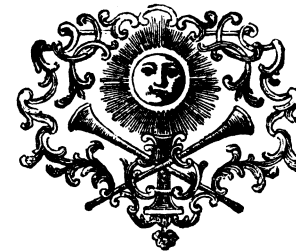


THE FEDERALIST

a political review

To look for a continuation of harmony between a number of independent unconnected sovereignties situated in the same neighbourhood, would be to disregard the uniform course of human events and to set at defiance the accumulated experience of ages.

Hamilton, The Federalist



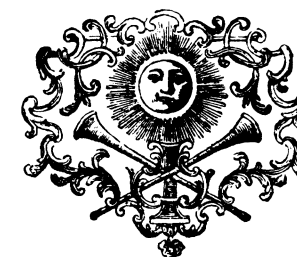
YEAR XLV, 2003, NUMBER 3

THE FEDERALIST

a political review

Editor: Francesco Rossolillo

The Federalist was founded in 1959 by Mario Albertini together with a group of members of the Movimento Federalista Europeo and is now published in English and Italian. The review is based on the principles of federalism, on the rejection of any exclusive concept of the nation and on the hypothesis that the supranational era of the history of mankind has begun. The primary value *The Federalist* aims to serve is peace.



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The principal cause of the failure of the WTO conference in Cancun on 10-14 September 2003 is the strong conflict of interests that put the different countries or blocks of countries represented there in opposition to each other. This means that Cancun was the effect of a crisis in world trade that has been going on for some time and that in turn is the expression of deep imbalances whose nature is both economic and political.

International trade plays a decisive role in the growth of the world economy, and thus in increasing the welfare of the citizens of the more privileged areas of the planet and in improving the development prospects of the more economically marginalised ones. It expands during periods of political stability and contracts when the relations between States become tense and national egoism prevails over co-operation.

The world market is a profoundly different reality from the domestic market of a State. Both are governed by rules. But those which govern the domestic market of a State — which is a market in the strictest sense of the term — are formulated and imposed by a sovereign power. Whilst those which govern the international market — which could be bilateral or multilateral — are voluntary, since they come out of treaties or conventions, or are in any case based on reciprocal trust between the contracting parties. Their effectiveness therefore depends essentially on the goodwill of the States that have accepted them. And it is inevitable that this goodwill is stronger when power relations between the States involved are more clearly delineated. It is true that there are organisations (in particular the WTO) that promote the formation of international trade rules and whose task it is to settle trade disagreements borne out of differences in their interpretation. But these organisations do not have their own power beyond that of the States which comprise them, and therefore they do no more than reflect their power relations: they work when the power relations between States are sufficiently strong to bring about a high degree of convergence between their interests, and they do

not work, or work badly, when there is no such convergence of interests.

Far into the horizon of world history is the growth of a Federal State encompassing the entire planet. When this happens the world market shall become a great domestic market. But before then, as has always happened in the past, a world market will develop only where the economic and political hegemony of one or more superpowers is in a position to make up for the lack of a world State, even if it does so only imperfectly. This has happened in the history of the last two centuries with the hegemony of Great Britain over the rest of the world during the 19th century and with that exercised, albeit to a lesser extent, by the United States, in the decades following the end of the Second World War over that part of the world subject to its control.

It should be noted that, before today, a feature of the States that drove the international economy was having a structurally favourable trade balance, set off by capital exports in the form of portfolio investments, or direct investments, or non-returnable aid to the rest of the world, or to that part of the world on which their hegemony was being exercised, and thus also to developing countries. Here we are reminded of the huge British investments made in the colonies and the decisive aid given by the United States to Western Europe after the Second World War through the Marshall Plan. This means that the hegemony of the superpowers must not only be economic, but at the same time political, and thus create large areas of interdependency to encourage the formation and the respect of common rules.

* * *

Today the world finds itself in a situation of anarchy. Consequently world trade is going through a phase whose possible outcomes are disconcerting and in which one can see the rebirth of the spectre of protectionism. It goes without saying that the current global power order is characterised by the undisputed military and technological domination of the United States. But this domination is not founded on any substantial consensus of allies whose interests converge with those of the hegemonic power. On the contrary, having become subjects, the latter begin to feel a growing unease, which more and more often breaks out into an attitude of open aversion, and is thus fragile and unstable.

This occurs because today the hegemonic power is not able to produce a surplus of wealth within its borders, which can be exported and shared with the other countries in its zone of influence, promoting international

trade and thus increasing global wealth. Today the United States are an economic power in decline. In truth it is a decline that has been going on for some time, because the foreign balance of the USA ceased to show a surplus since 1976, and then more and more markedly so since the Reagan presidency. However, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, and in a particularly dramatic way with the end of the speculative bubble of the 1990s, the rise to power of Bush jr and the war in Afghanistan and Iraq, this tendency has increased alongside the exponential growth of the global responsibilities of the USA. And, contrary to what occurred after the end of the First World War and in the first decades following the end of the Second World War, today they are the biggest debtors in the world: Their trade balance deficit is more than 5 per cent of their Gross National Product and almost half of their National Debt, which is just as large, is held by foreign investors (it must be remembered that the saving propension of American families is zero). And what is even more worrying is that both deficits are increasing at a breathtaking rate. The USA therefore no longer export wealth. They only export war, whilst they *import* wealth, demanding that the rest of the world finance their hegemony by participating in their military enterprises, or by financing them, or through protectionism, or the purchase of US Treasury bonds by foreign investors. Their currency is of course still the one in which most international transactions are carried out and which is kept in the central bank reserves of the other countries. But this only occurs because the Euro does not have a State behind it to give European monetary union sufficient guarantees of stability. In fact the dollar is depreciating, and alongside that its hegemony is weakening. And, if this tendency were to continue, or even increase, it would mean a crisis of confidence and financial disturbances of incalculable proportions. The truth is that the American economic recovery, apparently so vigorous, is extremely unstable because it rests on foreign wealth. Therefore we should not expect the boost for overcoming the current critical phase of the world economy to come from the American locomotive, which in any case no longer exists.

* * *

This certainly does not mean that the American economic (and political) power has ended its historical cycle and that its guiding role in the world economy should be substituted by another actor. The production system of the United States remains a great reality, and it shall

continue to be decisive in increasing the welfare of the world in the decades to come. But the USA shall have to be flanked, in a dialectic of both collaboration and competition, by one or more global power centres whose economies are strongly dynamic and open to the rest of the world and who are able to free the United States from the unsustainable burden that the solitary exercise of their hegemony involves. The USA could thus stop playing the role of policing a world order which in any case they are not able to maintain and start employing the newly freed resources to promote peaceful collaboration, exchange and development within more restricted regional areas.

The actor which seems destined to carry out this task, due to its level of total revenue, to the degree of technological development and the large market it has access to is the European Union, and in particular those countries which make up the Monetary Union. It is true that today there are other areas of the world whose degree of development is just as advanced or whose economy is expanding at a bewildering rate. Observers point especially to the two great economic powers of the Far East, Japan and China. But these are both countries which have great weaknesses. Japan has not yet emerged from a phase of stagnation which has lasted more than a decade. China, although in a phase of strong development, only has a gross domestic product equal to about a quarter of the Japanese for a population 10 times as big. But, above all, both countries are large net exporters and they do not have vast zones of influence in which to invest and promote growth (although it must be remembered that China's imports are increasing and that a Chinese zone of influence in East Asia is underway). For China and Japan therefore the fact that exports exceed imports means mostly a flight of real wealth from the country in exchange for depreciating dollars. And these are largely invested in USA bonds, and thus finance American military power; and partly they are sterilised in the enormous central bank reserves. The reality is that both in China and Japan, behind the favourable trade balance, lies an extremely large productive sector which is strongly protected, destined exclusively to resupply the domestic market and that has an extremely low productivity and cannot be opened to imports from the industrialised world, except in a very limited way, for partly different reasons (the feudal structure and dependency of one part of the economy on political potentates, and the fragility of the banking system, suffocated by enormous and irrecoverable credits, in the case of Japan; the massive presence of the army and the state bureaucracy in the Chinese economy, which is still far from being liberated from the shackles of centralised

control of production). In addition, in the case of Japan, the domestic market is relatively restricted and cannot be integrated with those of neighbouring countries according to the model of the European single market, since Japan is separated from them by a chasm of great diffidence.

* * *

Only Europe remains. But today the member states of the Union and more particularly those in the Euro Zone cannot act as the locomotive of the world economy, in collaboration with the United States, because the presence of both a single currency governed by a single central bank and 12 separate economic policies for which the governments of 12 separate sovereign states are responsible, forces the member countries to adopt measures which prevent the relaunching of their economies. Since they intend to maintain the Union alive without a democratic power to govern it, they must on the one hand reciprocally tie their budgetary policies (through the "Stability Pact") and on the other hand subject themselves to rigid competition control, delegated to the Commission in Brussels. It is well-known that both budgetary restrictions and competition control are subject to continuous bargaining and compromises and are often circumvented or simply disregarded by the Member States. But it is also clear that this cannot go too far or else the same European currency may become a victim of the irresponsible behaviours of the governments. These governments are thus curbed by these limiting conditions which is a significant brake on development. And this can only prevent the European economy from rebounding and thus boosting the world economy. And so Europe is vegetating at the margins of the international economic (as well as political) equilibrium, compromising at the same time the welfare of its citizens and the development of world trade.

The economic growth of Europe is prevented by its division. Its enormous potentials are sterilised by the lack of a political European power to ensure the political control of the Monetary Union, to create the conditions for an expansionary economic policy and to constitute an active pole for a more stable and evolutionary global economic and political equilibrium.

The federal unification of Europe would be the clearest signal of a radical conversion of the current catastrophic tendency towards an increase in protectionism and instability. It is a fact that certain protectionist encrustations, such as the common agricultural policy could not be

eliminated overnight. But they could make important steps towards their own liberalisation. In any case the birth of a new European state reality, albeit initially limited to a relatively restricted core, would give a strong boost to the birth of an open and peaceful world equilibrium, and would thus favour a strong growth of international trade. In a climate marked by stability and co-operation the problem represented by the surpluses of China and Japan could be resolved not by restricting exports or trying to impose an appreciation of their currencies, but by helping them to create the internal conditions for increasing their imports, and for increasing their wealth and that of the rest of the world. A federal European government could play an important role in promoting the development and unity of the countries of the Middle East and could put itself forward as the active mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is a permanent factor of paralysis for the entire region. It must be remembered that the success, albeit little more than symbolic, of Chirac, Schröder and Blair in their Iran mission was in any case a significant indicator of the great need that the region has for Europe. In an equilibrium of this kind the space available to the other potential poles of world economy in order to boost their productive development and to resolve their serious domestic problems would increase. And Europe, creating a climate of effective co-operation, could only make a strong positive contribution to the protection of the environment and the progressive improvement of working conditions in developing economies without prejudice to competitiveness, as well as the economic takeoff, even via some type of *asymmetric protectionism*, for African economies.

But the current European Union does not have the necessary instruments to reach this goal. In order to free itself from the restrictions caused by its division and to carry forward a great economic policy plan aimed at a strong encouragement of scientific research, vigorous technological development and the creation of a vast infrastructural network, it is necessary that the will to stop the current drift towards anarchy and the increasing inability to act becomes concretely manifest at the heart of Europe. What is needed, in place of the current weak confederation, paralysed by the need to permanently resort to complex and sterile compromises, and thus one which is condemned to economic stagnation and technological backwardness, is the birth of a true democratic power, peaceful but strong, able to mobilise the resources of its own economy and the consensus of its own citizens. This would be a power that can only be born within the restricted framework of the founding countries, but, starting from this framework will allow the economies of the other

countries of the Union to take off within the sphere of the great single market, and will enlarge progressively until it reaches the borders of the current Union and the larger one that is about to be born.

There is no other road to take to reinvigorate world trade and to facilitate the development of the poor and marginalised countries. Nor is there any other way to stop the perverse spiral of anarchy and protectionism which is allowing the re-emergence of threatening spectres of a past we had all long considered to be over.

The Federalist

The Battle for Europe. The Example and Ideas of Mario Albertini

GIOVANNI VIGO

Many men come up against events, issues and situations during their lifetime that drive them to denounce the scandal of war, oppression and injustice. But few go beyond experiencing moral outrage or declaring solidarity, and fewer still actually strive to eradicate those scandals by becoming political militants.

Militants need to be cool-headed and rationally aware that high and mighty goals are nothing but hot air unless the means for achieving them has been identified. However, becoming a federalist militant also requires a sort of “conversion.” It means relinquishing support for culture and politics at the national level, which in the long run clouds judgement, and consequently pursuing the gradual widespread acceptance of federalism.

This is precisely the path followed by Albertini, whose tireless down-to-earth commitment and deep thirst for knowledge have made him a landmark figure for federalism.

