century's scramble for Africa: '[T]he map of tropical Africa would be painted a new shade of British red from Mombasa to Lagos, with the vital centre in the Sudan. In the Sudan rail or air links could be provided, if the Egyptians were amenable, to Cairo and Cape Town.'²⁴ In addition, Kenya (and possibly Tanganyika too) was seen by Attlee, as suggested in 1946, as the primary candidate for hosting a new main base for the protection of Britain's imperial interests, serving first as a backup to Egypt and ultimately as its replacement.²⁵ Since Bevin and the military still coveted the Middle East as a long-term strategic bastion, they viewed Attlee's Kenyan replacement plan with scepticism. Even so, Bevin was all in on Africa's growing strategic and economic importance and did not view the Middle East and tropical Africa in either-or terms; for him it was rather a both-and situation.

Yet, if there was one part that was growing in importance, the tendency in 1946 was clearly in favour of Africa. 'Despite drastic changes in her position abroad', *The New York Times* wrote in October 1947, 'Great Britain remains a powerful imperial nation.' To be sure, the report went on, India was lost, Palestine on its way and, while still strong, its ties to the Middle East and the Far East were certainly also showing signs of strain. In contrast to this development however, the *Times* could also confirm that 'Britain's interests in Africa – from Kenya, the Sudan and Nigeria right down to the Cape – are expanding.'²⁶ Indeed, in 1947 Africa was taking the place of India 'as one of the ultimate justifications of the British Empire', and, with it, the primary function of the Middle East in Britain's global strategy, although still key and still the irreplaceable king of oil, was shifting from one of assuring the commercial and strategic link between Europe and Asia to one of facilitating the security of Africa.²⁷

²⁴ Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East*, p. 109.

²⁵ Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*, p. 243. See also 'Attlee aides scan East Africa bases', *The New York Times*, 8 October 1946.

²⁶ 'Britain holds to Near East despite her empire change', *The New York Times*, 20 October 1947.

²⁷ Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East*, p. 16; John Gallagher, *The Decline, Revival and Fall of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 145–9.

Britain's strong-minded commitment to the revival of African colonialism was owed chiefly to the belief in the continent's magnificent economic potential – Bevin being 'hypnotized' by its mineral riches. As such, it presented Britain with a priceless opportunity to resolve its appalling financial situation, its overall economic decline and, not least, its embarrassing dependence on the USA.²⁸ This manifested in Britain's unparalleled investment in its African colonies in the early postwar years; and as Britain's economic situation showed further signs of structural weakness after 1947, this precipitated, as Butler puts it, 'a brief, but unprecedented fixation with drawing on colonial resources.'²⁹

Africa's splendid economic prospects notwithstanding, Britain's initial enthusiasm could not rest with this alone. The presumed viability of the enterprise was also intimately bound up with an equally presumed temporal buffer. In sharp contrast to the Asian scene, then, Britain felt it could work under the assumption that its African plans had time on their side, given that the type of malevolent nationalist and communist currents materializing elsewhere in the Empire still were seen to be at a safe distance from tropical Africa. 'With regard to the African and his aspirations,' it was asserted in *International Affairs* in 1948, 'rapid political evolution is not of much concern to him; nor is it his primary need.' Rather, what the African was said to be seeking, and what Britain should provide for, was 'nourishment for his body and his mind'.³⁰ 'Africa,' to use John Gallagher's depiction, 'would be the surrogate for India, more docile, more malleable, more pious.'³¹ As Louis alludes to, this created a much-needed sense of African invincibility for the British. Until the early 1950s, Africa was the place where 'a permanent line of British defence could and should be decisively

²⁸ L. J. Butler, *Britain and Empire: Adjusting to a Post-Imperial World* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002), pp. 81–5; H. V. Brasted, Carl Bridge and John Kent, 'Cold War, informal empire and the transfer of power: Some "paradoxes" of British decolonisation resolved?', in Dockrill (ed.), *Europe within the Global System 1938–1960*, pp. 17–18, 25–6, 29; Shipway, *Decolonization and its Impact*, pp. 114–26.

²⁹ Butler, *Britain and Empire*, p. 82.

³⁰ Louis Kraft, 'Pan-Africanism: Political, economic, strategic or scientific?', *International Affairs*, Vol. 24, No. 2, 1948, p. 225.

³¹ Gallagher, *The Decline, Revival and Fall of the British Empire*, p. 146.

drawn' the place 'where the British Empire might be maintained indefinitely'.³² In Bevin's mind, as his biographer Alan Bullock has it, 'African independence was the agenda of the next generation'.³³

But if the temporal buffer was in place, at least for the time being, the sustainability of Britain's colonial regeneration in Africa also required European support and cooperation; this in order to reap economic scale benefits with regard to trade and technology on the one hand, and to serve as a necessary buffer against American involvement in Africa on the other. Until 1949, such Eurafrican colonial cooperation formed the backbone of Bevin's and the British Labour government's bid for establishing a 'Third World Power' or 'Third Force' that would grow to become equal in strength to both the USA and the Soviet Union.³⁴ Bevin also referred to this scenario as the 'three great Monroes' around which the postwar world was set to be structured.³⁵ While the brunt of the initiative, and part of Bevin's 'Grand Design', was with Britain, the leadership was to rest with a solid British–French coalition that would soon, if everything went to plan, attract the participation of other Western European states. Commencing in 1945, and with antecedents in Britain and Free France's cooperation in West Africa during the war, the Eurafrican Third Force conception would rapidly come to dominate the strategic and economic planning of the British Foreign Office.³⁶

³² Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East*, pp. 108–9, 16. See also Michael Collins, 'Decolonization and the "Federal Moment"', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 24, No. 1, 2013, pp. 26–8.

³³ Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*, p. 610.

³⁴ John Kent, 'Bevin's imperialism and the idea of Euro-Africa, 1945–49', in Michael Dockrill and John W. Young (eds), *British Foreign Policy, 1945–56* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1989). For a full account on the relations between Britain and France as regards Africa, spanning the period from 1939 to 1956, see John Kent, *The Internationalization of Colonialism: Britain, France, and Black Africa, 1939–1956* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). See also Anne Deighton, 'Ernest Bevin and the idea of Euro-Africa from the interwar to the postwar period', in Bitsch and Bossuat (eds), *L'Europe unie et l'Afrique*; Anne Deighton, 'Entente Neo-Coloniale?: Ernest Bevin and the proposals for an Anglo-French Third World Power', *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 17, No. 4, 2006, pp. 835–52; John W. Young, *Britain and European Unity, 1945–1999* (Houndmills: Macmillan 2nd edn, 2000), pp. 1–25; and Dilks, 'Britain and Europe, 1948–1950'.

³⁵ Parker, *Western Geopolitical Thought in the Twentieth Century*, p. 136; Deighton, 'Ernest Bevin and the idea of Euro-Africa', p. 110.

³⁶ Kent, 'Bevin's imperialism and the idea of Euro-Africa'.

In the summer of 1945 Britain's new Labour government was eager to craft a strategy with which it could quickly close what was deemed a transient power gap *vis-à-vis* the USA. As the preeminent scholar on the topic, John Kent, establishes, for this to become feasible it required Western European partners, foremost France. In addition, it required the propitious colonial regions in Africa, where the USA had no foothold and whose future stability, in stark contrast to Southeast Asia, did not call for American assistance. But although this 'concept of a Euro-African entity', as Kent terms it, immediately attained the status of established doctrine within Bevin's Foreign Office, and although a modest programme of technical cooperation in Africa between Britain and France had been operational since as early as November 1945 – in parallel with numerous other initiatives at lower levels – Bevin's big push for the Eurafrican Third Force did not begin until 1947.

Apart from the surging economic importance being assigned to Africa in 1947, this also, as mentioned earlier, owed to London's realization that its intra-European efforts to strengthen Britain's leadership in Western Europe had failed to materialize. Expanding trade and economic exchange between Britain and France and within Western Europe as a whole was thus seen as an insufficient remedy to Britain's broader economic problems, its accelerating dollar deficit and hence its continued dependence on the USA. Another factor that needs to be mentioned was tied to Bevin's quest, also getting under way in 1947, to acquire the trusteeship over Cyrenaica (the eastern part of Libya); this in order to safeguard a base option that could compensate for Britain's weakening position in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. Since this necessitated an understanding with both France and Italy (apart from the UN), it added to the momentum for European cooperation in Africa.³⁷

Rather than cooperation *inside* Europe, to which many within the British government had become increasingly sceptical, focus was from

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 48–56.

now on placed more firmly on European cooperation *outside* Europe.³⁸ Indeed, as Anne Deighton has revealed, within the British foreign policy establishment there was also a perception maintaining that 'it might be easier to create an African Union under European guidance rather than unify in Europe itself'.³⁹ In accordance with Coudenhove-Kalergi's and Sarraut's respective formulas, a Western European bloc, or a 'Third World Power' on a par with the USA and the Soviet Union, was then to emerge chiefly as a result of a successful European joint venture in Africa.⁴⁰ Or as the Chancellor of Exchequer, Stafford Cripps, spelled out before the African Governor's Conference in November 1947:

The economies of Western Europe and Tropical Africa are so closely interlocked in mutual trade, in the supply of capital and in currency systems that their problems of overseas balance are essentially one. Tropical Africa is already contributing much, both in physical supplies of food and raw materials and in quite substantial net earnings of dollars from the sterling area pool. The further development of African resources is of the same crucial importance to the rehabilitation and strengthening of Western Europe as the restoration of European productive power is to the future progress and prosperity of Africa. Each needs and is needed by the other. In Africa indeed is to be found a great potential for new strength and vigour in the Western European economy and the stronger that economy becomes the better of course Africa will fare.⁴¹

Under the headline 'Cripps says colonies hold key to survival', *The New York Times* underscored that Cripps' contention had 'been widely accepted by the country's top economists and business men'.⁴²

³⁸ Ibid., p. 52.

³⁹ Deighton, 'Ernest Bevin and the idea of *Euro-Africa*', p. 110n. 22. In some Commonwealth policy circles during the 1940s, such African Union-leaning European cooperation in Africa was also urged on under the banner of 'Pan-Africanism'; see e.g. Kraft, 'Pan-Africanism'.

⁴⁰ For the interwar roots of the Eurafrican Third World Power project as conceived in Great Britain, see Deighton, 'Ernest Bevin and the idea of *Euro-Africa*'; David Russell, "'The Jolly Old Empire': Labour, the Commonwealth and Europe, 1945-51", in Alex May (ed.), *Britain, the Commonwealth and Europe: The Commonwealth and Britain's Applications to join the European Communities* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 2001), p. 18; and Saville, *The Politics of Continuity*, pp. 93-6.

⁴¹ Quoted in Kent, 'Bevin's imperialism', pp. 58-9.

⁴² 'Cripps says colonies hold key to survival', *The New York Times*, 13 November 1947.

A few months earlier, *The Christian Science Monitor* had also commented on the Eurafrican scheme that was in the offing, beginning its almost full-page coverage as follows: 'The resources of Africa, with the surface hardly scratched, appear increasingly suited to development of the Dark Continent into a hinterland for a new western European grouping that may balance the United States and Russia.' Marvelling at the expert testimonies in circulation at the time concerning sub-Saharan Africa's enormous and still largely untouched riches in everything from foodstuff to minerals, the *Monitor* also noted that this part of Africa presented Europe with yet another asset in the form of a 'population' that, 'unlike the Arabs,' constituted 'less of a political problem'. But for Western Europe to truly succeed in realizing this great opportunity it required an equally great effort at European cooperation and coordination in the African colonies. According to this American daily, a few promising signs of such coordination could already be glimpsed, and hence its upbeat conclusion: 'The response of Britain, France, and Belgium to this potential of the future has made its first news. The "course of empire" does not belong to this day. Today it is "the course of co-ordination" – and it is apparently going to grow on a new north–south line. The Eurafrica Atlantic era of world balance appears to be dawning.'⁴³

Stafford Cripps' address was preceded by high-level discussions between London and Paris in spring 1947, where Bevin and President Auriol had first met and converged on the key value of colonial cooperation in Africa for the creation of a Western European bloc less constrained by US interests. Subsequently, Bevin notified the French premier Paul Ramadier that he would like their countries to initiate economic cooperation in Africa. The French reaction was very positive, Paris returning the favour by disclosing an even bolder agenda for African colonial cooperation, one that went beyond Bevin's expectations. Accordingly, by autumn 1947 the time was ripe for an agreement between the two countries on a long-term cooperation

⁴³ 'Resources scarcely scratched,' *The Christian Science Monitor*, 17 June 1947.

plan for Africa, comprising both political and economic issues. Both Bevin and his French colleague Georges Bidault took the matter to be of such magnitude that it was now to be managed at the highest ministerial level;⁴⁴ it 'was now part of major foreign policy', as Britain's Colonial Secretary Arthur Creech Jones underscored.⁴⁵ This sparked a flurry of high-level activity on both sides of the Channel. France proposed talks to clear the way for colonial cooperation in the areas of intercolonial trade, development, infrastructure and pricing of agricultural commodities – an initiative that led to the setting up of an Anglo–French working party on economic cooperation in West Africa towards the end of 1947.⁴⁶

In 1948 the planning for a Eurafrican bloc reached its climax. Britain set out to engage other European countries, but also South Africa, as participants in the Eurafrican enterprise. Belgium was already part of the plan, whereas Italy now became a key focus. As already mentioned, this was connected with Britain's interest in Cyrenaica. But in 1948, Britain's bid for a trusteeship had expanded to encompass Libya in its entirety. Since Italy, Libya's former colonizer, was seeking the trusteeship over Tripolitania, Britain's tender clearly had to include a severance payment to Rome. Among other things, this was to offer Italy wholesale accession to Western Europe's colonial cooperation in Africa, and, among the particulars, it was also to offer Britain's African colonies as an emigration outlet for Italy's many unemployed.⁴⁷ In general terms, Rome welcomed all available openings for European collaboration in Africa. As World War II had rolled back Mussolini's colonial push, which was a source of great national pride during the fascist period, Italy's postwar governments sought to re-establish international prestige by supporting all efforts towards European and US-led regional integration, which Rome saw as opportunities for asserting its economic presence in North Africa and furthering its 'Mediterranean

⁴⁴ Kent, 'Bevin's imperialism', p. 58.

⁴⁵ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 59.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 59; Deighton, 'Entente Neo-Coloniale?', pp. 841–2.

⁴⁷ Kent, 'Bevin's imperialism', pp. 60–1, 64.

vocation'. Bevin's Eurafrican plan – as well as the Eurafrican proposals that would follow in the 1950s – was thus of primary importance to the reconstruction of Italy's position in foreign affairs.⁴⁸ In the spring of 1948, moreover, the British Foreign Office went ahead and announced its plans for an African Development Council, representing Belgium, Britain, France, Italy, Portugal and South Africa and to be operative under the auspices of the Committee of European Economic Co-operation (the precursor of the OEEC and OECD).