He began his career as a federalist militant proper in 1953, in the midst of the battle for the European Defense Community. His experience was nothing like Paul’s conversion on the road to Damascus, however. Rather, it came at the end of a long and painful process. Like many young men of his generation, Albertini had endured difficult times, first under a fascist dictatorship then in the vain search for a national pathway towards Italy’s regeneration. During the war he had realized that victory for Italy would have meant the triumph of fascism, and as an anti-fascist he later commented: “I wished for Italy’s defeat, and this was a terrible sentiment for a young man to have.”¹ In his decision, that was both political and moral, Albertini was supported by numerous distinguished personalities: “A number of intellectuals, and even Croce himself,” stated Albertini in an interview, “say they hope Italy will be defeated. However,

it was actually Croce... who later recommended rejecting ratification of the peace treaty because it would have jeopardized Italy’s image. This is just one example, but in general, what happened was that few, if any, really broke the pact with Italy that tacitly derives from being born in this country. For me, this hatred of Italy meant freedom from the bonds that tie a person to a country only by virtue of being born there.”²

Having distanced himself at such an early stage from nationalism, Albertini was able to judge his political experiences in the immediate wake of the second world war more fairly. His supra-national leanings allowed him to clearly perceive Italy’s limitations, but he could not yet see Europe as a viable political alternative. In this regard, his respectful disagreement with Benedetto Croce was significant: “The ideal of Italy and its national dignity,” he wrote in 1947, “is dead; we view it as respectable in an old man who shared that ideal during his lifetime; however, it is a dead letter, entirely devoid of historic relevance, when recalled now, to fight today’s battle.”³

But somewhat contradictorily, Albertini was still committed to restoring democracy in Italy through the renewal of its national parties.⁴

It took further deep introspection to get through this period, and above all, a few major disappointments from Italy’s national politics. Some time later, recalling the turmoil of those years and especially the deadlock that Italy was gripped in, Albertini wrote: “Things were going nowhere. Thus I began to realize that this plan was... structurally flawed. If Italy was to be fully democratized, the approach could not be organizational (i.e. the transformation and unification of the country’s left wing parties). What was needed was a compelling political event of such proportions as to turn ideas and stances upside down, and bring about, as a consequence, a complete renewal of the parties. That was when I realized that the major event that Italy was waiting for was the unification of Europe. Europe as a starting point, and not, as most people saw it, as the culmination of the renewal process.”⁵

Albertini had joined the European Federalist Movement back in 1945, but as he later recounted, he considered it to be more of a cultural organization than a political one.⁶ In 1953 the European Federalist Movement - MFE struck him for the first time as being “the only political organization of strategic significance.” Having finally come to this conclusion, Albertini had no more time to waste. He wrote to Spinelli, went to visit him and thus embarked on a career as a federalist militant.⁷ That same year, the Movement was in a frenzy over the European Defense Community. There were hundreds of chapters and fifty thousand mem-

bers all pushing for the creation of the EDC and its inevitable corollary, political community. Success appeared to be within reach, but in early 1954 the first complications started to emerge and on 30 August, the French national assembly voted against the ratification of the Treaty, and thus all hopes for a European Federation within the space of a few years were shattered. The EDC's collapse was not just a temporary setback on the road towards European unity; the tide had turned and the mood that had allowed federalists to come so close to success had soured.

After the havoc wrought by the war, Europe's national states had got their economies back on their feet and restored a modicum of solidity to their institutions. With the ECSC, the seeds were sown for lasting cooperation. Nothing else seemed to be needed to ensure the prosperity of Europe's citizens, much less a European Federation. Another chapter in Europe's history had ended and if federalists wanted to pursue their battle, it would have to be in harmony with the new political climate. In an article that appeared in *Europa federata* in October 1954, Spinelli set out the conclusions he had reached after the fall of the EDC: "We do not know if federal European unity will ever materialize, but we know for sure that it will never materialize unless we admit that the national political horizon is ruinous. Favorable conditions may develop in six months, perhaps a year, or ten years: it is not up to us to decide. But if we are to make the most of those conditions and at last break the spell of national sovereignty, then there have to be among us those who will tirelessly denounce this evil, and reveal the deceitfulness of each and every political party in accepting the national arena as the normal arena for their activities, and making promises that they cannot keep if they remain in this arena."⁸

Such a role could only be played by a revolutionary movement which would persevere despite momentary defeats, and remain in the battlefield, ready to resume the fight where it had left off. Thus began what in the federalist tradition is known as the "new path."

What needed leveraging, Spinelli explained, was no longer Europe's national governments, who had by their actions, if not by their words, relinquished federalism, but rather Europe's citizens. Once mobilized, people would pressure their governments into giving up sovereignty in areas in which they were no longer able to exercise it effectively. These considerations did not challenge the political motives and ideals that informed Spinelli's decisions in 1943, but forced the Movement to reconsider its role and its relationship with power. At the time of the EDC, it was able to act as everything from an "advisor to the prince" to a lobby

group. After the collapse of the EDC, the MFE knew it had to embark on a different journey but no one as yet knew when the journey would end.

This was a time for patience and meditation: patience, because the conditions no longer existed — as they did at the time of the EDC — to engage the enemy in a decisive battle; now the way had to be paved for popular mobilization once the time had come for shifting the balance from separate nations to a united Europe. And meditation, because the political and cultural horizons of the Movement had to be broadened so it could more effectively fight against the forces of reaction that were ensconced within society, political parties, trade unions, the press, among the intelligentsia and above all, in governments. Having overcome the trauma of the EDC failing, governments had immediately made short shrift of the feeble federalist aims they had all too briefly entertained.

Mario Albertini was the right person to take up the challenge.

* * *

The "new path" demanded an exhausting degree of commitment from federalist militants. Their task was to try and patch up the sections that had survived the collapse of the EDC; prepare and organize the European People's Congress (an action that would involve European citizens directly by asking them to vote for candidates to the Congress in a sort of primary election); devise new plans for recruiting and training militants who could no longer be party-members or national politicians, but rather "a group of free men who, flying in the face of a natural tendency to accept and adapt to the status quo for to obtain success and further their career, were instead determined to fight for the federal unification of Europe."⁹ A new generation of militants had to be formed, and the right conditions created for fostering the birth of this group.

Spinelli openly tackled the issue in a paper he wrote in 1956. "Federalists," he observed, "have not created a hardcore group of militants in their midst. I'm not referring to the modern usage of the term as it refers to low-ranking envelope-stuffing propagandists. The militants that any organization needs if it is to become a real political force, are men driven by political passion, with the ambition to mean something important to their contemporaries, and who have decided to merge their passion and ambition with aims of the organization they belong to.

Not all members of a movement are militants and if political organizations were made up exclusively of militants they would rapidly turn into sects. However, the members who are totally committed and are

gambling their political future on the success of their action — those militants form the backbone of every organization.”¹⁰

Spinelli realized that for federalists the road was going to be uphill all the way; he believed that the new generation of militants needed to be full-time politicians, living *for* politics naturally, but also *off* politics (i.e. making a living from politics); they needed to gain a sense of fulfillment from dedicating themselves heart and soul to the cause of European unity. Only thus could enough determination be drummed up to stay in the field until the final victory. Instead, Albertini had a different idea of the figure and commitment of the militant. Recalling his clash with Spinelli, he wrote: “I wanted... men who could see the contradiction that exists today between values and actions as a personal issue. Militants who are professional politicians, but are occupied only part-time, and without pay; people who have enough income to live off regardless of whether or not they have power.”¹¹

Having defined the profile of the federalist militant, the next step was to highlight and leverage the motives that were leading certain people to look beyond the confines of nationalism. For Albertini, there were several pathways towards European unification: one was moral outrage, over national states denying the values of democracy and equality and “forcing one to consider the men of other states as foreigners, if necessary to be killed;” intellectual dissent was another, stemming from the realization that national states were no longer able to solve the great problems of our society; and finally political will, in a determination to focus not just on the issues at hand but also the strategy for solving them.¹² To Albertini’s way of thinking, the European cause needed militants capable of combining all three characteristics: moral outrage, intellectual dissent and political will.

But society does not steer men naturally towards federalism. “No one becomes a federalist alone, spontaneously, because federalism — like all new things at their first appearance, does not exist in the world of the established culture. The normal channels for disseminating culture (schools, the press, etc.) invariably adopt the national viewpoint, and consider the world as comprised of liberals, democrats, socialists, communists, christian-socialists, fascists, and so on... In this context, one becomes a federalist only if the circumstances of one’s life bring about a sort of conversion.”¹³ Proselytism involved two tasks for the federalist militant the first to recruit, the second to train. Recruitment was in some ways the harder of the two because it required reversing the way people regarded not just the politics but also the history of their country, the very

fabric of their identity. “The current state and recent history of our countries,” wrote Albertini in 1959, “are leading many individuals to consider the issue of European unity. But they remain militants in name only, or continue to support the national state because the national perspective has been imprinted upon them since infancy in the form of sentiments and images, and most of the stimuli and incentives of today tend to reinforce that perspective. As a result, even when torn by the desire for European unity, national sentiment tends to prevail until it is eventually uprooted by prolonged contact with federalist environments. Therefore our recruitment policy must entail continuously attracting new people, and giving them the opportunity to gain meaningful new experiences.”¹⁴

The second task, training, required uncommon effort on the part of both veteran militants and newcomers to militancy. Militants are not born, they are trained through political struggle embedded in study and discussion. “It might seem strange,” Albertini wrote in 1959, “that to succeed in any political enterprise it is necessary to build the struggle upon a foundation of serious study, with rules and structures that bear a closer resemblance to those of schools of philosophy than political associations. Yet, in all revolutionary enterprises something of this nature has always existed, because the hardest challenge for the revolutionary is precisely that of making the best use of rationality to direct the struggle towards a new objective in a world in which habit, conventional wisdom and clichés steer men towards old objectives.”¹⁵ Only men who have developed unusual strength of character and powers of reason will develop the skills of the pilot, and indicate the way ahead knowing that for long stretches of time their work will remain unacknowledged, but also realizing that if they can speak up when crucial decisions have to be made, their role can be a decisive one.

The activist’s work “behind the scenes” can only be carried out by people who do not depend on others for their survival, and within an organization whose independence is ensured by the self-financing of its members.¹⁶ If militants wanted to maintain independent judgments and actions, they should not have to accept compromises of any sort. Niccolò Machiavelli effectively explained the fundamental reason for this behavior in Chapter 6 of *The Prince*. After stressing that “there is nothing more difficult to execute, nor more dubious of success, no more dangerous to administer than to introduce a new order of things,” Machiavelli concluded by saying: “It is necessary, however, if we desire to examine this subject thoroughly, to observe whether these innovators act on their own

or are dependent on others; that is, if they are forced to beg or are able to use power in conducting their affairs. In the first case, they always come to a bad end and never accomplish anything; but when they depend on their own resources and can use power, then only seldom do they find themselves in peril.”¹⁷ Such stalwart militants would ensure not only the survival of the Federalist Movement, but that it would play a significant role in European unification, and safeguard the federalist ideology until the goal of a world federal government is attained.

* * *

Militant federalism is a revolutionary experience aiming to change the course of human history. It is not always easy to live up to this challenge. Many fall into the trap of confusing wishes with reality. Others mistake “the possible for the real, in other words they define policies based on situations that do not yet exist, only because they might materialize some time in the imagined future.”¹⁸ To escape these perils, reference must be made constantly to the prevailing political situation, i.e. it is the situation of power of a state that determines whether a political strategy is feasible and has some chance of success or not. Albertini lived by this rule, which spared the Federalist Movement from embarking on utopian or ill-judged campaigns.

In the early Sixties all the hopes that had been placed in the European Peoples’ Congress and its ability to call a Constituent assembly under mounting popular pressures, had been dashed. Now what? For Spinelli the unification process could only be revived by engaging in a national political struggle.¹⁹ Albertini believed otherwise. If the aim was to call a Constituent assembly, then first it had to be decided “in which situation of power is it possible to decide to call the assembly.” In a concise analysis of the issue, he wrote: “The European constituent assembly implies not just a change of government, not just a shifting of powers within a state, but the fall of many states and the birth of a new state in a new area... We are already living in a European confederation, in a European unity based on the eclipse of national sovereignties and the need for European states to cooperate closely in the political and economic fields. This is grounds enough to claim that a real basis already exists for the struggle to achieve institutional unity.”²⁰

The situation of power thus lent itself to a struggle for European Federation. But what concrete action could federalists undertake to grasp all the opportunities offered by the process?

This was not an easy question to answer because it was not a make-or-break situation, as it was for the EDC, where it was a matter of fighting, not deciding. After the early success of the Common Market, Europeans were looking forward to a long period of prosperity. In many countries, primarily Italy and Germany, economic integration had brought about a veritable “economic miracle.” Critical views received very bad press and the MFE’s unyielding stance was regarded as extremism not only by governments and national political parties, but even by Spinelli himself, who was by now moving in quite a different direction.

In 1962 Albertini had become the unofficial leader of the Movement; together with the federalists who had chosen to follow him, he was preparing to embark on a new campaign, the voluntary Census of the European federal population. At the Lyon Congress in the month of February of that same year, Albertini ended his report by proposing “a ten-year campaign to collect signatures in favor of ‘a majority for the Constituent assembly of the European people’, for the practical aim of using a means of action within everyone’s reach, and as such able to be developed everywhere.”²¹ This was a campaign that demanded the fierce determination of chapters and individual militants alike, and consisted in mobilizing organized Europeanism in the shape of the pro-European and Federalist movements, plus potential advocates — people aware that the national state had breathed its last — and Europeanists at large, i.e. those who realized the impact European unity had had on individual citizens.²²

Europe’s unification process had now developed to the point that an enterprise could be undertaken to raise popular consensus for Europe and pave the way for the final crucial decisions. It was still early days though: first public opinion had to be taught how to make its influence felt, once the time came. “Once Europe has a real government, every citizen will be able, by voting, to strengthen this or that European party, to support the European policy that best corresponds to their ideals and interests. But in today’s Europe, which does not yet exist as a democratic organization, all people can do is state their support for European unity. So for the time being, this is the only way Europe’s real power can emerge (in politics, strength lies in votes and attitudes): i.e. through people declaring they are for Europe, and the sum total of these declarations.”²³

In Albertini’s mind, the Census represented the only opportunity to reach the aims that the European People’s Congress had failed to achieve.²⁴ In 1966 he wrote: “Once we are closer to handing over power from the national states to the European Federation, and the need arises for a European partner for this constituent operation, the fact of having

already established an organic link between federalists on the one side and the population, the parties, the trade unions and so forth on the other, will facilitate the organization of the European People's Congress — based on the Census.”²⁵

Despite hopes that it would “spread like wildfire,” the Census turned out to be a great disappointment. Like the EPC before it, what was lacking was the support of a close-knit network of local organizations. But both ventures played a significant role within and outside the MFE: internally, the EPC and the Census provided an invaluable training ground for a new generation of militants determined to undertake or continue federalism's long journey through the wilderness. And externally, they provided proof that it was in fact possible to maintain direct contact with the local population and nurture the principle that economic integration alone would not automatically lead Europe to political union.

There has always been a very clear understanding in the MFE that the economy is not a strong enough driver to create a new state: it also takes a constituent act. Federalists were always and are still well aware that to fully succeed, economic unity also requires political unity. The first opportunity enter the fray and place Europe on the road towards political unity came at the end of the transition period of the Common Market, when everything came to a head and the political leadership was forced to take a stance. “Europe,” writes Albertini in 1967, “is no longer the mere historic design that it was at the beginning of our struggle. It has become an economic reality with a complex administration, and a growing political necessity. But alongside this powerful European reality there is a European parliament still devoid of a constituency. In asking for it to be elected, we are demanding something that everyone but the enemies of Europe welcome. Now we must maximize this sentiment... Of course it is not just a question of demanding the direct election of the European parliament, but rather of embarking on a slow and difficult process that will eventually lead to this goal... In practice, it means singling out individual objectives that are within reach along the pathway toward electing a European parliament, so as to bring about concrete decisions and not just Sunday sermons.”²⁶

With this decision the MFE abandoned the extremist approach (which would have meant calling the Constituent assembly at the start of the process) and instead opted for a strategy of constitutional gradualism. Neither the EPC nor the Census had been able to oblige governments to call a constituent Assembly — not because the idea behind the strategy was mistaken, but due to “the extreme difficulty of calling a Constituent

assembly at the start of the process, with the parties still so closely bound to national powers.”²⁷ To prepare for the decision, it was thus necessary to set in motion a process where successive constituent acts would force governments to hand over part of their sovereignty to Europe.

At the “Congress of Europe” organized by the European Movement in February 1976, Willy Brandt stated that the European Parliament that would be elected in three years' time would have to become Europe's permanent constituent Assembly.²⁸ The image conjured up by Brandt was very appealing but it suggested a process of indefinite duration, and as such received a lukewarm reception. Conversely, Albertini's idea of constitutional gradualism set definite goals based on the existing situation of power in Europe, for which a clear strategy could be defined.

The rationale inspiring constitutional gradualism was not unlike the thinking that had driven Jean Monnet to draft the Memorandum addressed to Robert Schuman proposing the creation of the ECSC. After realizing that nothing but blind alleys were being met across the full spectrum of the political front, Monnet went on to comment that: “There is only way out of such a situation: a concrete and resolute action on a limited but decisive point, that will bring about a fundamental change in relation to that point and help to modify the very terms of the problems as a whole.”²⁹ In Albertini's view, the point that would change the whole scenario was the direct election of a European parliament, because it would plant the first seeds of democracy in the unification process and shift the political scene from the national to the European stage.

However, opposition from several countries had to be overcome. But nothing would prevent nations that had at least verbally stated their agreement, from electing their members of the European parliament by universal suffrage. And this had to be the starting point. On 11 June 1969, a voter initiative went to the Italian Senate calling for the direct election of Italian delegates to the European parliament. Two similar proposals had been presented the previous year to the French national assembly. These initiatives put the problem of European elections in the spotlight, and influenced the decision of the French President, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, who on 13 May 1974 announced he wanted to “adopt or have the Community adopt an initiative to unshackle Europe and stop its dismemberment.” In October of the same year, the French Foreign Minister proposed the election by universal suffrage of the European parliament, which was adopted at the Rome Summit of 1-2 December 1975.³⁰ This would go down in history as the MFE's first strategic victory.

The initiative of the French government had arrived at a particularly

sensitive time for European life. The collapse of the international monetary system and the oil shocks were causing increasing economic turmoil, and the very existence of the Community was threatened. The direct election of the European parliament would strengthen ties between Europe and her citizens, but this would not suffice alone. Only the creation of a European government could solve the serious problems that had emerged. However, even when faced with such traumatic events, Europe's national governments still failed to go the full nine yards.³¹ The fabric of constitutional gradualism still needed to be patiently woven by mobilizing efforts to sharpen the contradictions in the process and inject greater courage into national governments. Monetary union seemed to be the most promising place to resume the battle.

As early as the day after the first monetary storm, Albertini had emphasized that currency could represent the slipperiest spot on the slope leading to Europe. "However irrational it may seem, there must be acceptance and support," he wrote in 1973, "for gradual monetary unification before, rather than after, the creation of a European political power, because those leading the process of implementation... are not behaving rationally... If someone can be prevailed upon to become committed to something (monetary union) that implies a certain requirement (political power), then perhaps that someone will end up having to create it whether they want to or not."³²

Having endorsed this gradual approach, the MFE first supported the creation of the European monetary system, to prevent the Community crisis from turning into a total debacle that would have obstructed further progress. Then it encouraged Spinelli's action in convincing the European parliament to vote on a treaty-cum-constitution that envisaged the creation of a "partial" federal government with competence only for economic matters; and lastly, after the heads of state and government rejected the treaty, the MFE backed the single market that would be a prelude to the single European currency. On 15 February 1992, Europe's heads of state and government met in Maastricht to decide on the single currency. This was another strategic victory for federalism.

After striving for decades to bring in the election by universal suffrage of the European parliament and the single currency, at last the foundations were laid for the last decisive step. The European union now had an elected parliament: it was not much more than symbolic, since a parliament without a state has no effective power, but it was a compelling symbol nonetheless, because it strengthened people's ties with Europe. After Maastricht, there would be a single currency and a European central

bank, which represented another two crucial steps towards the future federal state.

The process of creating a single currency was accelerated by the upheaval generated by the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the bipolarism that had prevailed after the second world war. Events on a scale such as this could not help but affect the fate of Europe. Wouldn't European governments — reeling from events that were reshaping the world balance and underlining more forcefully than ever before "the destructiveness of any policy on a national horizon" — feel an urgent need to unite and decide, once and for all, to take the federal bull by the horns. Instead, their response was half-hearted: some saw ties strengthening thanks to the single currency, but none had the courage to tackle the twin problems of defense and foreign policy, in other words, the creation of a European state. "Political union," wrote Albertini in 1990, "is still largely viewed not only as something distinct from economic union (for the sectors actually affected), but also as an enterprise bound to be slow moving and gradual, like the process that led us to the threshold of the single currency. However, this concept is entirely misguided. In the field of economics it is perfectly possible to move by degrees from a national situation towards an increasingly less national and more European situation, with a government and currency needing to be put in place only at the end of the process. On the other hand, in the area of foreign policy — i.e. primarily defense and the armed forces — particularly if separate from the economic domain, such a gradual process is impossible. Whatever combinations have been adopted, there is simply no getting away from forming alliances, be they looser or more formally structured. In short, invariably within a national framework, but never in a European situation that might be consolidated and ultimately materialize into a European political power. With this approach there can be no way out of the national context, as all those who recognize the difference between federation and confederation readily understand."³³

In point of fact, the heads of state and government did acknowledge that it would take more than a single currency to solve the problem of European unity. The Maastricht Treaty does not only refer to the euro, but also citizenship, foreign policy, defense and justice. "Currency, citizenship, sociality, foreign policy, defense," observed Albertini, "are all parts of a plan for creating a European state. The question is now whether the outcome will be successful or not; whether economic and political contrasts will generate problems; but there is definitely a plan, put together by Europe's governments, to create European unity by 1999."³⁴

However, the existence of a plan does not mean success is necessarily around the corner. The intergovernmental Conferences staged to iron out the problems that Maastricht left pending did little more than give the Union's structures a minor touch-up. The recent Convention on the future of Europe did little more. But federalists shouldn't be surprised: they've always known that governments would try to put off that fateful last step for as long as humanly possible and yield only under unendurable pressure.

As repeatedly demonstrated, the overwhelming majority of European citizens are in favor of European unity. It is — or should be — obvious that the national state as such has reached crisis point, and it is just as obvious that there is “a need to unify Europe” because “the problem is not one of choosing between independence or union, but between joining together and surviving or staying apart and disappearing.”³⁵ The challenges of history demand a federal response; governments are instead racking their brains to come up with ever more imaginative ways to avoid the one move that would solve every problem: the creation of a European federal state.

It is in this very situation that the federalist vanguard can play a decisive role in indicating the only avenue that can lead to a solution to the problem, decrying without hesitation all false alternatives, highlighting the political framework in which the constituent strategy is truly feasible and, lastly, calling upon the decision makers i.e. governments, to cross the line separating federation from confederation. These are the tasks to be tackled, despite the difficulties and opposition that have always stood in the way and will continue to do so.

In the early days of his career as a militant Albertini thus addressed his fellow federalists: “Our difficulties... are no different to those faced by all new things, whether in politics or life in general. The old saying that patience is a revolutionary virtue applies to us, too.”³⁶ But patience is not the same as simply sitting back and waiting for something to happen. It must be viewed as total dedication to the cause for which one has decided to fight. Friedrich Schiller once wrote: “What matters most is perseverance: it not only provides a livelihood but also gives life its unique value.”³⁷ Overlooking Schiller's reference to livelihood, the words of the German poet provide the perfect portrait of the lifestyle and work of Mario Albertini.

NOTES

¹ Mario Albertini, *L'Europa secondo me* (collection of interviews on Europe with pro-European politicians, academics and associations, compiled by the Lions Club, Lombardy Region), s.l. 1979.

² “Nazionalismo e alternativa europea. Intervista a Mario Albertini”, in *Il Dibattito Federalista*, X (1994), p. 37.

³ Mario Albertini, “L'amore dell'Italia nell'Europa”, in *Lo Stato Moderno*, IV (1947), p. 411.

⁴ The political commitment of Mario Albertini between 1945 and 1953 has been briefly illustrated by Daniela Preda in “All'avanguardia dell'Europa. I primi vent'anni del Movimento Federalista a Pavia”, in *Bollettino della Società Pavese di Storia Patria*, LXXXV (1985), pp. 153-215 and, more recently, by Flavio Terranova in *Il federalismo di Mario Albertini*, Milan, Giuffrè, 2003, pp. 2-6. Albertini emphasized this viewpoint in the preface to his essay entitled *Il Risorgimento e l'unità europea*, Naples, Guida, 1979, pp. 7-10.

⁵ Mario Albertini, “Un eroe della ragione e della politica”, in *L'Europa di Altiero Spinelli*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1994, p. 18.

⁶ Mario Albertini, “Un eroe della ragione”, *cit.*, p. 18.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 18. According to Daniela Preda (*op. cit.*, p. 160), Albertini was already active in the Pavia chapter of the MFE during the previous year. A letter dated 1 July 1952 and addressed to Aurelio Bernardi was written on MFE letterhead.

⁸ Altiero Spinelli, “Nuovo corso”, in *Europa federata*, October 1954, reprinted in Altiero Spinelli, *Una strategia per gli Stati Uniti d'Europa*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1989, pp. 152-3.

⁹ Francesco Rossolillo, “The Role of Federalists”, in *The Federalist*, XLIV (2002), p. 184.

¹⁰ Altiero Spinelli, “Le ragioni ideali del Congresso del popolo europeo”, in *Id.*, *L'Europa non cade dal cielo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1960, p. 254.

¹¹ Mario Albertini, “Il federalismo militante. Vecchio e nuovo modo di fare politica”, in *Il Dibattito Federalista*, I (1985), pp. 1-3, reprinted in Mario Albertini, *Una rivoluzione pacifica. Dalle nazioni all'Europa*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1999, p. 442. Commenting on these differences of opinion Albertini wrote: “It might seem that Spinelli refused to come to terms with this decision — and thus the significance of the MFE's and GFE's actions after 1960 — perhaps because he never actually cast off his illusions of the time.” (*ibidem*)

¹² Mario Albertini, “I tre gradi dei militanti”, in *Europa federata*, VIII (1956), reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, *cit.*, p. 367.