By this time the Eurafrican plan also featured prominently in the world press.⁴⁹ 'France and Great Britain are in permanent consultations to realise an economic Eurafrica, an element of equilibrium between the US and the USSR', Stafford Cripps told journalists in Paris on 11 February 1948.⁵⁰ This was a follow-up to Bevin's wide-ranging address to the House of Commons in January in which he stated that the time was 'ripe for a consolidation of Western Europe'. Bevin then went on to 'the subject of the organisation in respect of a Western Union', and here we must quote at length:

I would emphasise that I am not concerned only with Europe as a geographical conception. Europe has extended its influence throughout the world [...]. In the first place, we turn our eyes to Africa, where great responsibilities are shared by us with South Africa, France, Belgium and Portugal [...]. The organisation of Western Europe must be economically supported. That involves the closest possible collaboration with the Commonwealth and with overseas territories, not only British but French, Dutch, Belgian and Portuguese. [...] They have raw materials, food and resources which can be turned to very great common advantage, both to the people of the territories themselves, to Europe, and to the world as a whole. The other two great world Powers,

⁴⁸ See Alessandro Brogi, *Questions of Self-Esteem: The United States and the Cold War Choices in France and Italy, 1944–1958* (Westport: Praeger, 2002), pp. 191–210; Ruth Ben-Ghiat, 'Modernity is just over there: Colonialism and Italian national identity', *Interventions*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 2006, pp. 380–92.

⁴⁹ Deighton, 'Entente Neo-Coloniale?', p. 842.

⁵⁰ Cripps' interview was quoted globally; see, for instance, 'African bloc as balance with U.S.A. and Soviet', *The Canberra Times*, 12 February 1948. See also Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique – contrepoint de l'idée d'Europe*, p. 26.

the United States and Soviet Russia, have tremendous resources. There is no need of conflict with them in this matter at all. If Western Europe is to achieve its balance of payments and to get a world equilibrium, it is essential that those resources should be developed and made available [...]. There is no conflict between the social and economic development of those overseas territories to the advantage of their people, and their development as a source of supplies for Western Europe, as a contributor, as I have indicated, so essential to the balance of payments.⁵¹

Bevin's speech, seen as tremendously important at the time, won a broad backing also from the Conservatives in the House.⁵² Under the bold caption 'Historic policy shift announced by Britain', *The New York Times* blazoned abroad London's European mission to erect a 'Third World Power' that, thanks to its overseas raw material riches, confidently could aim to achieve parity with both the US and the Soviet Union.⁵³ Indeed, if such a Western Union took charge of the development of the African colonies, Bevin asserted in the autumn of 1948, 'we could have the U.S. dependent on us, and eating out of our hand, in four or five years. Two great mountains of manganese are in Sierra Leone, etc. US is very barren of essential minerals and in Africa we have them all.'⁵⁴

Yet, for all the cocksureness and determination to achieve independence from the USA, the Eurafrican concert fizzled out in 1949. All of a sudden, Britain opted out of the European bloc and instead decided that its fortunes would be better served by an Atlantic alliance and trade with the Commonwealth and Empire. In France, at the same time, President Auriol rejected Prime Minister Ramadier's and Foreign Secretary Bidault's plans for an agreement with Britain on colonial Africa, as he feared this would hamper the autonomy of the newly

⁵¹ 'Address given by Ernest Bevin to the House of Commons', 22 January 1948, CVCE (*Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe*), www.cvce.eu/viewer/-/content/7bc0ecbd-c50e-4035-8e36-ed70bfbfd204c/en

⁵² Deighton, 'Entente Neo-Coloniale?', p. 844.

⁵³ 'Historic Policy Shift Announced by Britain', *The New York Times*, 25 January 1948.

⁵⁴ Quoted in Kent, 'Bevin's Imperialism', p. 66.

reconstructed French Union. Colliding French and British interests, including the incompatibility of their respective colonial governance structures and philosophies, as well as their diverging views on European integration, also played a part in the demise of the French–British Eurafrican scheme. So did the collision within the British government between the Foreign and Colonial Offices. Not that the Colonial Office opposed European colonial cooperation per se, but it advocated a very different arrangement, one that would operate under the auspices of the OEEC and so include states that did not have colonies. The Colonial Office was adamant that European cooperation in Africa be built in close partnership with the Africans themselves so as to ward off any incriminating portents of colonial exploitation and European supremacy. But as Kent also draws attention to, much of London's U-turn owed to the Labour government's mounting scepticism to European economic cooperation as a remedy for Britain's own economic problems. Having already dispensed with the idea of a European customs union as ill suited to British interests, and with Britain and Western Europe's economy taking a turn for the worse in 1949, London saw itself as being in no position to assume responsibilities for assisting the continent. As a direct result of this, Kent shows, 'any formal sharing of colonial export markets had to be ruled out' and, accordingly, 'Euro–African links were now seen as hindering British efforts to achieve equilibrium between the dollar and sterling areas'.⁵⁵ As Britain's balance of payments and sterling–dollar crises spiralled out of control in 1949, forcing a sharp devaluation in the autumn of 1949, this, according to Kent, served the final nail in Britain's Eurafrican coffin. Having little choice but to ask Washington for assistance further confirmed that Atlantic alliance was to be Britain's new strategy of choice.⁵⁶

This did not mean that all Anglo–French colonial cooperation in Africa vanished from history in 1949. During the 1950s, for instance,

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 69; see also Young, *Britain and European Unity*, pp. 22–3.

⁵⁶ Kent, 'Bevin's Imperialism', p. 70. For Britain and Bevin's change in perception on Eurafrica, see also Deighton, 'Ernest Bevin and the idea of *Euro-Africa*'; and Adamthwaite, 'Britain, France, the United States and Euro-Africa, 1945–1949'.

such collaboration was quite successful in preventing the UN from gaining a foothold in African colonial affairs.⁵⁷ Another case in point, of course, is the Suez Crisis, or the Anglo–French (and Israeli) war against Nasser’s Egypt in 1956 (as we discuss further in the next chapter). From the British perspective, however, these and other joint efforts were geared towards advancing Britain’s independent room to manoeuvre in Africa and the Middle East – not to craft common European colonial policies – and were thus perfectly in line with the decision in 1949 to discard the Eurafrican plans. Important too, then, was that London’s strategic and economic substitution of Atlantic alliance, the Commonwealth and Empire for Eurafrica and Western Europe also determined Britain’s more general reluctance to European integration in the 1950s. From the late 1940s onwards, British governments would attribute enormous importance to the economic and trade relations with the Empire and Commonwealth, and to its special relationship with the USA; and London thus feared that being part of European integration on the continent, particularly of the supra-national kind, would severely hamper and compromise these relations and thereby also Britain’s standing as an independent world power.⁵⁸

Africa first! The French response

If Britain’s new global strategy required an estrangement from European integration in general, and Eurafrican cooperation in particular, the strategy on the part of France called for the opposite. Yet, the basic reasons for the differences in orientation, including the reasons for parting company over colonial cooperation in Africa, rested with very similar colonial objectives. Whereas Britain saw European integration as an impediment to colonial trade and investment in Africa, France was realizing that European, or Eurafrican, integration was becoming

⁵⁷ See Kent, *The Internationalization of Colonialism*.

⁵⁸ See e.g. Young, *Britain and European Unity*, pp. 22–4.

increasingly necessary in order to expand colonial trade and secure the absolutely vital investments in Africa that France was in no position to muster on its own.

The French Empire, as noted earlier, came out of the war barely a shadow of its interwar standing. To be sure, since the organization of Free France's resistance in large part owed to its fallback position in Africa, Brazzaville being the symbolic capital of Free France and Algiers (from 1943) its headquarters, Gaullist propaganda could claim that the Empire had saved the Republic.⁵⁹ This was a glorious picture from which the key figures were retouched – that is, the huge number of colonial troops who fought for Free France. In reality though, the greater part of the Empire – as in the imperial leadership – betrayed the Republic. It was Vichy, not de Gaulle's Free France, who with a few exceptions won the Empire's loyalty after the defeat in 1940. Hence, when de Gaulle proclaimed from London, in the summer of 1940, that 'The Crime of this Armistice is to have capitulated as if France did not have an Empire',⁶⁰ he was lambasting an enemy, Vichy, who already treated the Empire as basically the only game in town. For Vichy, the Empire was by far its most vaunted asset, its true claim to legitimacy and its big bargaining chip against Germany to restore national honour and make up for the defeat.⁶¹ More importantly, de Gaulle was appealing to a leadership in the colonies who had already turned its anti-republican back on him and freely pledged their allegiance to Vichy.⁶² Adding to the shameful string of events, the Vichy regime pro-actively sought Germany's colonial cooperation in Africa. As Robert Paxton has shown, it only took a month or so after the defeat before Vichy 'tried to

⁵⁹ See Henri Laurentie's address at the Chaillot Palace on 26 January 1945: 'L'empire au secours de la métropole', in Patrice Likière (ed.), *Restaurer, réformer, agir: la France en 1945* (Paris: La documentation française, 1995), pp. 41–51.

⁶⁰ Quoted in Eric T. Jennings, *Vichy in the Tropics: Pétain's National Revolution in Madagascar, Guadeloupe, and Indochina, 1940–44* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 9.

⁶¹ See further Martin Thomas, *The French Empire at War 1940–45* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998); Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order 1940–1944* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972, 2001).

⁶² Jennings, *Vichy in the Tropics*, pp. 9–30.

interest the Germans in making France the colonial and maritime link to an African “hinterland” for the New Europe.⁶³ By offering Germany both strategic and economically lucrative stakes in the French Empire, it was hoped that Germany would consent to Vichy’s military struggle against Free France in Africa, its plans at making inroads into British colonies and to Vichy’s overall aim of preserving as much as possible of its imperial autonomy. But Eurafrican colonial cooperation with Germany was also seen as a means to usher in more of a partnership between Germany and France in Europe proper.⁶⁴

From the defeat to the Germans in 1940 until the liberation in 1944, the two rival French regimes of Vichy and Free France fought a civil war in an Empire they both claimed as their own. Yet what emerged from the ashes of defeat, humiliation and the mutual accusations of treachery was nothing less than ‘the consolidation of an unprecedented imperialist consensus in French domestic politics’. Indeed, directly after the war, and save for the Communists, ‘none of France’s major political parties even paid lip service to the gradual disengagement from colonial territories that was so much a feature of British imperial policy after 1945’.⁶⁵ Thus asked Raymond Aron in 1945: ‘What are the essential objectives of all French foreign policy today?’ His answer was as unequivocal as the question was rhetorical: ‘The first is the maintenance of the integrity of the French Empire; the second is the permanent strengthening of France *vis-à-vis* Germany.’⁶⁶

Important steps towards this consolidation, or ‘maintenance’, were taken already at the Brazzaville Conference in January and February of

⁶³ Paxton, *Vichy France*, pp. 58–9.

⁶⁴ Julian Jackson, *France: The Dark Years 1940–1944* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 172–89. For a further discussion of Eurafrica’s importance in Vichy France, see Julia Nordblad, ‘The un-European idea: Vichy and Eurafrica in the historiography of Europeanism’, *The European Legacy*, Vol. 19, 2014, forthcoming. For an interesting proposal that was put forward in 1942, envisioning a future political and economic integration of Europe and Africa under German–French leadership, see René Viard, *L’Eurafrrique: Pour une nouvelle économie européenne* (Paris: Fernand Sorlot, 1942).

⁶⁵ Martin Thomas, ‘French imperial reconstruction and the development of the Indochina War, 1945–1950’, in Lawrence and Logevall (eds), *The First Vietnam War*, p. 130.

⁶⁶ Raymond Aron, ‘Reflections of the foreign policy of France’, *International Affairs*, Vol. 21, No. 4, 1945, p. 445.

1944, where the Free France leadership and the colonial representatives in Africa sought to stake out the future of the French Empire, focusing primarily on sub-Saharan Africa. (It was on the basis of the Brazzaville Declaration that the Fourth Republic redesignated the French Empire as the French Union in 1946.) Brazzaville set out from an awareness of an imperial crisis, where parts of the empire's clout, most acutely in the Levant (soon to be lost), but also in Indochina, were already crumbling. As Brazzaville's main champion and chief architect, the Ministry of Colonies' Director of Political Affairs Henri Laurentie – subsequently a strong advocate for French–British and wider European colonial cooperation in Africa⁶⁷ – summarized in a memorandum to de Gaulle in December 1944: 'Deprived of the means to exercise our power – army, air force, navy – we decided to replace them with the ideas and sentiments needed to revive and confirm France's rights to a colonial empire. It was in this spirit that the Brazzaville Conference was conceived and organized.'⁶⁸

For Laurentie, as Martin Shipway explains, the colonial problems were so grave that French policy following Brazzaville had to be shaped and articulated as being up against 'a general problem', since, as he added, 'we are looking at colonial revolution'. Although he recognized 'the colonial peoples' desire for independence' and thus the need for a reformed French policy that could partly accommodate such desires while at the same time succeeding in preserving the empire, the general solution to the 'general problem' nonetheless turned out to be one almost solely focused on 'imperial restoration'.⁶⁹

Free France's colonial minister (and future prime minister) René Pleven, who firmly presided over the meeting, made this very clear when he stated that 'the African peoples want no other liberty than that of France'.⁷⁰ Such was also the unequivocal message conveyed by

⁶⁷ Kent, *The Internationalization of Colonialism*, pp. 187–8.

⁶⁸ Quoted in Martin Shipway, *The Road to War: France and Vietnam, 1944–1947* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1996/2003), p. 76.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 78, 81, 82.

⁷⁰ Quoted in Paul Nugent, *Africa Since Independence: A Comparative History* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2004), p. 42.

the final resolution of the Brazzaville Conference: '[T]he aims of the work of colonisation which France is pursuing in her colonies exclude any idea of autonomy and any possibility of development outside the French empire *bloc*; the attainment of self-government in the colonies even in the most distant future must be excluded.'⁷¹

This is not to imply that colonial policy was altogether static. Brazzaville also comprised discussions and measures that called for reform and which addressed the growing plight of the colonial peoples, including the offence of forced labour, appalling living conditions and lack of political representation. For the most part, however, initiatives towards reform were indeterminate and never challenged the overarching objective of reaffirming French imperial sovereignty. Rather, the reform agenda emerging from Brazzaville foremost served 'to provide moral rearmament for a revitalized empire.'⁷² And while the sense of imperial crisis and disorder, even revolution, expressed in Brazzaville was real enough, it bore little reference to the sub-Saharan African scene, which, although clearly fraught with mounting and visible discontent, was still worlds apart from the situation in Indochina, the Levant and North Africa.⁷³

Immediately after the war, the reconquest of Indochina in 1945–1946 was instrumental in pushing Brazzaville's reform agenda further into the background, cementing a 'colonial consensus' in France that, from now on, would spawn an ever more unabashed attitude and brutal means to ensure French imperial ascendancy.⁷⁴ For our purposes here, though, it is important to qualify this colonial consensus further.

⁷¹ Les recommandations de la conférence de Brazzaville, 6 February 1944. Assemblée nationale, France; www.assemblee-nationale.fr/histoire/discours-de-brazzaville.asp#recommandations (accessed 2 August 2013). See also Hubert Luethy, *France Against Herself* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1955), p. 218.

⁷² Nugent, *Africa Since Independence*, p. 41. For an in-depth account of France's colonial policy in the immediate postwar period, see D. Bruce Marshall, *The French Colonial Myth and Constitution-Making in the Fourth Republic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).

⁷³ Nugent, *Africa Since Independence*, pp. 44–5; Thomas, 'French imperial reconstruction', p. 139.

⁷⁴ Tony Smith, 'The French colonial consensus and people's war, 1946–58', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 9, No. 4, 1974, pp. 217–47.

Because for all the visible and seeming consensual determination to hold on to Indochina, the accord was, in actuality, shaky at best. Moreover, as Laurent Cesari convincingly argues, this was in no small measure due to it being in conflict with France's far higher priorities in Africa, with key figures, such as subsequent premier Pierre Mendès France and François Mitterrand (overseas minister, minister of the interior and minister of justice in several governments between 1950 and 1957), calling early on for a 'retreat to Africa'. Soon enough, even the staunchest advocates of the war would concede that the real stakes in the conflict did not revolve around Indochina's strategic or economic importance *per se*. There was thus widespread agreement that Indochina's utility was diminishing rapidly, and this was made starkly apparent by France's dramatic reduction and withdrawal of both private and public investments in Indochina, most of which were being relocated to North and West Africa. Rather, the fear was that quitting Indochina would make France look weak and so encourage rebellion in North Africa.⁷⁵ Akin to the changes in the British colonial disposition at the time, although pursued with a far greater steadfastness, the real colonial consensus in postwar France was to crystallize around Africa. Thus, already at the Brazzaville Conference, René Pleven, realizing that France needed the assistance of its European partners, took the opportunity to reopen the Eurafrican discussion.⁷⁶

France's plans to develop its colonial possessions south of the Mediterranean evolved in tandem with the many initiatives for an internationalization of the colonial system in Africa, from Bevin's proposal for a French-British management of Africa and onwards. The most influential of these plans was made by Eirik Labonne, whose maximalist version of a future geopolitical entity stretching from the

⁷⁵ Laurent Cesari, 'The declining value of Indochina: France and the economics of empire, 1950-1955', in Lawrence and Logevall (eds), *The First Vietnam War*, pp. 176-95.

⁷⁶ Thomas, *The French Empire at War 1940-45*, p. 25; Speech by Mr Corniglion-Molinier, Debates in plenary session, The European Parliament, 11 May 1960, Draft Convention on the election of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage, 30 April 1960, compiled by the European Parliament, *The Case for Elections to the European Parliament by Direct Universal Suffrage* (DG for Parliamentary Documentation and Information, 1969), pp. 142-3.

Figure 3.1 Map of Eurafrica and Eurasia. Source: Eirik Labonne, *Politique industrielle et stratégique de l'Union Française. Les Z.O.I.A. Zones d'organisation industrielle et stratégique africaines* (Paris: Revue Militaire d'Information, 1955).

Congo to the Rhine set the terms of the French debate throughout the 1950s (see Figure 3.1). A former resident general in Morocco and Tunisia, and ambassador to Moscow during World War II, Labonne's master plan for integrating France's African colonies into some five industrial and strategic zones (Zones d'Organisation Industrielle et stratégique Africaines, ZOIA) was influenced by large-scale infrastructure and development programmes such as the Tennessee Valley Authority in the USA of the New Deal era and Stalin's Magnitogorsk. Referring to the Soviet experience, Labonne stated his ambition in 1948: 'For us, for the French Union, for the European Union, the Atlas mountains should be our Ural and Africa our Siberia.'⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Eirik Labonne, *Politique économique de l'Union Française – Industrialisation et armement. Deux conférences à l'Ecole nationale d'administration* (Paris: Atelier d'Impressions S.L.N, 1948), p. 40.

Launched as a series of lectures at the École nationale d'administration in 1948 and 1949, Labonne's initiative was, in 1950, officially institutionalized as a governmental committee (the Comité ZOIA or, simply, the Comité Labonne) chaired by the prime minister, and with Labonne as deputy chair and coordinator of a number of scientific teams and subgroups that laid out a master plan for a future Eurafrica. Labonne's first main idea was to focus on energy supplies (coal, oil, hydro-energy, uranium), these being indispensable for any industrial development. Second, he identified a set of geographically limited 'zones of industrial and strategic organisation' – that is, areas that were suitably located for mining, processing, manufacturing or general economic growth and simultaneously of strategic importance in an emerging Cold War context (Figures 3.2 and 3.3). The greatest efforts went into outlining Zone 1 and Zone 2, centred around Colomb-Bechar on the Algerian–Moroccan border and Tebessa on the Algerian–Tunisian border, respectively. The other three zones were to be built around the projected Konkouré dam and bauxite mines in Guinea, the Kouilou dam project in the French Congo and the coal fields of Madagascar's Sakoa region.⁷⁸ As vital parts of France's and Western Europe's defence strategy, these ZOIA's would provide France with territorial depth and an opportunity for dispersal of military forces and supplies. In economic terms the zones would provide the French and European economy with a scale sufficiently large to compete on the world market with processed raw materials (steel, aluminium, petrochemical products, for instance), thus turning the French Union into what Labonne called an 'autarchic' economic sphere, such as the USA, the Soviet Union and the British Commonwealth already possessed.

Third, in understanding the gigantic investments of money and labour needed, Labonne promoted collaboration of several dimensions. His plan entailed a far-reaching integration of France's civil and military forces. Labonne therefore welcomed France's withdrawal from

⁷⁸ Eirik Labonne, *Politique industrielle et stratégique de l'Union Française. Les Z.O.I.A. Zones d'organisation industrielle et stratégique africaines* (Paris: Revue Militaire d'Information, 1955), pp. 10–13, 26–9.

Figure 3.2 The geopolitical and strategic axis of Eurafrica, and the five projected industrial and strategic zones in Africa, as conceived by the Labonne committee. Source: Eirik Labonne, *Politique industrielle et stratégique de l'Union Française. Les Z.O.I.A. Zones d'organisation industrielle et stratégique africaines* (Paris: Révue Militaire d'Information, 1955).

Figure 3.3 Africa's Industrial Zone number 1, centred around Colomb-Bechar, Algeria. Source: Eirik Labonne, *Politique industrielle et stratégique de l'Union Française. Les Z.O.I.A. Zones d'organisation industrielle et stratégique africaines* (Paris: Révue Militaire d'Information, 1955).

Indochina as this made troops available for African development, and he proposed the creation of an organization (Bureau Africain de Travaux Industriels Militaires) that would coordinate the role of the 'three armies' (land, sea, air) in Africa's industrialization. Yet, even if France's worlds of money and soldiery joined forces, their resources would not suffice. This is why Labonne conceived of the ZOIA as an international undertaking, calling for a pooling of capital from the Marshall Plan and for the constitution of pan-European consortiums.⁷⁹

Through the act of modernizing and industrializing Africa, formerly antagonistic European nations would come together in an act of practical solidarity, Labonne asserted, echoing the Eurafrican utopias of Coudenhove-Kalergi, Sörgel, Valois, Guernier, Sarraut and Orsini di Camerota of the interwar period. As Labonne explained, Europe was becoming increasingly isolated from the rouble, dollar and sterling zones:

In this isolation, Africa remains for France more than ever a supreme opportunity to pull the Western nations of Europe, Germany included, into the orbit of a vast zone characterised by diversity and relative independence. Such European participation – financial, technical and human – in the organisms destined to promote African industrialisation constitutes one of the rare means, at once precise and rapid, through which may be established under our aegis that European solidarity which is one of the true pillars of peace.⁸⁰

Labonne's plan was more detailed and, save for budgetary matters, practicable than those of any of his predecessors. As mentioned, his plan also enjoyed political support at the highest governmental level. In 1952, the government instituted a Bureau for African industry (the Bureau d'Organisation des Ensembles Industriels Africaines, BIA) headed by the engineer Louis Armand, later to become the first

⁷⁹ Eirik Labonne, *Politique économique de l'Union Française – Industrialisation et équipement stratégique*. Étude – Programme (Paris: [unidentified publisher], 1949), pp. 30–2.

⁸⁰ Labonne, *Politique économique de l'Union Française – Industrialisation et équipement stratégique*, pp. 10–11.

president of EURATOM, in an effort to increase investments and promote industrialization of Africa in accord with Labonne's plan.⁸¹ Like Labonne, Armand realized the need for foreign investments in French Africa, and he was especially keen on exploiting the resources of Sahara.⁸²

Labonne's and Armand's organizations provided a platform that throughout the 1950s guided investments and policies aiming to modernize the French Union, which eventually led to the reorganization of the Sahara region in 1957 and the establishment of the Common Organization of the Sahara Regions (OCRS), which we discuss in the next chapter.⁸³ Most of the proposed industrial complexes remained on the drawing table, however. The dilemma was that – even as one-fifth of France's public spending in 1955 went to the Overseas⁸⁴ – the level of investments, skills and expertise was insufficient, which is why the rescue of the French Union seemed to depend on the establishment of a European union that would partly take charge of the colonies and in return would flourish thanks to the immense but unexploited resources of Africa. In support of this calculation, French Eurafricanists relied on

⁸¹ For a brief description of the tasks of BIA in relation to Labonne's programme, see Louis Armand, 'Pourquoi un ensemble industriel au Sahara', article in two parts, *Union Française et Parlement*, Vol. 4, No. 39, June 1953, pp. 12–13; and Vol. 5, No. 40–1, July–August 1953, pp. 7–8.

⁸² Louis Armand, *Le Sahara, L'Afrique et L'Europe*. Conférence prononcée le vendredi 25 février 1955 (Lyon: Société d'économie politique et d'économie sociale, 1955). Armand promoted Jean-Michel de Lattre's detailed report on the legal aspects of foreign investments in the French Union: *La mise en valeur de l'ensemble eurafricain français et la participation des capitaux étrangers: Sociétés à participation étrangère; Compagnies à charte* (Paris: Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1954).

⁸³ Several organizations were thus founded in collaboration with or inspired by the Comité Labonne and Armand's BIA, such as the Bureau de Recherches de Pétrole (BRP), the Commissariat à l'Energie Atomique, the Bureau de Recherches Minières of Algeria, the Bureau Minier de la France d'Outre-mer, the Comité d'Expansion de la région de Colomb-Bechar, the Association Eurafricaine Minière et Industrielle (ASSEMI) and the Consortium européen pour le développement des ressources naturelles de l'Afrique (Consafrique) – the latter two being particularly interesting as they were explicitly pan-European consortiums of European bankers and industrialists with an interest in African raw materials. See Jean-Michel de Lattre, 'Sahara, clé de voûte de l'ensemble eurafricain français', *Politique étrangère*, Vol. 22, No. 4, 1957, pp. 364–66.

⁸⁴ The figure was calculated by Pierre Moussa in his book *Les chances économiques de la communauté franco-africaine* (Paris: Armand Collin, 1957), which provided a detailed balance sheet of the costs and benefits of the empire for metropolitan France.

the argument of geopolitics, according to which only larger economic and political entities were able to enjoy independence, autonomy and prosperity. What Siberia meant to the Soviet Union, what the Western plains and mountains meant to the USA, and what China and India sought to accomplish with their great industrial leaps, must now be executed in Africa by the nations of Western Europe, Armand argued.⁸⁵ This is the reason why the strongest promoters of a rapid exploitation and development of Africa's raw materials were typically also strong promoters of European integration.

A case in point is François Mitterrand. A supporter of Labonne's plans, he deplored the scant resources that since 1946 had been devised for the modernization of Africa, whereas the war in Indochina had cost ten times as much.⁸⁶ Enumerating all the riches yet to be extracted ('iron, manganese, coal, gold, diamonds, copper, bauxite, salt, phosphates, maybe uranium, maybe oil'), he argued that Africa must come first ('Afrique d'abord') and that Paris, in being the capital of French Africa, also held the key to the future of Europe:

From the Congo to the Rhine the third continental nation will find its equilibrium around our metropolis. Europe itself can do nothing without France. What can it do to the East? The South opens itself generously to its people, its machines, its commodities, its capital, but all the routes leading there passes through us. Once again, the French itinerary determines that of Europe.⁸⁷

Mitterrand found it scandalous that the French quarrelled among themselves about whether to side with the Eastern or the Western bloc. There was obviously a superior alternative: 'the colossal bloc that extends from Lille to Brazzaville and from Abéché to Dakar'. This was for Mitterrand 'the one and only incontestable historical reality: Eurafrican France'. However, he, too, understood that the

⁸⁵ Armand, *Le Sahara*, p. 19.

⁸⁶ François Mitterrand, *Aux Frontières de l'Union Française* (Paris: René Julliard, 1953), pp. 24–5. (Africa had since 1946 received 350 billion francs and Indochina more than 4,000 billion, according to Mitterrand.)

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

development of this entity demanded European input of capital and skills. Thus, precisely because of the combination of France's imperial and geopolitical potential and France's inability to realize this potential on its own, the country was predestined to assume leadership in the process of European integration.⁸⁸

France's efforts to modernize Africa proved both instrumental and indispensable for its colonial and foreign policy in the 1950s, the European integration process in particular also in more concrete terms. As these plans apparently demonstrated France's high ambitions for Africa's development and concern for the welfare of its populations, they provided France's political and diplomatic corps with a strong argument against decolonization and for continued presence in Africa.