¹³ Mario Albertini, “Il reclutamento e la formazione dei militanti per le nuove lotte del federalismo”, in *L'Unità Europea*, November 1979 (supplement), reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, *cit.*, pp. 419-20.

¹⁴ Mario Albertini, “Esame tecnico della lotta per l'Europa”, in *Il Federalista*, I (1959), reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, *cit.*, p. 385. The short chapters making up this text had been published earlier separately in *Popolo europeo* as reflections on the work of militants.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 398.

¹⁶ This principle did not rule out *ad hoc* funding for specific actions. Advertising campaigns that had to be run in the press due to the silence surrounding the undertakings of the Federalist Movement even when they involved crucial decisions such as the elections by universal suffrage of the European Parliament or the single currency, were financed partly by militants and partly by voluntary contributions from sympathizers who were not card-holding members of the MFE but who supported its decisions. The same goes for the

major events promoted by the MFE during summit meetings between heads of state and government.

¹⁷ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. by Peter Bondanella, Oxford-New York, Oxford University Press, 1984, pp. 21-2.

¹⁸ Mario Albertini, "Pregare o forzare", in *Europa federata*, X (1957), reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, cit., p. 94.

¹⁹ On 24 September 1961, in a letter to the Lombardy Regional Committee of the MFE, Spinelli acknowledged that organized federalism was going through a serious crisis. In the same letter he expressed his intention to go to the Lyon Congress in the following February with a proposal for an alliance with the forces of democratic progress to participate in national political elections in three suitably chosen cities (D. Preda, *op. cit.*, p. 210).

²⁰ Mario Albertini, "La crisi di orientamento politico del federalismo europeo", in *Il Federalista*, III (1961), reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, cit., p. 111.

²¹ Mario Albertini, "Rapporto al Congresso di Lione", in *Le Fédéraliste*, IV (1962), reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, cit., p. 129.

²² Mario Albertini, *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, cit., p. 128.

²³ Mario Albertini, "Il Censimento volontario del popolo federale europeo", in *Giornale del Censimento*, II (1966), No. 3, reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, cit., pp. 147-8.

²⁴ Mario Albertini, "Rapporto al MFE", in *Giornale del Censimento*, I (1965), No. 1, reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, cit., p. 143.

²⁵ Mario Albertini, "Il Censimento volontario del popolo federale europeo", *cit.*, p. 150.

²⁶ Mario Albertini, "Un piano d'azione a medio termine", in *Federalismo Europeo*, I (1967), No. 7-8, reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, cit., pp. 156-7.

²⁷ Mario Albertini, "Tesi per il XIV Congresso nazionale MFE", in Movimento federalista europeo, *Atti del XIV Congresso. Roma 2-5 marzo 1969*, Pavia, EDIF, s.d., reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, cit., p. 303.

²⁸ Luigi Vittorio Majocchi, Francesco Rossolillo, *Il Parlamento europeo. Significato storico di un'elezione*, Naples, Guida, 1979, p. 105.

²⁹ "Il 'Memorandum Monnet' del 3 maggio 1950", in Mario Albertini, *Il federalismo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1993, p. 273.

³⁰ Luigi Vittorio Majocchi, Francesco Rossolillo, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-3.

³¹ On 27 August 1974 French citizens received a very significant message from Valéry Giscard d'Estaing: "Europe must not count on no one other than itself to organize itself, and the modern world will never be truly modern until the map ceases to show Europe as a lacerated area. This is the reason why over the coming months France will undertake initiatives towards the political organization of Europe. There are — I know — all manner of alibis for not forging a political Europe, but there will be no alibi for those who have been called to this appointment with history, as our generation has been called, and who have returned empty-handed. Over the coming weeks France will propose a series of measures regarding the relaunching of the economic-monetary Union of Europe; however, it is my intention to address the Heads of state and government of European countries, our partners and our friends, to propose coming together to reflect, during France's presidency of the Community, on the timing and methods for realizing the political union of Europe". (cf. Luigi Vittorio Majocchi, Francesco Rossolillo, *op. cit.* pp. 100-1). It is unsettling to see how the perceived gravity of the events was not matched by any concrete initiative to achieve political union.

³² Mario Albertini, "Il problema monetario e il problema politico europeo", in *Studi in onore di Carlo Emilio Ferri*, Milan, Giuffrè, 1973, reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, cit., p. 174.

³³ Mario Albertini, "Moneta europea e unione politica", in *L'Unità Europea*, September 1990, reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, cit., p. 322.

³⁴ Mario Albertini, "L'Europa dopo Maastricht: gli aspetti politici", in *L'Europa dopo Maastricht. Problemi e prospettive*, Milan, Giuffrè, 1994, reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, cit., pp. 337-8.

³⁵ Luigi Einaudi, "Sul tempo della ratifica della CED" in *Lo scrittoio del presidente (1948-1955)*, Turin, Einaudi, 1956, p. 89.

³⁶ Mario Albertini, "La formula del Movimento", in *Europa federata*, VIII (1955), reprinted in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, cit., p. 351.

³⁷ Thomas Mann, "Saggio su Schiller", in *Nobiltà dello spirito e altri saggi*, Milan, Mondadori, 1997, p. 461.

ALTIERO SPINELLI SPEECH AT FIRST UEF CONGRESS *

We cannot and do not wish to conceal from ourselves that the only countries capable of taking European initiatives at present are those in the Western or, one may say, the American part of the continent. Nothing is sadder than the fact that the ideal Europe, the cradle of law and liberty, constitutes only part of the geographical area of Europe. What is more, that area is certain to shrink, and European civilisation to become a mere historical memory, unless we can at least unite what at present remains of it.

European initiatives are possible where American influence preponderates, mainly because in most of Western Europe democratic institutions continue to exist, albeit shakily, while in Eastern Europe they have completely disappeared. But the opportunities also depend to a large extent on America's own position. The Americans are confronted by alternatives of historical importance and have not yet chosen between them. America cannot return to prewar isolationism: she is irrevocably involved in European politics. But that involvement may develop in many different ways according to the complicated interplay of actions and reactions between the American situation and that of Europe.

* Upon the suggestion of John Pinder, honorary president of the Union of European Federalists and president of the Federal Trust, we publish an extract of the speech delivered by Altiero Spinelli on August 27th, 1947 at the first meeting of the UEF, and published in Altiero Spinelli, *Dagli Stati sovrani agli Stati Uniti d'Europa*, Florence, La Nuova Italia, 1950 and, translated by Pinder, published again in the 3rd volume of *Documents on the History of European Integration*, edited by Walter Lippgens. This speech, besides demonstrating Spinelli's considerable wisdom, is particularly topical at the present stage reached by the process of European unification, in which the need to create a federation with the capacity to conduct an effective and independent foreign and defence policy is patently clear.

The US must maintain their high standard of living and level of production, and cannot do so if the rest of the world is plunged in poverty. Hence American policy tends to be opposed to reserved markets, closed economies, national planning and autarky. America has an interest in European prosperity and may promise aid to European countries on the sole condition that they succeed in developing a rich, open and orderly economic system. This is the rationale of the Marshall Plan, an opportunity that the European democracies must grasp and turn to their advantage. However, all the Americans can do on these lines is to offer us the opportunity. They can accept the formation of a peaceful and prosperous European union that would be economically useful to them while reducing their military commitments in the old continent and diminishing the area of contact and conflict with the Soviet Union. But they cannot themselves create such a union, and if the Europeans cannot seize the opportunity the US will be more and more tempted to move from the liberal alternative to that of imperialism. This latter alternative is strong in America: it develops in parallel with the former one, and it is this which makes every American initiative and intervention of such crucial importance to us.

If democratic Europe does not save itself by its own efforts, making use of the American opportunity, and does not develop federal institutions in the economic and political fields, then it is American imperialism that will prevail.

If the US has to maintain its position of strength in a Europe that is incapable of normal autonomous life, it will have to turn each country into an economic, political and military protectorate, exploiting it in one way or another or granting it this or that privilege. That is how empires come into existence. Liberal America is still alive and active, but is gradually losing ground to imperialist America. When that process is completed there will no longer be any chance of salvation for European democracy.

It is generally objected that a federalist plan of action on these lines will tend to form a West European bloc subservient to America and hostile to the Soviet Union. Many federalists are frightened by this accusation and quite the ground of reality to take refuge in vain and cloudy hopes.

We should firmly rebut such criticism. To federate the European democracies is the only way to prevent their becoming protectorates and instruments of an imperialist American policy, to prevent the development and consolidation of an American imperial, colonizing policy in Europe. The many Americans who are in favour of federal development

in Europe are not imperialists but are those who fear an imperialist future for their country and wish for the creation of a situation in Europe that will avert this possibility.

A European federation, even if only a partial one, will be independent of America in a way that is impossible for the states of Western Europe in isolation. Hence such a federation can resist and eventually overcome the disastrous policy of spheres of influence. The original federation must remain open to all other European countries: it must gradually and peacefully restore the values and institutions of democratic civilization to countries where they have been lost and can only be revived within a Europe purged of baneful influences and based on laws of justice and peace. In other words the federalist solution is unquestionably opposed to Soviet imperialism, since it would be the task of a federal Europe to check and finally abolish the whole imperialist system of zones of influence, controls, iron curtains and so forth; but it is opposed to Soviet imperialism on the same grounds as to the American variety.

If today it is possible to envisage the first steps towards federalism being taken in countries under American influence but not elsewhere, this is simply because in the former, as in America itself, there are possibilities of anti-imperialist and anti-totalitarian action that no longer exist in Eastern Europe, though we hope they will be revived there.

The opportunities to set about constructing a federal democratic Europe will probably exist for a few years longer. The role of the great world empires is no doubt an obstacle, but in so far as their intervention is not complete it gives an urgency to the problem of European union which may be salutary in its effect.

Having defined the concrete possibilities of bringing about a European union, we must recognize that nothing has yet been done in this direction, and the grave responsibility for this fact rests on leading political classes in the democratic countries. New men and new forces have come on the political scene. It might have been hoped that recent suffering would have convinced them of the absurdity of simply restoring the old national sovereignties. They ought to have understood that the totalitarian poison was not a sad monopoly of Germany, Italy and one or two other countries, but is at work more or less secretly in all European countries, perhaps without exception; and that the war itself, anti-Fascist though it was, has reinforced the totalitarian and anti-democratic elements that exist everywhere.

However, these facts were ignored and an attempt has been made to restore democracy on an exclusively national basis. The result is that

some superficial democratization has been achieved but that it has not solid basis. Absurdity has been piled on absurdity, and none of the gravest problems of the hour have been seriously grappled with. Economic autarky and national planning have been revived; national armies have been re-created, national hatred, rancour and suspicion have been fostered. Today every European nation is poverty-stricken and diseased, withdrawn into itself, uncertain of the future, unable to raise itself, obliged to depend more and more on political and economic structures that are profoundly anti-democratic.

There is no future on this basis for democratic civilisation. If it is to be once more secured the whole plan of political action must be modified. The time-honoured political divisions that are met with in every country no longer have any profound or genuine meaning. Whatever the external label, we must regard as essentially anti-democratic all groups which see it as their main task to re-establish and conserve the national sovereign state. Even if they do not realize it they are the grave-diggers of civil liberty and well-being, servants of the modern Leviathan, the all-powerful, totalitarian sovereign state.

And, again regardless of the external label, we must regard as a single progressive political élite all those who are resolved to smash the idol of the national state, to limit its absolute sovereignty and to set up federal institutions to administer the common interests of Europeans.

The presence at this congress of men of the most diverse parties is proof that people are becoming aware of a new line of political division. The question is: who is for free Europe and who against it? The task before the UEF is to strengthen this feeling and make it a reality in European political life.

The all-important issue is not whether this or that country has a government of the left or of the right: it is the rebirth of free, democratic, European civilization, which can only be achieved in a united Europe.

CONSTITUENT STRATEGY AND CONSTITUTIONAL GRADUALISM

Anyone embarking on a political battle to introduce change, to defend or to affirm values, or to respond adequately to the changing demands and needs emerging within society, cannot help but reflect profoundly on the theoretical line, the political line and the strategy that must be adopted. When the political battle goes beyond the confines of a consolidated power framework and seeks to call into question a centuries-old “political culture,” then this reflection must necessarily be all the more painstaking and pondered. Federalists, who pursue, on the one hand, the overcoming of the nation-state and the enlargement of the sphere of statehood, and on the other, the affirmation of the political culture of a united mankind, find themselves in precisely this position.

Of the three elements defining the federalists’ political struggle, strategy is the most concrete and, at the same time, the least stable. Impossible to formulate definitively, federalist strategy is, as regards its fundamental lines, closely bound up with the constant need to verify reality, in other words, to assess the present historical-political moment and the opportunities it offers to mobilise the forces in the field. Taking this as its starting point, the strategic line identifies the means with which to take on the national power that must be overcome in the creation of the new supranational power, and the manner in which this must be done.

By considering the two strategic lines that have been applied in the field since the birth of the European Federalist Movement, we can illustrate and clarify these concepts and maybe gain some useful pointers on how best to approach the present stage in the process of European unification.

The Constituent Strategy.

The expression constituent strategy refers to the strategy that sets *federation as the direct and immediate objective*. The first action reflecting this strategy was the one mounted by the MFE at the end of the ’40s, through its “Petition for a Pact for Federal Union,” a campaign that involved Italy’s top politicians and ended with the signing of the petition, at the Teatro Sistina in Rome, by prime minister, Alcide De Gasperi, and foreign minister Carlo Sforza, in the presence of the President of Italy, Luigi Einaudi.

The backdrop to this campaign was the decay and power crisis of Europe’s nation-states, whose weakness was seen to be exploitable in the bid to get them to put their centuries of conflict and destruction behind them and unite in a federation. Not only this, the United States was also acting as a propulsive force in this very same direction.

The fact that the federal pact never came into being only exacerbated Europe’s post-war problems, the greatest of which was that of German sovereignty, and in particular, of the German army. The European Defence Community (EDC) project was the governments’ answer to this problem, and the battle for a European political community the federalist reaction.

But the failure of the EDC meant that federalists had to rethink their strategy and their role. Gone was the hope that the albeit weak federalist line that had been represented within the national political forces would bear fruit, and gone, too, the belief that the only thing federalists needed to do was support the governments in their work, encouraging their pursuit of initiatives that would, faced with the exceptional post-war situation, lead them towards acceptance of the federal pact.

With the ratification of the WEU and the restoration of Germany’s sovereignty, it was clear that the rebuilding of Europe was proceeding along national lines, and was based on the preservation of the absolute sovereignty of the states: federalists thus set themselves the task of creating the conditions that would *force* the national governments to relinquish their sovereignty, their intention being to fire popular demand for a constituent assembly, the convening of which could come about only upon the creation of a *supranational political force* that was firmly in favour of such a step and that was strong enough to impose it on the national governments. This political force, which would serve to increase European popular will until victory was achieved, and agreement to the constituent assembly wrung out of the governments, was to be the European People’s Congress (EPC).

“This is not a maximalist programme,” wrote Albertini in an article on the significance of the Paris congress, in January 1955, of the European Union of Federalists, which launched the idea of the EPC.¹ “It is a question of shifting the struggle to terrain where it can be won. Schuman himself, whose courageous address opened the meeting, said that European action must focus not on the national parliaments, but on the two spheres of opinion — public and government. National situations become crystallised in national parliaments, and even more so in national governments. But it is from national governments that public opinion

must secure the first step, because national governments are the ones with the power of initiative.”

These were the considerations that led federalists — through the drawing up (by an *ad hoc* committee elected by the EPC in Turin in December 1958) of a draft treaty (federal pact) for the creation of the United States of Europe and for the convening of a European constituent assembly, and also through a campaign for approval of the same — to prepare the instruments with which to confront the national powers. “The vote of the EPC” — reads one of the articles signed Publius appearing in *Popolo europeo* in ’58 and written to illustrate the significance and to set out the objectives of the campaign² — “does not create a parliamentary power, but counts more as a sort of protest, a claim to the European voting right... The general political meaning of this long-term work plan is essentially as follows: it tends towards the hegemony on diffuse Europeanism. Today, Europeanism is a zero force politically... But this situation can be overturned with the primary elections... In the same way in which someone who has liberal, socialist, trade union reactions immediately reports them to a given party or trade union, thus tomorrow someone who has European reactions will report them to the European People’s Congress and no longer to the ‘Europeanists’ of the national parties. When this is done, Europeanism will be a political force. It will then be a matter of using this force appropriately and decisively when power crisis situations arise. In such situations choices become strong, the masses awaken from their usual slumber and acquire the power of choice. Then the EPC will be able to stage the decisive battle.”

One must, then, be careful not to confuse the constituent strategy with what has often been defined the “constituent method,” an expression that refers to the assignment of what some regard as an autonomous role to assemblies of representatives of the European people that would be able, should they wish to do so, to seize power and create a European state through the drawing up of a constitution. This latter idea represents a strategic, as well as a theoretical, error given that a) it fails to take into account the fact that power can be relinquished only by those who hold it in the first place, b) the role of the European people, while it is still an embryonic people, is reflected in its efforts *to force* the governments to sanction the creation of the federation, c) the sovereignty of the European people can manifest itself only in a measure commensurate with the extent to which it actually becomes a European people, through the formation of the new political community of which it becomes a founding part, d) writing a constitution is not the same as creating a state (a fact

clearly demonstrated by projects developed by the European parliament in the past, and, today, by the European convention convened by the Laeken summit); and in any case, even if a constitution were to make provision for federal institutions, this does not alter the validity of point a), above.

The course — opposition to the system of nation-states — embarked upon by the federalists with the EPC also emerged as the right one in the years that followed. When the governments, through the creation of the common market, started to move in the direction of simple economic integration, the strategy they adopted was inevitably to denounce the prevailing functionalist illusion, indicating the federation as its radical alternative.

The attitude of federalists towards the European Communities was thus strongly critical, and contrasted with the hope, then emerging, of a spontaneous evolution, in a federal direction, of what they defined Europe’s “pseudo-communities.” “Evolution,” wrote Albertini,³ “means passing (gradually) from status X to status Y. Well, one cannot talk directly of a (gradual) transfer of the power of these pseudo-communities from a national (confederal) status to a European (federal) status for the simple reason that these pseudo-communities do not have any power, and as a result cannot go from having one form of power to having another; and neither is it possible to talk in indirect terms: since they are subordinate to and not wielders of power, they are not in a position to transfer it from a national to a European level. Whatever form they take, these pseudo-communities remain within the confines of the national sphere. In relation to the European sphere, they are, one might say, asymptotic: they can be thought to draw ever closer to it, they cannot be considered able to reach it...”

Those who wish federation to be achieved cannot, therefore, be in favour of the pseudo-communities. So what must their attitude be? Indifferent, hostile? I would say that it must be hostile. Allow me to illustrate just one point: to unite Europe there needs to be a transfer of sovereignty from the state to the federation, and this can occur only if a sufficient number of individuals, firmly aligned in the European camp, turn against the national powers in order (to a great extent) to destroy them, while at the same time founding, in the same European camp, a political (constituent) power. We are talking about an extremely difficult revolutionary struggle... demanding exceptional force of reason. But as long as the pseudo-communities continue to be thought of as something intermediate, something that is evolving from the national to the Euro-

pean, then this struggle remains completely inconceivable. No one will ever opt for a costly, difficult and uncertain means if he thinks that there exists an inexpensive, easy and sure one. This is why those who truly wish to see Europe united must demonstrate that the pseudo-communities are not a suitable means with which to build Europe — must, in other words, oppose them.”

This political-strategic analysis brought federalists face to face with a difficult decision, one so contrary to the prevailing trend that to make it meant risking isolation. They were faced with a genuine dilemma: on the one hand there was the need to give consciousness to and organise the widespread Europeanism, in other words, the pro-European feelings of the citizens, and, on the other, the need to denounce the Europeanist policy pursued by the governments, a policy that, in reality, postponed the federal objective, and was feeding the widespread Europeanism that federalists themselves needed to be exploiting. “... Federalists,” wrote Albertini, “must be more concerned about Europeanism (support for the Communities) than nationalism (attachment to national sovereignty)... If they are, indeed, to unite a sufficient number of individuals behind them on the decisive front, the obstacle federalists have to overcome is that of Europeanism, which tends to set those same individuals on the dead-end track of the pseudo-communities; and not that of nationalism, which does not influence the individuals in question. At first glance, this might seem to suggest that federalists should be doing battle with those who favour Europe, albeit in a lukewarm manner, and ignoring those who are opposed to it... In reality, pro-Europeans do not favour Europe so much as the preservation of the nation states; and in reality the pseudo-communities are ... the expression of a pro-national policy, i.e., the policy of the pro-Europeans. Europeanism is a) better equipped than nationalism to defend the states, which support themselves better through collaboration than through isolation, and b) compatible with a degree of nationalism acceptable to the regular politician, who, given the effective power of the states, is obliged to settle for little. Basically, Europeanism is another form of nationalism... it is the most dangerous facet of the nation state.”

This adoption of this tough stance was not without repercussions on the MFE. It produced splits and divisions, but it was also the decision that allowed the Movement to emerge from the severe crisis prompted by the failure of the EDC without slipping into the functionalist trap. Through the EPC and the subsequent campaign, the voluntary census of the European federal people, the new militant forces of an independent

Movement were shaped — forces that have proved able to remain in the field to the present day.

Naturally, this identification of the strategic adversary (Europeanism) did not in any way obscure from view the federalists’ political enemy, the nation state, opposition to which was defined “community opposition,” an expression that reflected both the refusal to consider the national political communities as organic and permanent, and the political struggle to replace them with a new political community and state — the European federation.

We will see, later on, that many of the problems that characterised this strategic phase are extremely topical in the current phase, in which, in the wake of a long, almost forty-year, journey conducted according to a different strategic logic, that of constitutional gradualism, federalists once again find themselves having to confront the need for a change of strategy.

Constitutional Gradualism.

The firm logic underpinning the constituent strategy, i.e., the consideration that power cannot pass by degrees from the nations to Europe, is inherently, and therefore, always valid; it is one of the structural aspects on which to base analyses of the processes of democratic unification of states. But when applied to the question of strategy, it has to take into account the concrete situations that condition not so much its validity as its modes of application. That said, in the concrete situations examined above, the application of this firm logic was not subject to compromise: there existed the conditions needed to conduct a battle whose objective was to push the states directly into making the federal leap.

But no such leap was made: the nation states, impelled by their ever-increasing interdependence, continued to follow the path of simple collaboration, and developed a European policy of economic integration that allowed them to grow in strength and to achieve successes that were painted by the governments — and increasingly perceived by the citizens — as steps forward along the road to European unity.

Federalists thus needed to identify a new course, that started from this new situation, that is to say from the point reached by the process of European integration. On the horizon, and open to strategic exploitation, was the forthcoming end (following the creation of the customs and agricultural unions) of the transitory period of the Common Market. Upon reaching this point, the states would find themselves at a cross-

roads: a) if they wanted to go on reaping the benefits of economic integration, they would have to confront the question of economic and monetary union, b) in order to overcome the contradiction — which the governments more than anyone were coming up against daily — between the dimensions of the problems to be dealt with and those of the decision-making centres, they would have to tackle the problem of the institutions and of their democratic control. Together, these two fronts were to be, for the federalists, the platform from which to re-launch the European objective, adopting a new strategic line: that of constitutional gradualism.

Clearly, the federal state remained the federalists' objective, but in a situation that was characterised by a relative strengthening of the states, there was only one strategic course that could be followed: exploitation of the governments' own European policy, pursuit of gradual strategic ends — which did not imply an immediate transfer of sovereignty — as a *subtle way* of driving politicians onto a “downward slope”⁴ from the nations to Europe. This could be done by identifying a “slippery point,” or a problem (and the relative strategic objective), that could potentially induce the decision to transfer power. What they had to find, in other words, was *one* irrefutable contradiction in the whole integration situation, potentially recognisable (or already recognised) as such also by the governments and politicians, as a means of creating *the* contradiction between the partial response (the gradual constitutional objective of a constitutional nature) and the need for federal union.

As Jean Monnet had propounded in his Memorandum of 1950, it was a question of starting a “concrete and resolute action on a limited but decisive point, that will bring about a fundamental change in relation to that point and help to modify the way in which the problems as a whole manifest themselves.”⁵

Federalists, from the mid 1960s on, identified two such “slippery points” — one in the need to democratise the Community institutions, by creating a first centre of European political action (strategic objective: the direct election of the European parliament), and the other in the need to achieve a greater degree of economic-monetary integration (strategic objective: the single currency).

It was on these two fronts that they battled to create the contradictions intended to push the governments closer to deciding to create a federation, aware that this was a gamble, not a certainty, and aware that they would not be setting in motion a mechanism of cause and effect, but instead opening up a possibility.

This approach was radically different from the one they had adopted

in the previous strategic phase: the immediate creation of a European federal state had become the building of it through a gradual process. The steps in this process were presented as the building bricks of a state under construction, as gradual strategic objectives whose realisation would open up the possibility of breaking with the old order and creating a new one, a true federal state. It was, as Albertini wrote,⁶ the paradox of “creating a state to create *the* state” or, put another way, a question of viewing constitutional gradualism (the gradual construction of the state) in terms of political-institutional gradualism (the creation of imperfect institutions whose contradictory nature could be exploited in order to create *the* state).

The awareness that this gradual construction was a means to an end, a sort of trap intended to lead the states towards that decisive federal leap, was accompanied by the realisation that any possibility that this leap might actually be taken was limited, and still is limited, by the tendency of the national governments to concentrate only on the management of that which already exists, and to exploit all opportunities created by collaboration to one end only: the preservation of their own power. It was also recognised that *an occasional European leadership*, able to manifest a willingness to transfer sovereignty, and endowed with the strength to pull all the others in its wake, can emerge only in the presence of a truly explosive situation (a severe internal or external crisis).