Developments in Cameroon illustrate this, as evinced in pioneering research by Thomas Deltombe, Manuel Domergue and Jacob Tatsitsa. Governing on a UN mandate, France here faced resistance from a major independence movement, the Union of the Peoples of Cameroon (UPC, or Union des populations du Cameroun) led by Ruben Um Nyobé. In response to such anti-colonial opposition and to preempt an anticipated long-term scenario where France's rule would be succeeded by a sovereign Cameroon, France decided in 1950 to consolidate its control of Cameroon's industrial, commercial and strategic infrastructure. The territory became a vital field for strategic and industrial planning in accord with Labonne's Eurafrican principles. The main agent putting this into practice was Roland Pré, governor of Guinea (1948–51) and France's high commissioner in Cameroon (1954–6). Pré administered a swift expansion of Guinean bauxite mining along with the construction of an aluminium smelter with supporting power plants in Cameroon (the so-called Enelcam–Alucam combine in Edea), all of which served to entrench French and European interests and to justify the increased presence of military forces to protect the new instalments and root out the UPC, which, since 1955, conducted an armed struggle of liberation. Eurafrican planning and militarized colonial repression

⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 34–55, 206–11.

fused seamlessly and successfully. Nyobé was assassinated in 1958 and, as the pro-French leader Ahmadou Ahidjo was brought into power, the integrity of French interests was secured even as Cameroon became independent in 1960, all of which was applauded by an international community convinced by the economically and politically noble cause of France's Eurafrican policy.⁸⁹ Indeed, the first ingot of aluminium was tapped from the Edea plant only weeks before the agreement on associating the African colonies to the EEC.⁹⁰

Algeria was a far more critical case, as we shall see later. As political unrest was growing in Algeria, in 1955 the French government commissioned Labonne to make a quick draft programme to improve industrialization, employment opportunities and strategic organization of the Colomb-Bechar region.⁹¹ Labonne's committee and its various offshoots thus became instrumental for France's effort to resolve the Algerian conflict, to counter decolonization and consolidate its presence in Africa, while they also warranted the credibility and attractiveness of France's Eurafrican bid in negotiations on European integration.

In modelling what historian Dirk van Laak terms an 'imperial infrastructure', the above-mentioned large-scale plans thus furnished a programme for a colonialism of modernization and development that, thanks to its urgent economic and strategic motivation, could count on approval from many who sought to strengthen the case for some future European union.⁹² This was post-World War II policy, to be sure, and it evolved in a geopolitical context very different from the Eurafrican schemes of the interwar period. Yet, the underlying attitude

⁸⁹ Thomas Deltombe, Manuel Domergue and Jacob Tatsitsa, *Kamerun! Une guerre cachée aux origines de la Francafrique, 1948–1971* (Paris: La Découverte, 2011), pp. 96–186.

⁹⁰ This event was headline news in France's press and seen as proof of France's efforts to modernize its empire; see 'Le premier lingot d'aluminium de l'Afrique française a été coulé au Cameroun', *Le Monde*, 3–4 February 1957.

⁹¹ Labonne, *Politique industrielle et stratégique de l'Union Française*. Les Z.O.I.A., pp. 27–9.

⁹² For the notion of 'imperial infrastructure' and its relation to the 'infrastructure of imperialism', see Dirk van Laak, *Imperiale Infrastruktur: Deutsche Planungen für eine Erschließung Afrikas, 1880 bis 1960* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2004), pp. 15–39.

of unequal complementarity remained the same. 'It is in Africa that Europe will be made,' Jean Michel de Lattre wrote in a 1955 article promoting Labonne's plan.⁹³ Returning to the same issue in 1957 he asserted that 'in order to provide Europe with a future, three elements are missing: space, energy, raw materials. Africa can provide these; in return, Europe can deliver people, technology, capital.'⁹⁴ Such views found strong support also in the numerous publications, journals, magazines and pressure groups, which became increasingly convinced that European integration provided the best way to consolidate the Eurafrican project and develop France's colonial system.⁹⁵

As we see, then, France's uncompromising determination to restore its Empire while at the same time being fully aware of its own dismal weakness and the growing anti-colonial sentiments provide important clues as to why France would be the most tenacious standard-bearer for the relaunching of Eurafrica after World War II. For how else could French weakness be squared with French grandeur? As examined earlier, the mostly abortive Anglo-French colonial collaboration in Africa can be seen as the first major postwar attempt at Eurafrican consolidation. As Labonne's example indicates, such consolidation apparently had history on its side, as it conformed to a number of economic, geopolitical and strategic imperatives. During the 1950s, many more efforts along the same lines would be added, the most important one converging on the Treaty of Rome negotiations in

⁹³ Jean-Michel de Lattre, 'Les grands ensembles africains', *Politique étrangère*, Vol. 20, No. 5, 1955, p. 543.

⁹⁴ de Lattre, 'Sahara', p. 378.

⁹⁵ The main organs were *Marchés coloniaux* and *Union française et parlement* – and also, to some extent, the Algiers-based journal *Eurafrigue: Revue générale d'action africaine et méditerranéenne* – in which Eurafrica was promoted by all the major voices in France's and Europe's colonial circles as being of utmost economic, cultural and economic importance. Linked to these venues were numerous civil society initiatives, organizations and associations on both sides of the Mediterranean and with varying degrees of political and economic leverage. In 1957, many of these organizations and associations would organize in 'Eurafrica committees' (*Comités Eurafrigue*), with their own publication, *Cahiers économiques et de liaison des Comités Eurafrigue*, and with strong support at the top political level. For instance, the presidency of the French committee was held by Jacques Soustelle, governor of Algeria, and Félix Houphouët-Boigny. The French committee also counted Louis Armand, Eirik Labonne and most other French Eurafricanists among its honorary members.

1956–7. While this is the subject matter of the next chapter, it is now high time to move beyond the immediate context of France and Britain's efforts to modernize their empires and instead focus our attention on how the colonial question, and Africa in particular, were dealt with in the various European organizations that sprang up in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Internationalizing the colonies: The European movement

Let us begin where most EU studies' accounts on postwar European integration begin – namely, with the Congress of Europe, which took place in The Hague in May 1948. The Congress was held on the initiative of the International Committee of the Movements for European Unity, an umbrella organization established in 1947 to coordinate a number of movements and bodies of various political persuasions who advocated European integration (excluding communists and the far right); the organization changed name to the European Movement in October 1948. The event gathered several hundred prominent Europeans, ranging from intellectuals and trade unions to church leaders, businessmen and high rank statesmen – including Winston Churchill (who chaired the event), Paul-Henri Spaak, Konrad Adenauer, Alcide De Gasperi, Paul Reynaud, Anthony Eden, Paul van Zeeland, Paul Ramadier, Harold Macmillan and Pierre-Henri Teitgen, to mention but a few. Most importantly, the Congress of Europe heralded the establishment of the Council of Europe the following year.

While the Congress and the European Movement's subsequent flurry of activities are nearly always referred to in the literature – to a greater or lesser extent – the discussion is almost exclusively focused on the European Movement's intra-European concerns. Among other things, this comprises questions of peace-building in Europe and reconciliation between recent enemies, the German question, the future of nation-states and nationalism in Europe, the building Cold

War division of Europe and, not least, the contentious question of whether a united Europe was to be governed according to federal, supranational or intergovernmental principles. Rarely, if ever, though, are the European Movement's positions on the colonial question addressed. This is puzzling indeed, particularly considering that the colonial question featured prominently in the Movement's discussions.⁹⁶ Also, to think that this should not have been the case is entirely counter-intuitive, given what we have just recounted concerning the tremendous importance that Britain and France assigned to their colonial empires after the war – something that also held true for Belgium and the Netherlands.

As indicated, most of the European Movement and the Congress of Europe's participant groupings (among them Coudenhove-Kalergi's new organization, the European Parliamentary Union) adhered to the Eurafican tenet concerning the necessity of developing African colonies for the collective benefit of a war-torn Western Europe striving to emerge as a 'third force' in world politics.⁹⁷ 'If we wish to rebuild,' said Hendrik Brugmans, the leader of the European Union of Federalists (EUF) and one of the staunchest third force advocates, 'we urgently need "living space" – if you will forgive the expression – on a bigger scale than that of the old, so-called autonomous nations.'⁹⁸ In an article in British Labour's *Daily Herald* a year prior to the Congress, appealing to Ernest Bevin, Brugmans affirmed the indispensability of Europe's independence between the superpowers, adding that the European Union must include the overseas territories that are associated with its members.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ For an exception, see Wolfgang Schmale, 'Before self-reflexivity: Imperialism and colonialism in the early discourses of European integration', in Menno Spiering and Michael Wintle (eds), *European Identity and the Second World War* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 190–8.

⁹⁷ Jean-Marie Palayret, 'Les mouvements proeuropéens et la question de l'Eurafrrique, du Congrès de La Haye à la Convention de Yaoundé (1948–1963)', in Bitsch and Bossuat (eds), *L'Europe unie et l'Afrique*, pp. 185–229.

⁹⁸ Quoted and documented in Alan Hick, 'The European Union of Federalists (EUF)', in Walter Lippens (ed.), *Documents on the History of European Integration*, Vol. 4 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1991), p. 16.

⁹⁹ Documented in *ibid.*, pp. 17–18.

During the deliberations in The Hague in May 1948, such views were commonplace, the Congress' Political Report serving as a good illustration. One of the Congress' most important documents, it was drawn up by its International Committee, which was influenced by the British, French and Benelux foreign ministers. The report established that the integration of Germany into a European Union was to be achieved, in part, by means of a joint control of the country's heavy industry. 'On her side', the report went on, 'Germany would gain full access to the resources of other European nations and to the raw materials of their overseas territories.' This synergy rested on the foregone conclusion that, as the report spells it out under the heading 'Overseas Territories', 'The European Union must, of course, include in its orbit the extensions, dependencies and associated territories of the European Powers in Africa and elsewhere, and must preserve the existing constitutional ties which unite them.'¹⁰⁰

In the Congress' Political Resolution, moreover, it was unanimously agreed that the future European union or federation 'must assist in assuring the economic, political and cultural advancement of the populations of the overseas territories associated with it'.¹⁰¹ Similarly, the Economic and Social Resolution '[d]eclares that this Union must maintain and progressively adjust the economic ties which at present link the countries of Europe with the Dominions and associated States or dependent territories overseas'.¹⁰²

We should also briefly attend to the Congress' Closing Plenary Session and its unanimous adoption of the final document, entitled 'Message to Europeans', which had been drawn up by the Swiss author and staunch federalist Denis de Rougemont. In the fourth paragraph of this very short document (just over one page) the following message was delivered: 'Together with the overseas peoples associated

¹⁰⁰ Quoted in Alan Hick, 'The "European Movement"', in Lipgens (ed.), *Documents on the History of European Integration*, pp. 335–6.

¹⁰¹ European Movement, *Europe Unites: The Hague Congress and After* (London: Hollis and Carter, 1949), p. 38.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 68–9.

with our destinies, we can to-morrow build the greatest political formation and the greatest economic unit our age has seen.’¹⁰³

Among scores of other examples underlining the salience of the colonial question within the European Movements, we could turn, finally, to the European Union of Federalists’ (EUF) subsequent (and failed) attempt to federalize the Council of Europe, which was established a year after the Congress of Europe, almost to the day, on 5 May 1949. At its Extraordinary General Assembly in Paris in October 1949, the EUF adopted its ‘Draft of a Federal Pact’, to be submitted to the Council of Europe’s Consultative Assembly. Expressing grave concerns over what was seen as a botched unification of Europe, something that the EUF attributed to the failure to recast Europe in a federal or supra-national mould, the Pact was drafted with the utmost urgency. As the Preamble warned, ‘the political, economic, social and military position of Europe is rapidly approaching the critical point after which there will be no further possibility of preventing the final collapse of our civilization.’ This urgency is also reflected in the Pact’s approach to the colonial territories. As maintained by the EUF, ‘Europe as an entity will be viable only if the links which unite it with countries and dependent territories scattered all over the globe are taken into account.’ The necessity of incorporating the colonies into the European Federation is primarily economically motivated:

The object of federalizing Europe is not only to establish a world equilibrium, but also to provide for Europe, together with its associated countries and dependent territories overseas, a favourable place in the economy of the world. This last result will not be achieved unless Europe, with its associated countries and dependent territories overseas, develops all its resources so as to raise the standard of living of all the peoples concerned, and to re-establish the balance of payments between Europe and the rest of the world.

This provided, the Pact could also go on to proclaim that ‘The era of national ownership of colonial territories is past. [...] From now

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 94.

onwards a common European policy of development for certain regions of Africa should be taken in hand, for the benefit of all the peoples concerned.' In closing, the Euf emphasized that 'the Council of Europe must be asked to study as a matter of urgency, in consultation with all the interested parties, this question which is so vital for the successful building of Europe'.¹⁰⁴

Cooperation overseas: The Council of Europe and the OEEC

While the Council of Europe (CE) failed entirely to embody the federal principles advocated by the Euf and many other parties within the European Movement, it immediately succeeded in turning colonial cooperation in Africa into one of the organization's defining priorities – a fact largely forgotten today.¹⁰⁵ The unanimous adoption of the Strasbourg Plan by the CE's Consultative Assembly in 1952 provides ample testimony to this. Before probing the Strasbourg Plan, however, we need to say something about the organization that had been instrumental in the preparatory work for the Plan, namely the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC, subsequently the OECD), which has already been mentioned in passing above in the context of Britain's efforts to increase European colonial cooperation in Africa.

The OEEC was formed in April 1948 for the purpose of administering the US Marshall Plan – or the European Recovery Program.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Quoted and documented in Hick, 'The European Union of Federalists (Euf)', pp. 84–90.

¹⁰⁵ See Palayret, 'Les mouvements proeuropéens et la question de l'Eurafrrique', pp. 200–13; Uwe Kitzinger, *The Challenge of the Common Market* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), pp. 90–1; Robert W. Heywood, 'West European Community and the Eurafrica concept in the 1950s', *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1981, pp. 199–210; Karis Muller, 'Concentric Circles' at the periphery of the European Union', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vol. 46, No. 3, 2000, pp. 322–35; A. H. Robertson, 'The Council of Europe and the United Nations', in Berhanykun Andemicael (ed.) *Regionalism and the United Nations* (New York: United Nations Institute for Training and Research, 1979), pp. 506–7.

¹⁰⁶ The signing of the Convention for European Economic Co-operation formally established the OEEC (on 16 April 1948) and the organization originally consisted of eighteen member countries and territories.

While portions of its funds were used to assist individual recipient states in their work to boost financial stability in their respective colonial empires,¹⁰⁷ the OEEC also immediately decided to form an Overseas Territories Working Group in order to promote European cooperation in colonial affairs, particularly towards Africa.

In its extensive report from 1951, focusing on investments in the colonial territories south of the Sahara, the OEEC described itself as 'one of the media through which Member countries' overseas territories pursue their policy of co-operation'.¹⁰⁸ But it also maintained that the necessary public and private investment in overseas territories by no means should be limited to those OEEC members with colonial territories. Rather, all members should be encouraged to contribute: 'It is in the interest of the whole free world that the [colonial] territories, which form part of it, should endeavour to speed up and increase the production of scarce materials'.¹⁰⁹ Although formulated in less utopian terms, the report echoes the interwar period's plans for Eurafrica in its focus on large-scale infrastructural projects, water control, agriculture and 'constructional work, on a heavier scale' – e.g. 'Vast stretches of mosquito-infested swamp must be drained'.¹¹⁰ Important too is that the report is completely void of indications that colonialism in Africa might some day come to an end; on the contrary, Eurafrican planning is unreservedly described as 'a long-term task' in an African terrain characterized by 'political security'. In combination with rising raw material prices and the necessity of increased industrial production, such political security, the report goes on, had helped generate the current 'tendency for capital to move towards Africa'. Therefore, 'Every advantage must be taken of this tendency'. In conclusion, however, the report makes sure to

¹⁰⁷ OEEC, *Investments in Overseas Territories in Africa, South of the Sahara* (Paris: OEEC, 1951), pp. 51, 75; Frances M. B. Lynch, *France and the International Economy: From Vichy to the Treaty of Rome* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 192.

¹⁰⁸ OEEC, *Investments in Overseas Territories in Africa*, p. 9.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

underscore yet again that, 'quite apart from the present situation, [...] the development of the territories is essentially a long-term task'.¹¹¹

For its part, the Council of Europe's Strasbourg Plan set out to resolve one of Western Europe's most pressing problems at the time, namely its chronic and paralysing dollar deficit, which the (by now) discontinued Marshall aid had done little to settle. The answer? Africa! As explained by the French CE representative, M. Saller, during the CE's Consultative Assembly debate on the Plan: '[N]o European Political Community can survive without the support and co-operation of overseas countries having constitutional links with Europe. This is an ever-present economic reality which Europe must perforce recognize if she is not to be doomed to perish'.¹¹²

By way of joint large-scale investments in the exploitation of the African colonies' vast yet largely untapped natural resources, Western Europe would be able to reduce its dependence on dollar imports of raw materials. As established by the Plan: 'The economies of the overseas territories, which are large producers of raw materials, and the industrialised economies of the European countries are on the whole complementary'.¹¹³ As West German representative Johannes Semler, heading the CE's Committee on Economic Relations with Overseas Territories, pleaded for the Plan before the Assembly, he quoted from a speech made a week earlier by former French prime minister Paul Reynaud, now chairman of the CE's Committee on Economic Questions: 'We must also, if free Europe is to be made viable, jointly exploit the riches of the African continent, and try to find there those raw materials which we are getting from the dollar area, and for which we are unable to pay'.¹¹⁴ In so doing, this would facilitate Western

¹¹¹ Ibid., pp. 72, 79.

¹¹² Council of Europe, *The Strasbourg Plan* (Strasbourg: Secretariat-General Council of Europe, 1952), p. 151. We could note that Jean Monnet had been an early advocate of precisely this line of policy; see e.g. 'U.S. to prod Europe for self-recovery', *The New York Times*, 16 July 1948.

¹¹³ Council of Europe, *The Strasbourg Plan*, p. 16.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 135.

Europe's transition into 'a third economic group standing midway between the Communist and the dollar areas'.¹¹⁵

However, since the large-scale investments required could not be shouldered by the colonial powers alone, the Plan was adamant in stressing the indispensability of all Council members (by now fourteen countries) contributing. As pointed out by the UK representative Lord Layton, 'it is clear that we have to think of these overseas territories not as the possessions of any one country [...]; they have to be integrated with all the countries of Europe and all the overseas territories'. This chimed with practically all of the representatives. For instance, Denmark's Hermond Lannung emphasized 'the overriding importance of greater co-operation and of a major joint European effort in Africa if we do not wish to see Africa lost to European influence, culture, trade, etc. and, in the long run, for that influence to be replaced by that of another continent.' Europe had just lost the 'battle of Asia', Lannung asserted, and now its nations needed to unite in order to not also lose 'the battle of Africa'. 'Here we have before us a great concrete and practical task which calls for the utmost collaboration of us all'.¹¹⁶

For this project to become viable, obviously, West German, but also Scandinavian, capital and industrial clout was greatly sought after. According to the Plan, all parties stood to gain from such a collaborative approach: 'If European countries without colonial responsibilities contribute to the development of overseas territories it will then be possible to open these overseas markets to them.' With limited access to its traditional markets in the east – now within the Soviet orbit of control – the Plan argued, such a scenario should provide West Germany, in particular, with an important incentive to look to Africa as an outlet for its 'tractors, cranes, bridges, dredges, machine tools, etc.'. ¹¹⁷

As during the interwar Eurafrica debate, the topic of European emigration to Africa also figured prominently in the Strasbourg Plan, since 'over-population' still was seen as 'one of Europe's most critical

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 15.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 140, 154.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 54–7, 175, 190, 64, 54.

human and social problems.’¹¹⁸ Save for Italy’s demand to provide for mass emigration to African colonies, however, the majority opinion within the CE’s Assembly opted for a more moderate approach, mostly advocating emigration of select groups of people with certain skills.¹¹⁹

While the Strasbourg Plan, after several years of deliberation, was basically rejected by the CE’s Committee of Ministers – a quite natural fate given the EC’s intergovernmental character – its content and spirit was still very much representative for the Eurafrican momentum during the 1950s. Let us not spoil this chance to create ‘Eurafrica as a third global force’, exhorted the major French magazine *L’Observateur* in October 1952 in reference to the Strasbourg Plan.¹²⁰ Also, the Committee’s rejection did not slow down the Assembly’s activity on the matter; on the contrary, the work and debate continued unabated during the 1950s. In response to the rejection, for instance, the Assembly proceeded to set up a ‘Study Group for the Development of Africa.’¹²¹ We should note too that in its review of the Strasbourg Plan, which was published in 1954 and commissioned by the CE’s Committee of Ministers, the OEEC observed ‘with satisfaction that the aims laid down in the Strasbourg Plan by the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe largely agree with those of the Organization’. Here, the OEEC also affirmed that ‘there can be no doubt of the community of interests which exists between Member countries and the overseas countries covered by the Strasbourg Plan’, adding: ‘The governments of Member countries are therefore in full agreement with these objectives [...]. The Strasbourg Plan rightly insists on the importance of economic co-operation between all Member countries and the overseas territories dependent on certain of them.’¹²²

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 58.

¹¹⁹ For a more extensive account of the issue of European migration to Africa in the context of postwar Eurafrican integration, see Peo Hansen and Stefan Jonsson, ‘Demographic colonialism: EU–African migration management and the Legacy of Eurafrica’, *Globalizations*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 2011, pp. 261–76.

¹²⁰ P. M. Dessinges, ‘Le Conseil de l’Europe et l’Afrique’, *L’Observateur*, No. 126, 9 October 1952.

¹²¹ Robertson, ‘The Council of Europe and the United Nations’, pp. 506–7.

¹²² OEEC, *Comments on the Strasbourg Plan* (Paris: OEEC, May 1954), pp. 9–10.

In this context it is also important to mention the European League for Economic Co-operation (ELEC), which was established in 1946 for the specific purpose of promoting colonial cooperation between Western European states. An economic organization, think-tank and lobbying group, ELEC gathered key political and economic actors in Europe and had close ties to the OEEC. As Laura Kottos has shown, ELEC was not only influential in shaping the content of the Strasbourg Plan as such; it was also instrumental in keeping its spirit alive after it had been formally rejected. Most crucially, however, ELEC's perseverance and the fact that many of its members also functioned as key players in the Treaty of Rome negotiations would combine to facilitate the institution of the EEC's colonial association regime subsequently agreed upon in Rome in 1957. As Kottos is able to demonstrate, then, despite the Strasbourg Plan's formal demise within the Council of Europe, some of its key components were to be resurrected as part of the EEC's association of the members' colonial territories.¹²³

NATO's Eurafrikan outfit

If the OEEC and the CE's efforts mainly focused on the economic aspects of colonial cooperation – albeit always embedded in the prevailing geopolitical discourse and objectives – the establishment of NATO, also in 1949, would involve a modest yet very concrete strategic application of Eurafrika. As the NATO Treaty (signed on 4 April 1949) specified in its Article 6, 'an armed attack on one or more of the Parties is deemed to include an attack: on the territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America, [and] on the Algerian Departments of France'.

¹²³ Laura Kottos, 'A "European Commonwealth": Britain, the European League for Economic Co-operation, and European debates on empire, 1947–1957', *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 4, 2012, pp. 497–515. For support of Kottos' thesis, see 'Översikter och meddelanden', *Statsvetenskaplig tidskrift*, Vol. 64, No. 5, 1961, pp. 316–18.

The incorporation of French Algeria rested with a French demand or, better, an ultimatum. Indeed, if the USA, which very much disapproved of Algeria's inclusion, had not succumbed, France would most likely have refused to join NATO, something that in turn would have jeopardized the whole project, given the absolute centrality of France's participation.¹²⁴

France's original bid, forwarded during the negotiations in the summer of 1948, went even further, asking for the inclusion of North Africa in its entirety, covering not only Algeria but also northern Egypt, the Suez Canal, all of Tunisia as well as the northern parts of Morocco. For a while, this French demand prompted Belgium to ask for Congo's inclusion into NATO as well.¹²⁵ In the draft treaty, France actually managed to have its tender acknowledged, although dissenting views were appended to the draft. Such dissent would soon be voiced more generally in the ensuing negotiations towards the end of the year. Nonetheless, France did receive some qualified support from Britain, with its US ambassador, Oliver Franks, stating that 'while the British government would probably not wish to continue to press for inclusion of all of Africa north of 30° it would want the part west Libya included'. As the late Escott Reid explains, the real purport of this was that 'the British were prepared to compromise on excluding all of Africa except Algeria'.¹²⁶ While still not ready to formally back down from its original bid, France's immediate response was nonetheless quite indicative of the fact that it was Algeria that constituted the heart of the matter. At the beginning of January 1949, Foreign Minister Robert Schuman clarified this in his talks with the Canadian ambassador to France, Georges Vanier, informing him that:

[I]t would be quite impossible for any French government to accept the idea of excluding Algeria which was part of metropolitan France, on political grounds of course because no French government could

¹²⁴ Lawrence Kaplan, *The United States and NATO: The Formative Years* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1984), p. 118.

¹²⁵ John W. Young, *Britain, France and the Unity of Europe 1945–1951* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1984), p. 103.

¹²⁶ Escott Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty 1947–1949* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977), p. 214.

possibly propose this to Parliament, but also on purely strategic grounds because the general defence of France could not be envisaged without the inclusion of Algeria as a base for defensive action as well as for purposes of retreat. [...] It would even be difficult for the government to accept the exclusion of Tunisia and Morocco, but that of Algeria quite impossible.¹²⁷

Schuman's strategic point regarding the 'inclusion of Algeria as a base for defensive action as well as for purposes of retreat' reflected the Eurafrikan sentiments that were predominant in France, not least within its military circles and the Labonne Committee. As we shall discuss further in the next chapter, the strategic argument in favour of Eurafrika drew from the lessons of France's failure to utilize North Africa precisely 'as a base for defensive action as well as for purposes of retreat' during the German attack in 1940; but it also drew from the lesson that, eventually, as the war progressed, North Africa would come to assume such a strategic role, thus facilitating the liberation of Europe. As illustrated by Labonne's programme for constructing industrial and strategic zones in Africa, the postwar reasoning for a strategic Eurafrika concept thus sought to drive home the point that the only way to sustain or deter a Soviet attack on the continent was to reconstruct Western Europe and North Africa as an integral whole.¹²⁸

With the French government making it very clear that Algerian inclusion was an ultimatum while at the same time clarifying that it would not push NATO's African extension any further than Algeria, its partners, save for the USA and Canada, were also getting ready to accept France's demand.¹²⁹ The main objections raised by Washington revolved around two main concerns: (1) 'that the inclusion of Algeria would bring up the whole controversial problem of overseas territories'; and (2) that the US military was 'fearful lest the pact might

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 215–16.

¹²⁸ See e.g. Claude d'Abzac-Epezy and Philippe Vial, 'In search of a European consciousness: French military elites and the idea of Europe, 1947–54', in Ann Deighton (ed.), *Building Postwar Europe: National Decision-Makers and European Institutions, 1948–63* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995).

¹²⁹ Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope*, p. 216.

be called into operation in the event of native tribal troubles in these areas', also referred to as 'native uprisings'.¹³⁰ Before long, though, the USA decided to budge and let the French request stand. This happened shortly after Canada had judged the French position unyielding and so opted to accept Algeria's inclusion, the Canadian chief negotiator reporting home that as far as he was concerned 'the inclusion of Algeria would make no real difference in the operation of the treaty'.¹³¹ As we show in the next chapter when discussing the implications of Article 6 in the context of the Algerian war, such a conclusion was soon proven to have been quite off the mark.

Africa as an essential European task: The Schuman Declaration

On 9 May 1950, almost exactly a year after the establishment of NATO, French foreign minister Robert Schuman presented what was to become known as the Schuman Declaration, or Schuman Plan, announcing the Franco-German aim to jointly regulate extraction and production of coal and steel. The Schuman Plan – which, besides Jean Monnet's work, benefitted greatly from American input and backing – gave birth to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in the Treaty of Paris a year later, comprising France, West Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries (but not Britain). Not only did the ECSC create a common market for coal and steel among the six members, but also, most significantly and symbolically, it vested the control over production with a supranational High Authority (the precursor of the European Commission). With coal and steel constituting the basis for

¹³⁰ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 216.

¹³¹ Quite remarkably, Reid and Lawrence Kaplan basically agree that this prediction was borne out by future events, Reid concluding that, 'By skilful diplomacy, France had won a victory on the Algerian issue but the victory did not have much substance.' For his part, Kaplan claims that, 'In the long run Algeria was to mean little; the portions of North Africa identified clearly and specifically in Article 6 became irrelevant after Algeria won its independence' (Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope*, pp. 216–17; Kaplan, *The United States and NATO*, p. 118).

arms production, this arrangement was said to be designed so as to tie France and West Germany together, or as it was stated in the Schuman Plan, 'to make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible'.¹³² Due to its peace message and *supranational* design, the Schuman Plan, and not least Robert Schuman himself, is a source of pride within today's EU policy parlance and the 'whiggish' EU scholarship.¹³³ Since 1985, moreover, the EU officially celebrates 9 May as 'Europe Day' in the 'spirit of peace and solidarity', no mention being made of the fact that while Robert Schuman made his 9 May plea for 'World peace', France fought an extremely brutal colonial war in Indochina.