Having set out on this road, federalists had to gauge carefully their attitude towards the national powers. In the constituent strategy phase, following the failure of the EDC, considerable emphasis had been placed on “community opposition,” and the Europeanism of the governments and politicians had been viewed as an obstacle; in the new strategic phase, on the other hand, the aim was to exploit the governments' European policies, and a tactical three-stage approach was needed: 1) once the strategic objective had been identified, federalists had to begin “steering” the politicians, national and European, in the direction of that same objective, resolutely pointing out the constitutional implications of pursuing the gradual objective (European franchise and the single currency imply a government, since a democratically elected parliament that wields no power and has no possibility of controlling an executive would be entirely meaningless; in the same way, the government of a currency depends on the existence of a state power); nevertheless, the approach was not to condemn, so much as to collaborate with those who, while not yet willing to relinquish sovereignty, were, however, ready to take a step that would lead them onto a precipice from which it would be far easier

to push them towards the federal leap; 2) having achieved the gradual strategic objective, the next step would be to exploit this success by demanding a constituent assembly; 3) were this entry into the field to produce nothing more than maintenance of simple collaboration, federalists would clearly have to abandon the field in order to denounce the compromise and prepare to wage a new battle.

Providing it is understood correctly, the constitutional gradualism strategy cannot be confused with the *step by step policy*, in other words, with those adjustments to the institutions and Community policies that, ultimately, do nothing other than facilitate — when the growth of interdependence makes this necessary — intergovernmental cooperation. Constitutional gradualism means identifying and pursuing objectives that have the potential to trigger a constituent process, objectives whose achievement, as we have said, lays bare the contradiction between the need for and the lack of a European power, and calls the question of sovereignty into play.

Neither can this strategy be confused with *functionalism*, which interprets the progressive steps towards integration as a course that will almost automatically lead to federation, and fails to take into account either power aspects or the question of will, i.e., the two elements crucial to a real understanding of how a process of integration can culminate in unification.

Back to the Constituent Strategy.

The achievement of the two objectives pursued by federalists over their forty-year adoption of the gradualist strategy has not been followed by the creation of a European federation. The process is thus incomplete, and in the face of this we must ask ourselves (as we have done in the past at every strategic turn) two crucial questions: 1) what is the current framework of world power? 2) what point has the process of European unification reached? The answers to these two questions help to indicate strategy we should be adopting today, and the concrete content of that strategy.

With regard to the global power framework, what we might say, very briefly, is the following: the international situation is highly unbalanced, and this imbalance is generating uncontrollable disorder and anarchy. To restore equilibrium to “global government,” new political subjects need to be set on the scales of power, and Europe, were it a state, would today be the only credible candidate (although other subjects, currently becom-

ing established, may well emerge in the future). We might also remark that America is far less in favour of the birth of a European power than it once was (the current US policy towards the European states is, indeed, one of *divide and rule*). Looking, then, at the global power framework, it is clear that the world desperately needs Europe, and it is also clear that American policy is one of the obstacles to Europe’s unification.

But the greatest obstacles to European unity lie, in reality, within Europe itself, within this Europe that has pushed ahead with enlargement despite lacking sound democratic political institutions, this Europe whose rising tide of nationalism is the inevitable consequence of the absence of a single political community (deriving from a single state) equipped to manage its shared interests.

Considering the new European framework, we can see that gradual drawing closer to the federal objective, a process at one stage seen by federalists as the only possible avenue, is now out of the question, given that it is no longer possible to conceive of intermediate strategic objectives of a constitutional nature. Europe’s foreign and defence policies are not worthy of the name, given that a true European defence policy, i.e., “single” and not “common,” implies the immediate relinquishment of sovereignty, and is thus the premise for (from the point of view of the intention) and the consequence of (from the point of view of the decision) the creation of the European federal state, and as such, the ultimate point of arrival and not an intermediate step.⁷

But what conditions more than anything the possibility of pursuing the federal objective, and as a result also conditions the strategic choices, is the fact that everything that was built within the framework that began with the Six and lasted right through to the Twelve members of European monetary union risks remaining frozen at the confederal stage, or even being destroyed by the Union’s embracing of states that are not only not interested in, but often entirely opposed to European unification. Paradoxically, Europe’s salvation lies in its division, or rather in the creation, at its heart, of a federal core state able to serve as a guarantee of cohesion in the face of the dangers of disintegration and as a force for gradual enlargement, until such time as it embraces the whole of Europe.

Federalists have been indicating the creation of a federal core as the means of overcoming the resistance of resolutely anti-European states, like the United Kingdom, and the qualms of less responsible states, ever since the time of the very first constituent battles. Today, however, the divisive factors, both within and outside Europe, have become stronger and more complicated, and Europeans, if they are to avert disaster, now

have very little time left to them in which to do it.

If, then, the gradualist approach is no longer a viable option, and if our analysis as regards the dangers of disintegration and the urgent need for union is correct, then federalists must go back to indicating the radical option, firmly resisting the temptation to seek evolutionary possibilities in a situation that is no longer influenceable. This is not only the logical conclusion of correct political analysis, but also the only way of safeguarding the autonomy of the MFE, that is to say, its capacity, at the opportune moment, to dissociate itself from false solutions and to indicate the only way out of situations of impasse.

We federalists must, then, go back to the constituent strategy, that is to the direct call for a federal state, not allowing ourselves to be conditioned by the sirens of Europeanism who, prisoners of the process whose advancement Europeanism has helped to bring about, persist in seeing the future in terms of a gradual drawing closer to the objective, and are unable to see that, in reality, this objective is not only in danger of moving further and further out of reach, but indeed of disappearing over the horizon altogether.

And we must also show those who are, potentially, invested with the most responsibility (the governments of the founder member states) what has to be achieved (an irrevocable pact of federal union and the democratic adoption of the same through a constitution drawn up by a constituent assembly). It is around these objectives that the citizens of Europe need to be mobilised.

Nicoletta Mosconi

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¹Mario Albertini, "Significato del V Congresso internazionale dell'Unione europea dei federalisti", in *La Provincia pavese* (16 March, 1955).

²These writings, from 1957, are gathered in "Technical Analysis of the Struggle for Europe" (1959) in *The Federalist*, XXXI (1989), pp.133 onwards.

³Reply to a letter by Gianni Merlini published in the "Discussioni" section of *Il Federalista*, III (1961), pp. 188 onwards.

⁴Mario Albertini, "Il problema monetario e il problema politico europeo" (1973), in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1999, p. 184.

⁵Cfr. "Il Memorandum Monnet del 3 maggio 1950", in Mario Albertini, *Il federalismo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1993, p. 273.

⁶Mario Albertini, "Elezioni europea, governo europeo e Stato europeo" (1976), in *Una rivoluzione pacifica*, cit., p. 225.

⁷The strategy of gradualism is for "keeping European unity on the agenda, but not for bringing it to a successful outcome. In effect it is worth nothing (as might be ascertained when an attempt was made to raise a European army to avoid the rebirth of the German army) when European objectives are such as to demand a transfer of sovereign power to Europe." Cfr. Mario Albertini, "Theses for the 14th MFE Congress" (1989), in *The Federalist*, XXXI (1989), p. 128.

CHINA'S SUCCESSES AND THE ILLUSIONS OF EUROPE

In the first half of the 1960s France and China, within a few years of each other, joined the limited number of countries with a nuclear arsenal. But this fact did not mean that those two countries carried the same weight on a global scale. China was in fact demonstrating that it had the size and the resources to assert itself as a regional and indeed a world power, whilst France was trying to defend its own national sovereignty from the influence of the superpowers on the European continent. After 40 years, in 2003, China has become the third country, after the USA and Russia, to be able to independently send teams of astronauts into space, and the European Union has challenged the USA in the field of satellite systems.¹ Yet again the two facts are only seemingly comparable. The first Chinese space voyage confirmed that China is by now able to compete with American superpower in the field of new technologies and in geopolitical influence: the European satellite project Galileo is only a commercial gamble for the reasons that we shall give later.

After the fall of the USSR China sped up the stages of its transition from a developing country to an emerging power. The importance of China at the international level has been growing more and more in the management of bilateral and multilateral relations during the ASEAN and APEC summits, in the management of the USA-North Korea crisis, in international treaties on the limitation of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.² Following the terrorist attack of 11 of September 2001 in New York China asserted its role in Central Asia, presenting itself as the only credible guarantor of the stability of the region. This is proven

by the fact that in a brief time it resolved all the main land disputes with its neighbours, among which Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Russia, Tajikistan and Vietnam. Its foreign policy did not overlook the European Union, with which China promoted the start of the biannual Euro - Asian summits, and to which it offered financial aid to develop the European space project Galileo: it is a relationship of collaboration which is favourable to China in the medium-term since, on the basis of the comparison of current development trends of their respective space policies, China will surpass Europe by 2010 in its capacity for yearly launches of satellites into space, and not the other way round.³ Certainly the problems that China must still tackle and resolve, in order to help almost one and a half billion Chinese people achieve a quality of life similar to that of the citizens of developed countries, are enormous. But its constant growth in production, not only in the industrial sectors typical of developing countries, but also more advanced sectors such as electronics, is a reality.⁴ Economically it is foreseen that China will become the third biggest trading partner of the USA by the end of the year and the second biggest world market in absolute terms by 2020. The question that everyone asks themselves by now is no longer *whether* China will reach the USA, but *when*.⁵ In the effort to slow down this progression, the most conservative exponents of the Bush Administration are not hiding their temptation to drag China into a technological-military contest similar to that engaged with the USSR and won.

All these signals only help to confirm that we are facing a widening gap between the Chinese and European development processes. A new pole is emerging at the global level, and this pole is not Europe, but China, which is preparing to start the journey already made during the last century by the USA and Russia. The political motives behind the decision of the Chinese government to invest considerable resources in the space race are clear, and go beyond purely technical and scientific aspects.

* * *

Amongst the advanced technological sectors, space exploration has a particular strategic importance, not so much as regards the launchers, that is to say the construction of vehicles used to put satellites, space modules and stations into orbit, which by now are available to many States including developing ones, but especially as regards the integration of satellite services into the production, organisational and military systems of individual States. Thus in the 1990s there was a true revolution in this

field. Until then in fact space exploration was confined to two applications operating separately and mainly for a limited number of privileged users: *remote sensing* for military and/or scientific purposes and telecommunications. The progressive integration of the Internet in satellite communications systems and the possibility of storing an ever increasing amount of data in ever more capable and universally accessible memory banks at lower and lower costs, removed those restrictions and those distinctions, favouring the birth and dissemination of global information services available to any user of the Internet or mobile telephones.⁶ During the 1990s the USA gained a monopoly of the control of the system, and the Pentagon may decide at any moment, as it did in fact during the crises of the wars in the Balkans and Iraq, to suspend or disrupt commercial services offered by the USA via satellite.⁷ Aware of the risks of leaving the USA to maintain leadership in this field, China ensured its development of an independent satellite system, despite having decided to financially support the European satellite project Galileo as we have said. Even France and Germany became aware of the enormous advantage acquired by the USA, and have strongly supported, within the European Union, the need to launch an independent European programme, which in fact gave birth to Galileo itself. As is well known, the USA, making use of the divisions between Europeans within the ESA, managed to delay the launch of the European service until 2008, and thus to use the time gained to renew their own GPS satellite constellation and set up a new generation of the technology, already more competitive than the European system.⁸ But there is more.

The Galileo project, born out of the confederal policy of the European States, came to light thanks all the partners in the project accepting the restrictions imposed by Great Britain to retain it a service only for civilian purposes without any European control and subject to that of national governments. But who does such a choice help all in all? Let us suppose that the Galileo system had already been active at the time when the Bush administration decided to intervene in Bosnia and then in Afghanistan and then in Iraq: Faced with a predictable request by America to suspend or limit access to satellite data supplied by Galileo to any enemies of the USA, which body, agency, European department would have taken the decision to obey or resist this request (and in this case with which instruments and managed by whom)? The answer is obvious: there is no power in Europe able to impose its will on questions of this nature. In the official documents of the European commission, in the communiqués of European councils, in the debates at the European Parliament, there is no

answer to this type of problem, just as there is no reference to the problem of the framework of power necessary to create at the European level in order to manage a space exploration policy in a credible way. At best those documents limit themselves to presenting aseptic scenarios which suggest the idea that everything depends on the will or otherwise by the States to invest more in this field. A recent document from the European Commission concludes that, with current resources, "Europe does not fully guarantee independence vis-à-vis technology and access to space," but that a leap forward would be possible "with a growth rate [Author's note: in expenditure for space technologies] higher than the global growth rate of the EU economy."⁹ It is well-known that China has so far spent infinitely less on its space programmes than the Europeans, however no one can doubt its capacity to maintain its independent access to these technologies.

The fact is that the political problems that the Europeans have so far refused to sort out are rapidly coming back to haunt them: the Europeans can no longer afford to make false steps. As the debate on the European Constitution also showed first inside the Convention and then at the Intergovernmental Conference, instead of resolving the crucial problem of its political division, Europe re-proposed co-operation projects more or less reinforced in various fields, including defence and foreign policy.

If Europeans renounce the creation of the European federal State in the immediate future, whichever project or programme they adopt in space exploration, they will continue simply to dissipate resources, without being able to control in any way their future or to influence the decisions of those old and new continental poles around which the world is organising itself.

Franco Spoltore

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¹ In October 2003 China successfully sent astronauts into space on board the space module Shenzhou. The European Union confirmed that they wanted the satellite system Galileo to be in service by 2008.

² The article by Evan S. Medeiros and Taylor Fravel, "China's New Diplomacy", in *Foreign Affairs*, November-December 2003, lists the numerous diplomatic successes won by China in the last decade.

³ Already in 2001 the ex director of the ESA Roger-Maurice Bonnet, commenting on China's foreseeable leap forward in space travel, was asking himself if it still made sense for Europeans to keep the ESA running ("China: the Next Space Superpower", in *Scientific American*, October 2003).

⁴ See the data presented by David Hale and Lyric Hughes Hale in "China Takes Off", *Foreign Affairs*, November-December 2003.

⁵ Martin Wolf's comment, "The Long March to Prosperity", which appeared in the *Financial Times*, 8 December 2003, provides plenty of data to document the economic efforts that China is carrying out.

⁶ Bruce T. Robinson, in his article "How the U.S. Army's New Satellite Tracking System Helped Avert Friendly Fire and Lift the Fog of War", which appeared in *IEEE Spectrum*, October 2003, repeats part of the testimonies brought to the USA Congress by Pentagon representatives after the capture of Baghdad. These testimonies had been requested by Congress precisely to verify whether the expenses incurred in order to develop American satellite links had been effective or not.

⁷ The military locations of this technology have profoundly influenced, since the beginning, during the 1980s, the development of both the American GPS satellite system, and the Soviet-Russian GLONASS system.

⁸ The article "Galileo", which appeared on *Rivista Italiana Difesa (Italian Defence Review)* in November 2003, provides an exhaustive description of the technical aspects of the European-American contest in this field.

⁹ European Commission, *White Paper - Space: a New European Frontier for an Expanding Union. An Action Plan for Implementing the European Space Policy*, November 2003.

ISLAM AND THE IDEA OF NATION

Since its appearance during the Seventh Century Islam has always represented a difficult reality for the Western world to understand. The speed with which it spread over a vast territory, caused an immediate armed opposition in Europe of which the Crusades are only a marginal aspect, especially from the Muslim point of view which sees the efforts of the Christians to reconquer the Holy Land as mere clashes. This period of strong territorial expansion and great religious proselytism is commonly called the Golden Age by Muslim historians and it is the period where Islamic integralists are recalled in order to reaffirm the superiority of Islam on the world of the infidels.

The expansionist force of Islam towards Europe only placated during

the 16th Century and from that moment a slow military and cultural decline began. The discovery of new merchant routes and new lands, the strong impulse towards the art of war and science favoured Europe and marginalised the Muslim world. It is also important to underline the fact that the Protestant Reformation and the subsequent Counter-Reformation in Europe contributed to a strong ideal, cultural and artistic outburst which set the continent off towards a laicism which became fully rooted over the course of the centuries, breaking the ancient temporal power-secular power link which in the Islamic world is still today the source of many problems.

But this long period of decadence left behind a great religious entity stretching from Bangladesh, Indochina and one part of the Philippines at one end to Morocco at the other, which was destined to become the base for crucial events of a political nature — some of which have already happened and some of which are yet to happen. It is important to distinguish here the wider Islamic community (the *umma*) which includes all the people who belong to the same religion, from the Arab community, which adds language and culture to the unity of religion, even if these are articulated in a multiplicity of different dialects and lifestyles.

* * *

Islam was until relatively recent times a predominantly religious and cultural reality, without a direct political relevance. When Muhammad began his task of proselytism he used faith as an instrument of unification for the tribal realities which characterised the Arab world. Faith justified the wars of expansion: One didn't have to assert the principle of the defence of a territory but the superiority of one community, which shared the only and true faith, above another. In this context politics was secondary to religion. The Islamic community saw the succession and copresence of different caliphates with changeable boundaries who were responsible for the administration of the lay aspects of communal life, but beyond the *umma*, the principal link which united Muslims, and in particular Arabs, was the pre-political reality of the tribe, which lives on today. It is important to note that in the Arabic language there are no words to describe what in Europe we call State and nation.¹

Profound changes were introduced into the Arab world, and more generally the Muslim world, by European colonialism and by the process of decolonisation. Russian colonialism in Crimea in the 1700s and subsequently in the region of the southern and eastern Mediterranean

demonstrated to the Islamic world their inability to react to the challenges of the modern world, also posing the problem of how Muslims could live alongside infidels who imposed their own laws (civil and criminal) and their own institutional models.² This is the way the reality of the State, with well defined borders, an administration and an army was introduced into large regions of the world. The fact remains that the colonial process and its ending divided the Arab (and Muslim) world with artificial frontiers that were incomprehensible for those who felt they belonged on the one hand only to their tribe, and on the other to the Islamic community which does not recognise frontiers or barriers and for which the only boundary is that beyond which there are no more devotees.³ It is no coincidence that the governments of the first nation states that arose with the European *imprimatur* were directly or indirectly controlled by military castes trained in Europe, which attempted to support themselves on a nationalism that had absolutely no foundation in the history of these new entities. In a few cases attempts were made to marry Socialism with Islam.

But the reality of the State was born, with its problems, its conflicts and its rivalries. Moreover the *umma* has continued to profoundly influence this reality. Without Islam it is practically impossible to govern an Arab State, or more generally a Muslim one, which is indispensable for legitimising it. Religion therefore acts essentially as an *instrumentum regni*, but at the same time it makes it difficult for a true nationalism to be born. In the Arab world (and more generally in the Muslim world) there is a national loyalism, which in reality is very fragile and a supranational loyalism, which have the State and the *umma* as their reference point respectively, and thus the latter began to acquire political importance.

During the last fifty years a further element characterised the Arab world: The enormous riches which derive from the oil reserves are in reality concentrated in the hands of restricted elites that generally come from the dominant tribe or ethnic group. In the Arab countries, with the exception of Turkey and Egypt, a modern tax system never developed because in any case the coffers of the state are resupplied by the income deriving from petrodollars.⁴ This is a further element which indicates the detachment between the State and the citizen, and which is the sign of a conception of statehood, of its functions and prerogatives, which is profoundly different to the European idea of the State.

* * *

These brief statements help us to understand the resistance to change present in this vast area of the world and the tensions which permeate it. The war in Iraq and the continued failures which have been met during efforts to create a framework of stability in which Israelis and Palestinians can live together are indicators of a situation in constant ferment: the question is how to make the situation evolve towards peace and development and to steer it away from the current chaos and disorder. We have repeated many times in the pages of this review the important role a united Europe could play as an example of pacification and political, social and economic stabilisation.⁵ Europe undoubtedly has responsibilities both for what happened during the colonial era, and for the inheritance it has left behind with decolonisation, and for its current impotence in the sphere of international politics.

But there are also responsibilities for the Muslim countries in particular those of the Arab world. It is essential that the State structure, albeit still an imperfect one, that they have inherited from the West is completed with the introduction of democracy and a reasonable degree of laicism. At the same time it is essential that, along with the democratic consolidation of the States inherited from colonialism, supranational initiatives take shape in the region. Without such a turning point any hope of development is destined to go adrift.

The internal crises of countries such as Iran or Algeria are the consequence, albeit in a different form, of political tensions that develop even as a consequence of globalisation. However many efforts are made to limit access to the world of the Internet and satellite television, contact with the Western world is inevitable and destined to push the current governments of the area to share more and more the affairs which link the East to the West. At the same time globalisation deepens the interdependence between Islamic, and especially Arab, countries adding its own effects to those traditionally due to the commonality of religion and culture. The point is therefore to be able to guarantee an international framework which supports every effort towards the opening up to modernity and towards preliminary forms of democracy and domestic unity. We therefore need to favour the most tolerant Islamic movements (which in any case are the majority, because the Koran in no way negates democratic principles), and to support every effort towards forms of regional integration.

As regards in particular the Arab world, the role of Europe would be essential, even if we consider the strict interdependence which unite her to it, that is to say to the most western part of the Islamic world. The

collaboration between the Arab world and Europe could favour stability and union where American military domination foments disorder and brings war. The future of the Arab world is therefore also tied up with the fact that Europe has institutions which allow it to have its own autonomous presence in the region, supported by an autonomous foreign and defence policy. For this reason a new heavy responsibility lies with the European countries that are unable to take on the role that history gave them after the end of the Second World War: Promoting peace and development whilst respecting diversity.

Stefano Spoltore

NOTES

¹ Panayotis Vatikiotis, *Islam: States without nations*, Milan, Il Saggiatore, 1993, p. 54 (translation of *Islam and the State*, Routledge, 1987).

² Giorgio Vercellin, *Islam, faith, law and society*, Florence, Giunti, 2003, p. 50 and p. 88; Heinz Halm, *Islam*, Bari, Laterza, 2003, pp. 21 and onwards. (Translation of *Der Islam. Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Monaco, Verlag C.H. Beck, 2000).

³ See: Panayotis Vatikiotis, *op.cit.*, pp. 54-70 and pp. 143-187.

⁴ See the review *Aspenia*, Rome, No. 20, 2003, p. 167.

⁵ *Il Federalista*, XLIII (2001), No. 3.

THE DIVISION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The split that occurred between the countries of the EU at the Brussels summit in mid-December over adoption of the text of the "Constitutional Treaty", and the long confrontation among the states that preceded it, have both served to highlight with extreme clarity the increasing depth of Europe's division. In this regard, two considerations are essential. The first relates to the fact that adoption of the so-called European Constitution would not have rendered the Union the slightest bit stronger or more cohesive, and thus would not have made it possible to overcome the problem of the continent's division; the second relates to the "two-speed

Europe” debate triggered by the failure of the conference.

In reference to the first of these points, it must be recalled that the Convention had been assigned a specific mandate: to draw up proposals for a new treaty that would render the Union more democratic, closer to the citizens, and able to act more effectively, following the previous failure, in precisely these regards, of not one but two IGCs — the two that had produced, respectively, the Treaty of Amsterdam and the Treaty of Nice. Indeed, neither of these treaties addressed the urgent need for institutional reform that the single currency’s need for government, on the one hand, and the enlargement of the EU, on the other, had made patently clear. In spite of a protracted and heated debate, in the ’90s, on the future of Europe and the urgent need to deepen its political structure, the question asked in ’98 by Hans Tietmeyer, then president of the Bundesbank, (“Is political union more a condition or a consequence of monetary union?”) remained unanswered; similarly, the idea, at the time current, of creating a system of concentric circles, with the most deeply integrated countries at the centre, as a means of giving the Union the flexibility it needed to embrace new members, or of creating something akin to what Giscard d’Estaing more recently defined a “federation within the confederation,” also failed to elicit a response.

Theoretically, then, the Convention should have helped the Union to achieve that step-up, in quality terms, that the previous years had failed to produce, given that the euro was a reality whose limitations, deriving from the lack of a single European government of the economy, were now a very real problem, and given that enlargement was now a certainty — one with which the Union’s institutional order was manifestly ill-equipped to cope.

As confirmation of these contradictions stirring the Union throughout 2002 and the first half of 2003, while the Convention was debating the future of Europe, the signs of the EU’s increasingly precarious situation started to multiply: first of all, some of the states (France and Germany in particular), hit by severe economic stagnation, had problems respecting the terms of the Stability Pact; in more general terms, however, we can cite the dependence of Europe as a whole on the USA’s economic trend, and its incapacity to find its own, independent route to recovery. The storm that blew up at the end of November 2003, following Ecofin’s decision not to impose penalties on France and Germany for exceeding the budget-deficit limits laid down by the Stability Pact and the reaction of the European Commission, which, as this piece is being written, has decided to fight the decision through legal channels, had been brewing for

some time. It was a storm that was, after all, both predictable and inevitable, since it is madness to imagine that the eurozone countries can go on indefinitely having no proper economic policy — something they are no longer equipped to formulate individually, and which they cannot even develop together, not having transferred the necessary powers to European level — but only restrictive rules that may certainly prompt virtuous conduct in phases of economic expansion, but which quickly become straitjackets in times of recession. Having said that, until such time as a European government of the economy is created, these rules will remain indispensable in order to preserve cohesion within the eurozone. Thus, a contradiction is perpetuated that threatens to lead Europe to ruin. The only possible solution is the transition to political union already solicited by Tietmeyer’s question, which means transferring sovereignty from the states to Europe and transforming the Union into a federal state, equipped with all the competencies and instruments needed in order to govern Europe’s economy and currency effectively and democratically, with the consensus and under the control of the citizens. This is what the Convention should have been working towards, had it wanted to come up with real solutions to the contradictions generated by a European currency that is forced to exist in the absence of a European power.