As for Eurafican institutionalization, the ECSC offered little on paper and was limited to the stipulation in paragraph 79 of the Paris Treaty, whereby 'Each High Contracting Party binds itself to extend to the other member States the preferential measures which it enjoys with respect to coal and steel in the non-European territories subject to its jurisdiction'.¹³⁴ In the opinion of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, this stipulation was seen as holding out 'some prospects' in favour of 'the Eurafican conception'.¹³⁵ According to Vernon McKay, also commenting at the time, Article 79 was owed in part to German and Italian steel producers wanting admittance to markets in France's African colonies, and to Italy and the Netherlands' wish to gain access to the iron ore deposits in Gabon and Mauritania.¹³⁶ More precisely, Italy demanded that the ECSC incorporated France's colonial areas so as to ensure Italy the cheapest possible iron ore imports from

¹³² European Union, 'Declaration of 9 May 1950', *Europa* (official website of the European Union), http://europa.eu/abc/symbols/9-may/decl_en.htm

¹³³ We owe the coining of this term (in the context of EU scholarship) to Mark Gilbert, 'Narrating the process: Questioning the progressive story of European integration', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 3, 2008, pp. 641–62.

¹³⁴ Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community, Paris, 18 April 1951; the treaty entered into force on 23 July 1952.

¹³⁵ Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, Opinion Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, 'Draft Treaty embodying the Statute of the European Community, adopted by the Ad Hoc Assembly', Doc 127, 7 May 1953, p. 3.

¹³⁶ Vernon McKay, *Africa in World Politics* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 144.

the mines in eastern Algeria. Since this would have required some tough adjustments within the French Union and its complicated tariff system, France was not ready to accommodate Rome's request.¹³⁷ As Ernst Haas noted in *The Uniting of Europe*, this 'almost resulted in Italian withdrawal from the negotiations and only a bilateral accord with France saved the situation'.¹³⁸ The compromise, brokered by none less than Jean Monnet himself, thus specified that while the French overseas territories and Algeria were to remain outside the ECSC, France was to grant its partners, Italy in particular, the same 'preferential measures which it enjoys with respect to coal and steel in the non-European territories subject to its jurisdiction' – as stipulated in the treaty's Article 79.¹³⁹

But this was not the only colonial matter that could have derailed the ECSC negotiations. Italy also demanded that France made sure it capped Algerian labour immigration into its mining, coal and steel industries. Italy, who was desperate to secure outlets for its allegedly huge 'surplus population' of unemployed, thus wanted the ECSC Treaty to warrant preferential treatment for Italian labour migrants in (foremost) France's heavy industry. France, who had no interest in enacting measures that would risk stoking the conflict further in Algeria, resolutely turned down this request. In fact, 'the French delegation threatened to refuse further cooperation with the proceedings in case the Italian proposals would be supported by the others'.¹⁴⁰ Since the guaranteeing of free movement for its miners and coal and steel workers within the ECSC area was deemed indispensable

¹³⁷ Gérard Bossuat, *L'Europe des Français, 1943–1959: La IVe République aux sources de l'Europe communautaire* (Paris: Publ. de la Sorbonne, 1996), p. 174; Seung-Ryeol Kim, 'France's agony between "Vocation Européenne et Mondiale": The Union Française as an obstacle in the French policy of supranational European integration, 1952–1954', *Journal of European Integration History*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2002, p. 63.

¹³⁸ Ernst B. Haas, *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social, and Economic Forces 1950–1957* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1958), p. 249.

¹³⁹ Kim, 'France's agony between "Vocation Européenne et Mondiale"', p. 63; see also William Diebold Jr., *The Schuman Plan: A Study in Economic Cooperation, 1950–1959* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, Frederick A. Praeger, 1959), p. 134.

¹⁴⁰ S. A. W. Goedings, *Labor Migration in an Integrating Europe: National Migration Policies and the Free Movement of Workers, 1950–1968* (The Hague: Sdu Uitgevers, 2005), p. 131.

and so could not be allowed to stall over the Algerian migration issue, Rome soon yielded to Paris' position; and consequently the matter was left to the discretion of the member state governments. However, as we shall see in the next chapter, the Algerian migration issue was to reappear as an even more contentious issue towards the end of the Treaty of Rome negotiations.

These colonial hurdles notwithstanding, the treaty, as mentioned, only included one article with pertinence to the colonial issue. Yet, the Schuman Declaration itself spoke in more assertive terms: 'With increased resources Europe will be able to pursue the achievement of one of its essential tasks, namely, the development of the African continent.'¹⁴¹ Apparently, Schuman picked up on a suggestion made by René Mayer, then Minister of Justice, and Jean Monnet, both of them keen Eurafricanists, that France could give Africa as a 'dowry to Europe' and as a way to 'seduce the Germans'.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ European Union, 'Declaration of 9 May 1950'. Somewhere down the road, the Schuman Declaration's bold assertion concerning Africa appears to have become a sensitive, or perhaps embarrassing, topic in certain circles. In the English translation of Robert Schuman's *Pour l'Europe* (Paris: Nagel Editions, 1963), the Schuman Declaration is reprinted – and retouched – in an annex with the Africa-passage deleted, and this without any information as to why this has been done; Robert Schuman, *For Europe* (Avignon: Institut Robert Schuman pour l'Europe, 2000), Annex, p. 103. The European Movement's official website proceeds in the same fashion, although here the deletion is marked (yet never explained) with three periods inside square brackets; www.europeanmovement.eu/index.php?id=6790 (accessed 13 September 2013). While it is not far-fetched to assume that today both the Institut Robert Schuman pour l'Europe and the European Movement have a vested interest in trying to conceal the Schuman Declaration's manifest colonial outlook, it is much harder to explain why Leiden University's Schuman Plan Collection has also chosen (without any explanation) to delete the Schuman Declaration passage on Africa (as it appears on its European Union History website); www.hum.leiden.edu/history/eu-history/historical/schuman.html (accessed 13 September 2013). In the words of Etienne Deschamps, the silence of historians on the Eurafrican dimension of Schuman's thinking on Europe 'remains astounding'; see Deschamps, 'Robert Schuman, un apôtre oublié de l'Eurafrrique?', in Sylvain Schirman (ed.), *Quelles architectures pour quelle Europe: Des projets d'une Europe unie à l'Union européenne (1945–1992)*, (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2011), p. 75.

¹⁴² The immediate mastermind behind the passage on Africa in Schuman's declaration, according to McKay, was no one less than the 'Father of Europe' himself, Jean Monnet, also the chief architect of the ECSC; see McKay, *Africa in World Politics*, p. 139. However, sources closer to the political scene show that it was proposed by René Mayer, Minister of Justice and representative of Algerian Constantine who, with Monnet's approval, added it to the final draft of Schuman's declaration; see Pierre Uri, *Penser pour l'action: Un fondateur de l'Europe* (Paris: O. Jacob, 1991), p. 80; Jean Monnet, *Memoirs*, trans. Richard Mayne (New York: Doubleday, 1978), p. 300; and, for a discussion of

As such, of course, the Schuman Declaration's Eurafrican passage followed from the historical pattern sketched here. Since the 1920s, community and collaboration of Europe's states had presupposed their collaboration in Africa too. Now, as both the Council of Europe and the ECSC were established, their protagonists obviously felt it important to signal that these organizations and institutions of European integration enabled the more far-reaching collaboration that had for long occupied debates on foreign policy and geopolitics. Schuman himself was convinced that such a collaboration was necessary and had to be a part of any form of European integration. As we shall see later, he would become an even more ardent promoter of the Eurafrican idea as this towards the mid-1950s appeared to him as the only viable strategy for containing the African territories within a geopolitical sphere controlled by France and Europe.¹⁴³

A month after the Schuman Declaration, the French government followed up their initiative in a note proposing a 'European fund for the economic and social development of Africa' to be set up in liaison with the creation of the coal and steel community. The concrete format envisaged by the French government was basically that which would later be realized with the European Economic Community: all interested European partners – Germany above all – were invited to contribute to the development of France's colonial possessions in Africa, and in return for opening the overseas territories to foreign investors the French government expected European markets to be gradually opened for African products.¹⁴⁴

Many European intellectuals picked up the signal from the Schuman declaration, among them influential Austrian writer on foreign policy,

these accounts, Thomas Moser, *Europäische Integration, Dekolonisation, Eurafrika: Eine historische Analyse über die Entstehungsbedingungen der Eurafrikanischen Gemeinschaft von der Weltwirtschaftskrise bis zum Jaunde-Vertrag, 1929–1963* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000), pp. 169–77.

¹⁴³ Deschamps, 'Robert Schuman, un apôtre oublié de l'Eurafrrique?', pp. 84–91.

¹⁴⁴ 'Note sur le développement du continent africain en liaison avec la réalisation du pool européen de l'acier et du charbon', 15/20 June 1950. Reprinted in Bernard Bruneteau (ed.), *Histoire de l'idée européenne au premier XXe siècle à travers les textes* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2006), pp. 252–5.

Anton Zischka. In his view, the Franco–German coal and steel agreement was but the first step in a process leading to a common exploitation of Africa's resources. Africa, argued Zischka in the title of his book, was 'Europas Gemeinschaftsaufgabe Nr. 1' ('Europe's number one common priority')¹⁴⁵ (see Figure 3.4). Similarly, German weekly *Der Spiegel* reported immediately after Schuman's speech that the African option, lost for Germany after World War I, was now again open for West German industrialists seeking to extend their mining and processing investments to northern Africa. An old dream was thus revived: 'Der Eurafrika-Konzern'.¹⁴⁶ In 1954, Gustav-Adolf Gedat, formerly a fellow traveller of the Nazis and now a prominent politician in Adenauer's party, wrote an influential treatise stating that 'Europe's future lies in Africa'¹⁴⁷ (see Figure 3.5). French writer Pierre Nord expressed the same conviction: '[I]t is in Africa that the French-German reconciliation, the first condition of Europe, may begin.'¹⁴⁸ As *The New York Times* reported in early 1953, this was also a prevalent opinion within the West German Economics Ministry, where the 'pooling of Western Europe's coal and steel' was seen as a sure gateway to new and larger markets: 'European industry, in combination, it is believed, will be able to achieve what an official of the Ministry called the "ultimate goal" of opening Africa to industrialization and thus creating a market there.'¹⁴⁹ Or as one unnamed 'great industrialist', also quoted in the *Times*, put it shortly after the Schuman Declaration had been made:

Under the Schuman plan the latent riches of the African continent would be intensively exploited. American companies with dollar capital would buy in Europe part of the equivalent needed in Africa. Thereby,

¹⁴⁵ Anton Zischka, *Afrika: Europas Gemeinschaftsaufgabe Nr. 1* (Oldenburg: Gerhard Stalling Verlag, 1951).

¹⁴⁶ 'Schumanplan: Kombinat Europa', *Der Spiegel*, No. 20, 18 May 1950, pp. 13–17.

¹⁴⁷ Gustav-Adolf Gedat, *Europas Zukunft liegt in Afrika* (Stuttgart: Steinkopf, 1954). In 1938, Gedat had published a first book on the geopolitical and religious struggle over the African continent: *Was wird aus diesem Afrika: Erlebter Kampf um einen Erdteil* (Stuttgart: Steinkopf, 1938).

¹⁴⁸ Pierre Nord, *L'Eurafrique, notre dernière chance* (Paris: Arthème Fayard, 1955), p. 12.

¹⁴⁹ 'West German outlook is clouded by coming role in allied defence', *The New York Times*, 6 January 1953.

Figure 3.4 Cover of Anton Zischka, *Afrika: Europas Gemeinschaftsaufgabe Nr. 1* (Oldenburg: Gerhard Stalling Verlag, 1951).

Figure 3.5 Cover of Gustav-Adolf Gedat, *Europas Zukunft liegt in Afrika* (Stuttgart: Steinkopf, 1954).

Europe could earn enough to close the dollar gap [...]. Marshall aid would become superfluous. Expanding markets created in Africa could absorb the growing exportable surplus of Europe. This would keep Europe fully employed. In Africa, production of low-cost food raw materials purchasable in non-dollar currencies would become available to cover needs in Europe. Africa is close to Europe. She would become the goal of home-seekers from overcrowded Europe as America was before World War I. Several millions of refugees from east Europe, several millions in Italy would find an outlet in Africa.¹⁵⁰

Servicing the empire: The European Defence Community

Less than two months after the Schuman Plan was proclaimed, the Cold War confrontation intensified with the outbreak of the Korean War. This forced an increase in defence spending across Western Europe and the USA. Having lost its nuclear weapons monopoly the year before, this also compelled Washington to embark on a substantial transfer of troops to Europe, with numbers increasing from less than one hundred thousand in 1950 to more than one-quarter of a million in 1952. Even more important, Washington made sure it notified its allies about the urgency of going ahead with West German rearmament in some form – although this, of course, would have to stop short of an independent West German army. Despite US reinforcements, these were still far from sufficient in the event of a Soviet assault on Western Europe, for which German manpower was deemed essential. ‘With Germany’, President Truman stated at the NATO Council meeting in September 1950, ‘there could be a defence in depth, powerful enough to offer effective resistance to aggression from the East [...] Any map will show it, and a little arithmetic will prove what the addition of German manpower means to the strength of the joint defence of Europe.’¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ ‘Schuman Program is hailed by Swiss’, *The New York Times*, 15 May 1950.

¹⁵¹ Quoted in Fursdon, *The European Defence Community*, p. 83.

While the former items were fairly straightforward, although financially burdensome, the latter – about arming West Germany, which had been discussed since well before Korea and had always been flatly rebuffed by France – would prove much more difficult to achieve, at once pitting Washington's pressure on Paris to accept German rearmament against Paris' countermove to first obtain Washington's assistance in consolidating France's meagre military standing in Europe as well as its precarious imperial clout. Since Washington was already on board in Indochina, and since the rebuilding of French military strength in Europe was vital to US strategy, Paris' demands were not problems *per se*; they were already subjects for ongoing negotiations. The problem was rather to reach a swift agreement with France on German rearmament within NATO, something that all the other NATO partners were to stand solidly behind by September of 1950.

At the New York foreign ministers' meeting of the 'Big Three' (the USA, UK and France) in September, French foreign minister Schuman had informed his partners that he too recognized the need for German troop involvement in Western defence, but since this would be impossible to sell to the French public and Parliament France had little choice but to stand firm in its refusal to allow for an immediate German rearmament.¹⁵² At the same time though, France also took seriously the US threat of deciding to go ahead without awaiting France's consent. But with France constituting a centrepiece in the USA's European defence architecture and since Washington was staunchly in favour of European integration, the Americans opted for not alienating France any further and instead convinced Paris that it should take the initiative and put forth a proposal for the others to consider.¹⁵³

On 24 October 1950, the French government under René Pleven rose to the occasion and presented a plan to Parliament (again built on ideas of Jean Monnet)¹⁵⁴ for the establishment of a European Army.

¹⁵² Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945–1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 109.

¹⁵³ Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France*, pp. 188–99.

¹⁵⁴ For Jean Monnet's influence on the Pleven Plan, see Fursdon, *The European Defence*

This became the so-called Pleven Plan, the rudiments of which would subsequently make up the abortive European Defence Community, signed into treaty in Paris in May 1952 by the six members of the ECSC. Since the other NATO members mainly viewed the Pleven Plan as little more than a tactic to delay German rearmament – according to Eisenhower it was as ‘cockeyed an idea as a dope fiend would have figured out’¹⁵⁵ – the plan stalled in bitter debate and had to go through a new set of difficult negotiations. French diplomats even conceded to their British colleagues that, although clearly affirming West Germany’s military contribution in principle, the Pleven Plan was intended to block a speedy German rearmament.¹⁵⁶ Nonetheless, and to cut a very long and convoluted negotiations story short, once France had accepted that the EDC was to operate within the framework of NATO, the US decided to commit to the largely French-oriented EDC.¹⁵⁷ Soon after, the new Eisenhower administration would elevate the EDC into the most imperative objective as far as the European Cold War theatre was concerned; indeed, as Edward Fursdon puts it, for the Americans ‘there was no other European policy’. By the same token, the Eisenhower administration was to throw the whole weight of its influence in favour of a swift ratification of the treaty.¹⁵⁸

According to the treaty, the EDC was to be a supranational community (yet with an intergovernmental Council), conferred with binding decision-making powers – some of which were to involve majority voting – common institutions, common armed forces and a common budget.¹⁵⁹ Modelled on the Schuman Plan and the ECSC’s

Community, pp. 84–8.

¹⁵⁵ Quoted in Sebastian Rosato, *Europe United: Power Politics and the Making of the European Community* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), p. 131.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 131; see also Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, pp. 110–11.

¹⁵⁷ Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France*, p. 203.

¹⁵⁸ Fursdon, *The European Defence Community*, p. 271; see also Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France*, pp. 263–96; Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, pp. 122–5; Geir Lundestad, ‘*Empire*’ by Integration: *The United States and European Integration, 1945–1997* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 45–8.

¹⁵⁹ European Defense Community Treaty. Signed at Paris, 27 May 1952. Unofficial translation. Archive of European Integration, University of Pittsburgh, <http://aei.pitt.edu/id/eprint/5201>. (Traité instituant la Communauté européenne de défense (Paris, 27 mai

institutional structure, the EDC's principal element consisted of its common army, which was to be employed in the event of an armed attack against any one of the member states. This supranational 'European Army' was to be made up by a total of forty divisions, whereby fourteen would be French, twelve German, eleven Italian and three from the Benelux countries. In order to ensure the objective of integrating national armies, and hence the supranational European Army, no army corps was allowed to contain more than one division from the same country; in addition to this the general staff was to be integrated and senior officers recruited from all the member states.

Crucial too was of course that member states could not, as specified in Article 9 of the treaty, 'recruit or maintain national armed forces' outside the common army framework. Hence, there would be German soldiers in Western Europe again, but no sovereign German army. At the request of France, however, the treaty's Article 10 afforded an equally crucial exception to this rule by laying down that 'member States may recruit and maintain national armed forces intended for use in the non-European territories with respect to which they assume defense responsibilities, as well as units stationed in their countries which are required for the maintenance of these forces and for their relief'.

At first sight, this may give the impression that the EDC, in contrast to the Council of Europe, NATO and other European integration enterprises, was rather de-linked from colonial matters. After all, the treaty established a clear-cut separation between a European Defence Community whose scope of operation was delimited to the European turf (west of the Elbe), on the one side, and France's extra-European military engagements, on the other. Despite repeated (and ultimately successful) French requests to tamper with this separation by having protocols added to the treaty that gave France additional and exclusive rights – in contravention of the treaty's original federal ambition – to withdraw troops from the EDC for service in the colonies, some of the

1952). Mémorial du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg. Journal officiel du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg. Recueil de législation. 05.05.1954, n° 24. Luxembourg: Service Central de Législation.)

major studies on the topic nonetheless convey this impression that the EDC only concerned intra-European affairs. That is, these studies do not even provide a hint at the possibility of a colonial and thus a wider global dimension to the EDC saga.¹⁶⁰

That the EDC episode somehow can be approached as reducible to the developments on the European Cold War scene and to Franco-German relations, in particular, has been thoroughly put to rest by, among others, Jasmine Aimaq, Kevin Ruane and Irwin Wall's research into the French-American relations over the EDC. As Wall is able to demonstrate, the negotiation struggle over EDC was indissolubly linked with France's colonial struggle, particularly in Indochina:

Indochina and EDC became the two poles of American policy in France, each dependent upon the other; for only French success in Indochina could allow a restrengthened France in Europe, able to take a confident place in the integrated European army alongside a militarily restored Germany. It was thus American policy as much as French that collapsed at Dien Bien Phu.¹⁶¹

In a situation where Washington's entire European policy had been made to hinge on a swift ratification of a European Defence Community that, in turn, hinged on (the false promise of) a congenial French government determined to secure parliamentary approval for the treaty, Indochina emerged as a key bargaining chip in the hands of the French. It did so too, because in addition to the EDC being the chief US objective in Europe, a pro-Western Indochina was its top priority in

¹⁶⁰ See, for instance, Simon Duke, *The Elusive Quest for European Security: From EDC to CFSP* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 2000); Craig Parsons, *A Certain Idea of Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003); Rosato, *Europe United*. In Parsons, the part on the EDC sets out from the premise that 'All accounts agree that the French debate over German rearmament arose in response to massive geopolitical pressure' (p. 68). Yet such 'geopolitical pressure' is understood as resulting entirely from bipolar tensions between the USA and the Soviet Union, and is thus not made to encompass the enormous pressure France found itself under in Indochina and, increasingly so, in North Africa and elsewhere in the French Union, all of which coincided with the EDC imbroglio.

¹⁶¹ Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France*, p. 235.

Asia. The fact that, as Ruane notes, 'both objectives depended to a large degree on the French' was 'an irony not lost on US policymakers'.¹⁶²

By posing stability in Indochina as a prerequisite for parliamentary approval, Paris managed to exploit this equation to its advantage in the increasingly hostile negotiations with Washington between 1952 and 1954. In other words, France was able to have the US commit to shouldering more and more of the financial burden for the Indochina war – close to 80 per cent by early 1954 – in exchange for France's repeated, but never fulfilled, promises to ensure a ratification of the EDC that French governments and parliament, post-1952, wanted less and less. As Jasmine Aimaq demonstrates, this was indeed a 'chronic theme' in the EDC negotiations, the French constantly lamenting the fact that they were unable to garner enough domestic support for the EDC unless they were lent assistance in Indochina.¹⁶³ And while this agonized the Americans tremendously, 'it proved impossible to cut off funds in Indochina to make the French ratify EDC; given Washington's anti-communism, Paris held the upper hand'.¹⁶⁴

As Aimaq also reveals in her original study *For Europe or Empire?*, the intimate nexus of the EDC and France's colonial objectives would become further accentuated and so culminate during the partly overlapping Dien Bien Phu crisis (13 March–7 May 1954) and the UN Geneva Conference – which convened from 26 April until 21 July 1954, concluding with a peace accord on Indochina (the Geneva Agreements) that, among other things, withdrew French troops from the north and temporarily divided the country at the 17th parallel. Here, with France on the brink of collapse at Dien Bien Phu, the premier Joseph Laniel made it blatantly clear to the Americans that if they were to tolerate a French defeat they would also have to suffer the

¹⁶² Ruane, *The Rise and Fall of the European Defence Community*, p. 83.

¹⁶³ Jasmine Aimaq, *For Europe or Empire? French Colonial Ambitions and the European Army Plan* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1996), p. 234.

¹⁶⁴ Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France*, pp. 268. See also William I. Hitchcock, *France Restored: Cold War Diplomacy and the Quest for Leadership in Europe, 1944–1954* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), pp. 179–81.

consequences of the EDC's defeat; 'France would not deliver both.'¹⁶⁵ A few months earlier, it was exactly such a situation that US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles had alluded to when warning that 'we must be on our guard lest Indochina also carry [the] European Defence Community down the drain'.¹⁶⁶

The USA seriously contemplated intervention to save France at Dien Bien Phu, but in the end Washington decided to keep out, much due to, as we noted earlier, British refusal to participate but also after concluding that a defeat would not seriously disrupt the overall US strategy. But with the fall of Dien Bien Phu to the Vietminh the French government under Laniel also fell, and with the new government under Pierre Mendès France not only did French Indochina policy change in a way detrimental to US objectives – meaning a rapid peace accord with Vietminh and French withdrawal – but also the EDC prospects were to deteriorate even further. Once again Dulles' prediction seemed to have been confirmed; just months prior the Secretary had deemed the Laniel government 'our main reliance both for EDC and Indochina', adding that whichever government came after 'would not only have a mandate to end the war in Indochina on any terms, but also to oppose French ratification of EDC'.¹⁶⁷

The day after the Geneva peace settlement was signed on 21 July the USA decided to terminate all deliveries going to the French in Indochina. A little over a month later, on 30 August, the EDC was laid to rest by the French National Assembly with 319 votes to 264; this was undertaken on a procedural motion and thus without a substantial debate. As if to vindicate Washington's worst suspicions, Mendès France – who wanted the treaty dismissed¹⁶⁸ – did not even put his government on the line over the vote, but rather chose to stay in a false neutral and so refrained from stating anything in support of the treaty. Shortly thereafter, the one question that had occasioned the EDC

¹⁶⁵ Aimaq, *For Europe or Empire?*, pp. 227, 225.

¹⁶⁶ Quoted in Ruane, *The Rise and Fall of the European Defence Community*, p. 85.

¹⁶⁷ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 90.

¹⁶⁸ Hitchcock, *France Restored*, pp. 194–96.

in the first place, namely West German rearmament, found a swift resolution through the Paris agreements of October 1954, whereby West Germany (with a few restrictions attached) was admitted into the Western European Union and NATO.¹⁶⁹

In focusing on Indochina, Aimaq is able to reorient the EDC from its narrow European Cold War milieu onto its proper and much broader global terrain. But in answering the question posed by the title of her book – *For Europe or Empire?* – she takes the case much further, arguing that for France the European army plan was never primarily about preventing German rearmament within NATO. By the same token, neither was it chiefly about utilizing Indochina as a means to stall or delay German armament. Standing the received scholarly wisdom on its head, Aimaq instead contends that, by and large, the EDC was a means by which France could exert leverage against the USA in order to continue the fight for control in Indochina. Above all, then, the army plan was contrived not for European objectives, but rather for imperial ones. As Aimaq states it, France used Europe for Empire.

This is not the place to determine whether Aimaq's line of reasoning fully corroborates such a very bold claim. However, we do need to reconnect briefly with Laurent Cesari's discernments that we touched upon earlier when discussing colonial policy in postwar France more generally. To recapitulate, we highlighted Cesari's cogent point concerning the declining economic and strategic value that the majority within France's political establishment were to assign to Indochina from the early 1950s and onward. By the same token, there was also a growing agreement that the Indochina war was militarily unwinnable and that the goal instead should be to obtain a 'graceful exit' and to shore up France's military capabilities in Africa, foremost in Algeria where a crisis was looming – hence Mendès France's call for a 'retreat to Africa' from Indochina.¹⁷⁰ 'Africa, especially North Africa', Cesari clarifies, 'was the really useful part of the French Empire.

¹⁶⁹ This was approved by the French Parliament at the end of December 1954; West Germany was formally admitted to NATO at a ceremony in Paris on 9 May 1955.

¹⁷⁰ Cesari, 'The declining value of Indochina', pp. 175–95.

Opponents of the Indochina war such as Mendès France supported Eurafrican colonialism'. As for strategic value specifically, moreover, 'North Africa was almost equal to that of Europe'.¹⁷¹

However, by no means does this lead Cesari to depreciate Indochina's key role and function in the EDC negotiations. But in contrast to Aimaq's thesis he does not see France's utilization of Indochina as being tantamount to it choosing Empire, as in its *Asian* empire, over Europe. Rather, he manages to make the case that France used the Indochina bargaining chip in the EDC negotiations for the purpose of strengthening its standing both in Europe proper and in its Eurafrican combine. France thus secured US funding for the war under the pretext of not being able to ratify the EDC while having most of its armed forces tied down in Indochina. This predicament was then also used as a forceful argument against ratifying the EDC *before* Indochina had been successfully pacified and troops shipped back to Europe, since such a premature decision would have resulted in having more German divisions than French serving in the European Army. But as Cesari can show, while Washington, from 1952 and onward, started to pour money into the French war effort, Paris 'in no way planned for a decisive military victory over the DRV [Democratic Republic of Vietnam], whatever [it] might have said to the Americans in this regard'.¹⁷² Rather, a chief objective in receiving American aid was to use parts of it to build up its European and Eurafrican defence capabilities and its arms industry, which in turn would help France procure large dollar revenues from increased arms exports.

As a result of this ingenious manoeuvre, which also allowed France to relieve its own budget of some spending that otherwise would have gone to Indochina, the war soon emerged as a 'dollars-earning machine'.¹⁷³ Once the war had ended, Mendès France confirmed this before the National Assembly, stating that 'we have found in the Indochina war the equivalent of resources that normally our exports

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p. 179.

¹⁷² Ibid., p. 187.

¹⁷³ Ibid., p. 186.

should procure for us. [...] The end of the hostilities in Indochina will result in a diminution of our dollar reserves.’¹⁷⁴

So while Cesari’s account confirms the centrality of Indochina in the struggle over the EDC, it throws doubt on Aimaq’s claim concerning the centrality of Indochina in French strategic planning. The years 1950–4 were rather marked by an internal French struggle between those clinging to a more global colonial outlook, and where the retention of Indochina of course was vital, and those advocating the Eurafrikan path. According to Cesari, this struggle ended with the Geneva peace agreement and France’s subsequent ceding of control to the USA in South Vietnam. When the new French premier Edgar Faure, on 10 May 1955, decided to give up on trying to persuade the Americans about the risks involved in supporting Ngo Dinh Diem, South Vietnam’s newly appointed prime minister, Cesari picks this as the ‘symbolic date marking the definite victory of supporters of Eurafrika over rivals with global ambitions for France.’¹⁷⁵

The point here, though, is not to decide which of Aimaq’s and Cesari’s accounts is the more accurate – the complexities surrounding the EDC are simply beyond our scope. Rather, the point is to show that the EDC drama, much like other European integration schemes at the time, is impossible to comprehend outside the global colonial context.

Africans in European Parliaments? The European Political Community

In closing, we should also say something about the equally strong colonial imprint on the abortive European Political Community (EPC), which was to function as the EDC’s political authority and super-structure. According to the EDC Treaty (Article 38), the EPC was to ‘be conceived so as to be capable of constituting one of the elements of

¹⁷⁴ Quoted in Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France*, p. 282.

¹⁷⁵ Cesari, ‘The declining value of Indochina’, pp. 194–5.

an ultimate Federal or confederal structure, based upon the principle of the separation of powers and including, particularly, a bicameral representative system'. It was the ECSC's Parliamentary Assembly (the precursor of the European Parliament) that was commissioned to prepare a draft treaty to establish a European Political Community; the work was conducted in collaboration with members of the Council of Europe's Consultative Assembly and under the leadership of the ECSC Assembly's president and former Belgian premier Paul-Henri Spaak. This grouping, named the Ad Hoc Assembly, went on to adopt what many took to be a very bold and far-reaching draft treaty in March 1953.¹⁷⁶

As set out in Article 1 of the draft treaty, 'The present Treaty sets up a EUROPEAN COMMUNITY of a supra-national character', assigned with a 'mission', as stipulated in Article 2, 'to ensure the co-ordination of the foreign policy of Member States in questions likely to involve the existence, the security or prosperity of the Community'. As also specified, 'The Community, together with the European Coal and Steel Community and the European Defence Community, shall constitute a single legal entity' (Article 5), which basically meant that the EPC, besides engaging with its own aims and objectives, would assume the authorities and tasks of the ECSC and EDC. Important, too, was that in terms of financial competence the draft treaty authorized the EPC to levy its own taxes (Article 77). The Community budget was thus not only to rely on member states' contributions, but was also allotted a means of independent financial leverage. Politically, this was even more strongly expressed in the EPC's institutional framework, which, due to its supranational character, invested the two-chamber parliament – a directly elected People's Chamber and a Senate elected by the parliaments of the member states – and the Executive Council with far-reaching powers. Such powers, alongside a range of other issues, were to be debated and amended *ad infinitum* during the rocky

¹⁷⁶ Ad Hoc Assembly, *Draft Treaty Embodying the Statute of the European Community* (Paris: Secretariat of the Constitutional Committee, 1953).

road of negotiations that both preceded and followed the Ad Hoc Assembly's formal adoption of the draft treaty in the spring of 1953.

There was also to be much dissension over the draft treaty's stated objective that the EPC should work towards 'the progressive establishment of a common market' among the six member states (Article 2). What caused this was the Netherlands' accompanying proposal, the so-called Beyen Plan – named after its initiator and Dutch foreign minister Johan Willem Beyen – that was put forth already in 1952, prior to the ad hoc committee's adoption of the draft treaty. In order to ensure the advance towards a true political union, the Beyen Plan wanted the EPC's common market to include an expansive range of common policies, including a fully fledged customs union that would abolish internal tariffs and quotas as well establishing a common external trade policy. Since the Dutch government presented the Beyen Plan as a condition for going along with the EPC, France's flat rejection of the plan has led many accounts of the EPC to conclude that this also constituted the chief reason why no agreement ever could be reached on the EPC. According to Seung-Ryeol Kim and Yves Montarsolo, however, this is a premature conclusion. In meticulously sifting the archival evidence, both Kim and Montarsolo are able to demonstrate that the pivotal matter on which the EPC negotiations was made to hinge and continuously tread water rested with the French inability to decide how the empire, or French Union, would fit into the new European Political Community.¹⁷⁷

Sharing many similarities with the intra-French divergence over colonial matters as relating to the EDC, the fault lines with regard to the EPC ran between those (mainly Gaullists, such as Michel Debré, and prominent officials at the Quai d'Orsay, the French foreign ministry) who feared that the supranational, and eventually federal, character of the EPC would be to the detriment of the French Union and France's global role, and those (including Schuman and Pierre Henri Teitgen's

¹⁷⁷ Kim, 'France's agony between "*Vocation Européenne et Mondiale*"', p. 64; Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique*, pp. 91–194.

Christian Democrats [MRP], Guy Mollet's Socialists, Conservatives like Paul Reynaud of the Council of Europe and, of course, Monnet) who thought European integration and the EPC could work to the benefit of France's colonial objectives.

But in contrast to the EDC, the EPC draft treaty actually made provisions for the full incorporation of France's colonial territories into the new community, albeit leaving it up to France to determine the extent to which this would apply. In commenting on the EPC draft treaty, the Council of Europe's Committee on Economic Questions, headed by Paul Reynaud, welcomed these provisions, stating that:

The Committee re-affirms its belief in the conception of the Strasbourg Plan that neither the Six nor the Fifteen (Eighteen) [referring to the CE members] form an adequate framework for a solution of the European economic problem in its broader aspects and that the area of freer trade should be extended as far outside Western Europe as possible. In this connection the Eurafican conception of the Draft Treaty, although more wholeheartedly developed in a few remarkable statements before the Ad Hoc Assembly than in the Treaty itself, should be greeted as a step in the right direction. The hope may be expressed that the member countries concerned will, as a rule, be in a position to make laws, recommendations and all other decisions of the Community applicable to the non-European territories, as foreseen in the second paragraph of Article 101 of the Draft Treaty.¹⁷⁸

Due to the marked disagreements in Paris, the colonial question, or the French Union, soon emerged as the main crux of the negotiations, both internally in France and between the six. In other words, due to the treaty's provisions regarding incorporation of 'overseas' or 'non-European territories', including their political representation and economic and, ultimately, trade relations, France was now put in a situation where it had to make some very difficult choices and decisions.

¹⁷⁸ Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, 'Opinion (Appendix to the Rec. 45) of the Committee on Economic Questions [1] on certain economic aspects of the Draft Treaty embodying the Statute of the European Community', 11 May 1953.

This, though, was not a question of whether the colonies should be in or out of the EPC; instead, the matter revolved almost exclusively around under what political forms and principles and to what extent they should be brought into the EPC, a state of affairs that just made the issue even more intricate.¹⁷⁹ The influential Gaullist and deeply Euro-sceptic Michel Debré, on the one side, and the staunch Euro-advocate and MRP leader Pierre Henri Teitgen, on the other, were thus in agreement on the incontrovertible necessity of the full incorporation of the colonial territories into the EPC. They also agreed that the French Union was absolutely vital to France, or that, as Teitgen put it, 'France was not only a European power but also a world power, whose interests went beyond the framework of the European continent', which, in consequence, meant that the bond between the metropole and the overseas was 'indivisible'.¹⁸⁰

But whereas Teitgen, Schuman, Monnet and the like felt that such indivisibility could be made quite compatible with the supranational structure of the EPC, Debré, his Gaullists and powerful officials at the Quai would have none of it and so were determined to settle for nothing less than the scrapping of the community's supranational and federal ambitions in favour of a strictly intergovernmental or confederal arrangement. In their view, supranationalism namely risked yanking away the overseas territories from France, since it would pave the way for the other member states to benefit economically from France's overseas territories without being obligated to offer anything in return. As such it would deprive France of its preferential trading system and access to colonial markets, while at the same time continue to saddle her with the lone investment responsibilities.¹⁸¹

The political risks were equally serious. With Indochina, Tunisia, Morocco and others calling for independence, there was a strong sense that if the African territories gained representation in the EPC's

¹⁷⁹ Kim, 'France's agony between "*Vocation Européenne et Mondiale*", p. 67.

¹⁸⁰ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 66.

¹⁸¹ Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique*, pp. 137–9, 154–8; Kim, 'France's agony between "*Vocation Européenne et Mondiale*", pp. 69–70.

powerful and directly elected parliament (People's Chamber), they may very well utilize such a position to break ranks with the metropole. By allowing France's sovereignty to be diluted in a supranational European community, this would fundamentally threaten the cohesion of the French Union and, with it, France's global influence. According to this particular outlook, Kim shows, 'it was to be expected that the relationship between the European community and the Union Française would supersede the existing connections between France and its overseas areas'.¹⁸² In order to prevent Monnet's supranational 'adventure' from unfolding into such a 'nightmare', as Debré described it, measures needed to be taken to divest the EPC of its supranational mandate and its parliament of all its 'governmental and legislative power'. In its place, Debré wanted a Europe made up of 'a coalition of national authorities' or 'an association of sovereignties'.¹⁸³

To say that many within the MRP and the Socialists opposed such views is not tantamount to saying that they bought the draft treaty and its supranational blueprint wholesale. They too, of course, realized that the EPC could entail negative consequences for the French Union and so needed to be equipped with certain safeguards against adverse infringements on French colonial sovereignty. But their basic approach was that it should be possible to strike a fruitful balance between supranational European integration and France's colonial undertakings. In this context, Socialist leader Guy Mollet – a major Eurafrica proponent – argued that since France would not be able to muster the much-needed overseas investments on its own, European collaboration in this area was to be welcomed. To set this in motion, Mollet, together with others, called for the rapid establishment of a joint European investment bank for the French colonies.¹⁸⁴

Important to mention, too, is that a few African voices influenced the EPC debate, most importantly that of the French deputy from Senegal, Léopold Sédar Senghor (subsequently the first president of

¹⁸² Kim, 'France's agony between "*Vocation Européenne et Mondiale*"', p. 73.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 69, 73.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 74–5.

Senegal), representing the Senegalese Democratic Bloc, which he had founded in 1948. Senghor was also a member of the EPC's Ad Hoc Assembly (as part of the subgroup 'Co-opted Members') and as such he spoke as one of the most unreserved advocates of the draft treaty.¹⁸⁵ This advocacy also formed part of Senghor's Eurafrikan platform, which was partly inspired by Anton Zischka whom Senghor quoted frequently in his parliamentary interventions. He saw the overseas territories' full and unconditional incorporation into the EPC as necessary as it was indisputable. As Senghor explained, metropolitan France with 42 million inhabitants would not be able to take the guiding role in Europe, but 'Eurafrikan France with 88 million inhabitants would be able to play the role as guide and animator of the European Union precisely by emancipating the peoples of the Overseas territories'.¹⁸⁶ In contrast to most others, Senghor therefore considered political representation for the peoples in the overseas territories to be a necessary prerequisite, insisting that twenty seats (out of a total of 281) in the People's Chamber be earmarked for the overseas.¹⁸⁷ What Gaullists and Quai officials feared would enable overseas deputies to challenge the metropole and saw division in the French Union, Senghor took to be a condition for the Union's future survival.

But Senghor's position on overseas representation in a supranational EPC did not garner any enthusiasm with the other camp either. This was particularly true for Georges Bidault of the MRP, who was the minister of foreign affairs in 1953–4. Bidault replaced Robert Schuman at the demand of the Gaullists who knew Bidault as a sceptic of both the EDC and the EPC and thus as Schuman's opposite, although they both belonged to the same party.¹⁸⁸ But Bidault, who would become the central

¹⁸⁵ See for instance Senghor's intervention in L'Assemblée nationale 18 November 1953: 'La politique européenne', *Liberté II: Nation et voie africaine du socialisme* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1971), pp. 117–24.

¹⁸⁶ Senghor, 'L'Eurafrrique: Unité économique de l'avenir' (L'Assemblée nationale, 17 January 1952), *Liberté II*, p. 91.

¹⁸⁷ Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique*, pp. 115–18; Kim, 'France's agony between "Vocation Européenne et Mondiale"', pp. 66–7.

¹⁸⁸ R. E. M. Irving, *Christian Democracy in France* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1973), pp. 171, 174–5, 181.

figure in the EPC tussle, was no advocate of a rollback of European integration as such; rather, he ended up defending certain aspects of what had gone before, he straddled other issues, but most of all he made sure he demonstrated his aversion to the supranational character and federal intentions of the EPC draft treaty. As he told the National Assembly in March 1953: 'We have to make Europe without unmaking France.' 'We speak on behalf of 120 million people,' he continued, adding most crucially: 'We must pursue two objectives which are not contradictory: the consolidation of the French Union and the construction of Europe.'¹⁸⁹

But how this was to be accomplished in concrete terms never found agreement among the French, an impasse that, needless to say, was to rub off on the row of fruitless EPC negotiations between the six. Instead, what ensued in the months prior to the EDC's demise was, first, a further strengthening of the French confederal and anti-supranational position – straining the European talks even further. The day prior to the foreign ministers' conference in The Hague in November 1953, *The New York Times* thus wrote that 'M. Bidault has insisted that the political community should not be of a federal character and should be strictly confined to the coal and steel pool and the proposed European army. It would thus have little supranational power.' The *Times* also referred to Bidault's rejection of any future federal encroachments on the French Union.¹⁹⁰ The latter reflected a second tendency of an intensified intra-French debate concerning the importance of creating a balance between France's European role and its global role, the sticking point always being the colonial question or the French Union.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹ Quoted in Irving, *Christian Democracy in France*, p. 182; see also Kim, 'France's agony between "Vocation Européenne et Mondiale"', pp. 75–7.

¹⁹⁰ 'Continental unity hinging on France', *The New York Times*, 26 November 1953.

¹⁹¹ Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique*, pp. 191–4; Kim, 'France's agony between "Vocation Européenne et Mondiale"', pp. 82–3.

Europe's last chance: Concluding remarks

Since the EPC was ditched in direct consequence of the collapse of the EDC, the EPC negotiations were never formally concluded; and neither did the internal French debate reach a settlement. France was thus stuck agonizing, as Kim puts it, between its '*vocation européenne*' and its '*vocation mondiale*'. And despite Bidault and scores of others' repeated promises, the search for a balance between the two had only produced a frustrating impasse and a growing cleft within France's political establishment. Yet, as our discussion of the European Defence Community – the EPC's older sibling – should have indicated, in the autumn of 1954 there were also signs that this impasse was nearing a resolution. In other words, instead of continuing along a hopeless path of trying to strike a balance between *two* missions framed as separate at best – as in France's European role *and* its global role – but which more often than not were treated as mutually exclusive – as in '*vocation européenne*' or '*vocation mondiale*' – there were indications that many in France, not least the Socialists under Guy Mollet, were getting ready to seriously reconnect with the Eurafrique path of approaching the two as necessarily constituting *one* relation of 'interdependence'. Eurafrique thus inevitably remained on the agenda, the failure of EDC and EPC turning out to be a mere *faux pas* on what many French and European intellectuals and politicians saw as the trail of historical necessity. The scenario was summarized in a book by Pierre Nord entitled *L'Eurafrique, notre dernière chance* (Eurafrique, our last chance) (see Figure 3.6). Politically disunited, economically weak and militarily impossible to defend, Western Europe was crushed between the USSR and the USA, Nord contended:

Only Eurafrique is a complete economic, political and military solution. It is *the* solution for Europe. Economically, Eurafrique may very rapidly become a power equal to the USSR and the US, between which it will ensure the equilibrium. Economically and militarily, Eurafrique will be a nuclear power. In its immense territories, which no enemy can occupy, destroy or obliterate, it will produce atomic bombs. Which is

to say that nobody will attack it. Yet, what we want is peace, nothing but peace.¹⁹²

How this endeavour was to play out during European integration's next big test is the topic of the next chapter.

Figure 3.6 Cover of Pierre Nord, *L'Eurafrrique, notre dernière chance* (Paris: Arthème Fayard, 1955).

¹⁹² Nord, *L'Eurafrrique, notre dernière chance*, pp. 114–15.