In addition to the economic crisis, the work of the Convention also coincided with a dramatic event that threw into sharp relief Europe’s urgent need for a single political identity as well: the war in Iraq. The impotence of the European states, forced to choose between the servility of those who know they cannot oppose the extraordinary power of the strongest force and thus seek to ingratiate themselves with it, and the hopeless opposition of a minority, demonstrated an unequivocal truth: that only a strong and independent Europe could have made a difference. In this instance, too, faced with the need to create a European foreign and security policy, it is clear that the transfer of sovereign powers from the states to Europe is the only realistic option. Weak and misleading efforts to create a European defence on the basis of closer cooperation among a few states can, of course, produce only ridiculous results, such as the setting up, recently agreed by France, Germany and Great Britain (under the watchful eye of the United States and NATO), of a “European military planning cell.”

But was it realistic to imagine that the Convention might really be capable of transforming the Union into a true federation? Clearly not, and for a number of reasons. Unlike an IGC, the Convention had the considerable advantage of not being restricted by the need to reach unani-

mous decisions — the advantage, indeed, of not even having to worry about the question of voting. The decision-by-consensus formula that it adopted was meant to make it possible — and did, in fact make it possible, thanks to the authority of the Presidium — to cut through the most controversial issues. It was thus easier for the Convention, compared with an IGC, to reach agreements, but this was due precisely to the fact that it was not accountable in the final instance. The Convention's work was influenced by the knowledge that any decisions it might reach would later be taken, definitively, by the governments, knowledge that allowed it to ignore dissenting voices. Its mandate was thus determined, in both its form and its substance, by the will of the governments, and all the governments asked it to do was produce a series of proposals for improving the working of the Union without upsetting its existing institutional balances (which rest on the fact that the states have ultimate decision-making power).

The Convention thus worked — and it could not have been otherwise — not with a view to getting Europe to take a political (the federal) leap forwards, but rather with a view to rendering the Union more “governable,” something that in many cases meant giving the states a little more control over the European institutions in an endeavour to reduce, even minimally, the huge democratic deficit implicit in the working of a twenty-five-state confederation with numerous powers to intervene in the internal affairs of its member states. This is the framework outlined by Giscard d'Estaing in '94 when, in the course of the debate over the creation of a more closely integrated core of countries at Europe's heart, he drew a distinction between what he called *Europe as a power* (made up of those countries willing to give Europe an independent political identity) and *Europe as a space* (the larger Europe), and underlined the need to equip these two Europes with different rules and institutional systems, precisely in virtue of their different ends. The task assigned the Convention was to work on *Europe as a space*. This was clear from its membership, which included representatives even from candidate EU member countries. The marked heterogeneity of its members was, indeed, the dominant feature of this assembly in which nations with radically differing attitudes to the process of European integration were represented, and in which agreements had to be reached among countries presenting vastly differing degrees of integration, and whose national interests have still not been rendered convergent by a decades-long participation in a common process.

As a result, the Convention was unable to tackle the problem of

European economic government, and ignored entirely the divisions over the war in Iraq that were tearing the Union apart (incredibly enough, priding itself on its ability to leave that crisis “outside” its discussions), concentrating instead on the search for a compromise — necessarily a low-profile one — that might be acceptable to everyone. The so-called Constitutional Treaty that it delivered was thus nothing other than a very modest *dressing up* of the old treaties, which, for the first time, openly declared unmodifiable the current balance of powers in Europe, that is, the balance on whose basis the states retain their sovereignty and their power to implement decisions reached at European level. The solutions it proposes to the thorniest problems (external representation of the Union, the voting method, the composition of the European Commission) neither modify the nature of the institutions involved, nor render them more efficient and democratic, but simply seek to remedy old contradictions by introducing new ones, which is what inevitably occurs in any confederal system. For example, in areas where the majority voting system provided for by the previous treaty was seen to be excessively advantageous to the medium-sized countries, it was modified in favour of the larger and smaller ones; or, in a measure commensurate with the degree to which to which the composition of the enlarged commission (originally intended, again by the previous treaty, to serve as a guarantee for the smaller countries) excessively penalised the large states, intermediate solutions were sought that in reality merely generate new imbalances. In relation to the previous Treaties of Amsterdam and of Nice, the new text — and this is also the view of many expert commentators — failed to deliver any new feature that might genuinely favour the taking of real steps forwards in the process of the building of Europe (a view also expressed by political commentators the day after the closure of the Convention).

The fact that the states have rejected the proposed “Constitution” — arguing over whether to keep the old incongruencies in place or replace them with new ones — does not alter the terms of the problem: the real issue to be solved continues to be the progressive and unstoppable moving away from the prospect of political union that today characterises the framework of the Union and is accompanied by worrying resurgences of nationalism.

* * *

In the light of these considerations, it also becomes easier to analyse

the “two-speed Europe” problem. The fact that this concept continues to resurface indicates that there still exists a glimmer of awareness both of the need to progress along the road to European unity — and it is no coincidence that this is the position emerging within the ambit of the Europe’s founding countries, which, given their deeper involvement in the process of European unification, feel more keenly the weight of its disunity — and of the fact that this progress can be achieved only in a narrower framework than that of the present Union. Those who instead argue that the Union must be made to move forward *en bloc*, and condemn the two-speed concept as an attempt to undermine European unity, in reality seek — consciously or unconsciously — to preserve, and indeed, in the light of current trends, to deepen, Europe’s division. The European Union is not able to advance at a single speed, since it has ceased to be an evolving framework. This is not to suggest that the Union is useless (no one can deny that the consequences of its disintegration would be disastrous), nor that it should be dismantled in order to allow a group of states to deepen their reciprocal integration. The European Union is still the ambit that will allow the gradual integration of new countries, which will necessarily require longer periods of time to become assimilated. But only the presence, within the EU, of a federal core of states can enable it to fulfil this role, giving it the stability needed to counter the inevitable disintegrative forces to which all confederations are subject. At the same time, the federal core will serve as an example, indicating to new members the right direction in which to move. In this framework, the European institutions, whose role today is, objectively, to defend and preserve the *status quo*, would become the link between the federation and the rest of the Union, ensuring that the process of integration remains open to those countries that are not yet ready to relinquish their sovereignty.

We thus need to return to the debate of the ’90s on the need to create a federation within the confederation, and to give this theory the substance of fact: we need to identify clearly the objective (the federal state), the framework within which this objective can be pursued (the core group of countries that possess the historical and political requisites to assume this responsibility — the founding countries inevitably emerging as the most likely candidates), and the method (a federal pact among these countries, and the convening of a constituent assembly with a mandate to draw up the federal constitution of the European state, which any other state of the Union wishing to do so may subsequently apply to join).

This is clearly an initiative that necessitates a break with the existing

treaties and one that must inevitably — to begin with at least — be pursued outside the framework and logic of the Union. But it is a crucial break, which represents the indispensable premise for safeguarding the unity of the European people, and which will immediately be repaired upon entry of the federation into the Union and upon the predictable enlargement of the initial federal core to the many states that are not, at the present time, ready to support an initiative of this kind, but which will want to join it once it has become a reality.

However, the current debate on the question of a two-speed Europe fails to touch on any of this. It gets only as far as that first glimmer of awareness before, perhaps daunted by the difficulties inherent in carrying the idea through to its logical conclusion, veering off in the direction of minimalist if not dangerous proposals. The idea currently gaining most support and being most widely discussed, particularly in France and Germany, seems to be that of enhanced cooperation, an idea that retains a certain validity whether or not an agreement on the “Constitution” is reached within the year. Indeed, the treaties in force already make provision for this option and the Franco-German idea would seem to be — use of the conditional is mandatory, given that the ideas that are circulating are still extremely vague — to give those countries deeming it opportune the possibility to cooperate more closely in various sectors, in accordance ultimately, with their respective national interests. It is a prospect that would do absolutely nothing to encourage movement in a federal direction, that would indeed get in its way, since it would — should it ever come about — lead to the creation of a network of asymmetrical and overlapping alliances that would inevitably generate tension and contrapositions within the bosom of the EU. Neither is it conceivable that this danger might be averted by a group deciding to take up all the opportunities for enhanced cooperation in a bid to form the heart of Europe: not even France and Germany could do this, because it would be impossible for them to maintain a sufficient coincidence of interests.

The inadequate reactions to the failure of the Brussels summit, even considering the idea of a two-speed Europe, might thus be seen as an indication of the difficulties that the process of European integration is currently going through. Faced with the clear need to take a real leap forward in quality terms, even the states most deeply committed to the idea of European unity are going into reverse gear; lacking the courage to make the radical choices that are needed, they take refuge behind counterproductive hypotheses. It is hard to say how long Europe will be able to go on withstanding this situation. What we can say with certainty

is that the rest of the world is not waiting on our decisions, and that Europeans today are not equipped to rise to the challenges presented by this new century. At best — failing the emergence, in a reasonably short space of time, of some reaction — History, which is already banishing our continent to the sidelines, will condemn Europe to inexorable civil, social and political decline. And that is the best-case scenario, since the effects of Europe's disunity could well be far, far more dramatic.

Luisa Trumellini

Discussions

We have received, and are pleased to publish, two letters from federalist friends wishing to respond to articles appearing in the last issue of The Federalist.

Dear Editor,

I read with great interest and appreciation your editorial, published in number 2/2003 of *The Federalist*, "For a Federal Pact Among Europe's Founder Member States," finding myself to be in agreement, in many respects, with the title of the opening paragraph, "The Impotence of Europe and the Need for a European Foreign and Defence Policy," albeit with some reservations (which I will enlarge upon later). Kindly allow, therefore, an old federalist — like yourself — to add a few, brief reflections to your arguments.

As old federalists, then, and leaving aside all the clearly essential theoretical premises, which you have, after all, covered perfectly well, let us imagine for a moment that we are (and thank heavens we are not!) political leaders or members of the ruling class of one of the countries involved in the current process of the building of Europe (if we might still define it as such). Or better still, members of the ruling class of the country in which both of us were born, and in which we wish, as best we can, to go on living. Let us consider the, in some ways perhaps overplayed, European intergovernmental conference recently opened in Rome.

Quoi faire? First of all, I am afraid that Cossiga has plenty of good reasons for maintaining that perhaps the best, and possibly the only, course to opt for is still that of seeking to contribute — albeit, of course, with the utmost diplomacy and political tact — to a rejection of the so-called draft constitution (or better, draft international treaty) handed down by the Convention under Giscard d'Estaing; even though to do this will probably also and unfortunately mean ultimately having to decree together the substantial collapse of the negotiations begun. That said, I also fear that it is now no longer possible — and perhaps no longer even right — simply to move in the direction of such a rejection.

There has been a determination, albeit in conditions that are, to say the very least, controversial, to set the EU on the road towards its own enlargement, a noble aim certainly, and one that must inevitably, sooner or later, be placed on the agenda. Considerable sacrifices have been required of many countries, and there are a great many ineluctable demands and expectations that must now be met. But the prospect of EU enlargement has necessarily brought with it the need for revision of the Union's institutional machinery, for changes designed to ensure that this machinery will still be able to work in the context of what will be a much larger Union. One of the most important of these changes must surely be, as you yourself have pointed out, the introduction or extension of the majority voting rule to many (which exactly?) new areas. It is possible — leaving aside other, and certainly not lesser, difficulties — that this may prevent the EU from seizing up, but it will also doubtless increase the risk of insoluble crises due to the Union's being inflexibly subject to regulations and conditions that are modifiable only through unity of consensus.

The destiny that awaits, or will await, the European Union cannot be viewed without serious doubts and concerns. But perhaps, to we federalists of old, all this might be of only limited interest.

There remains, alternatively or in addition, the prospect — perhaps no more than a vague hope — of a serious and faithful (genuine) federalist and constituent initiative, founded on the conscious and unconditional renunciation, on the part of several of the eligible states, of their sovereignty, initially in the sphere of foreign policy and defence, given that all the rest, i.e., that measure, small or large, of residual autonomy that these states will be considered entitled to retain, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity — also provided for by the founding fathers of the United States of America, James Madison first and foremost — does not touch on essential areas.

But which of the European states might be seen as truly set on moving towards this goal, today or in the near future, and what chances would they have of succeeding in the endeavour? Perhaps one, two, or even more, of the six original founders of the old European Community? Can anyone really believe — or even merely hope — that France and/or Germany, or even only one of the two vis-à-vis the other, will, in the near future, want to undertake so much, to make such a decisive renunciation? This France, and also this Germany, that are already so openly unwilling even to effect the simple adjustment of their finances that is required in order to comply, in the euro area, with the terms laid down in the Stability Pact?

Without doubt, the people or peoples that might accomplish this step are, for the moment, lacking, and I fully understand the anxious quest to fill the gap that they have left and continue to leave. But are Chirac and Schröder really the individuals to look to?

I refer to France and/or Germany because it is with these two countries that the crux of the problem and/or the risk of murky hegemonic games (a risk to be guarded against) really lies. I must confess, sir, that around the time of the (then possible) military intervention in Iraq, the alignment of some federalist spokesmen and organisations, in the wake of the assumption by Paris, and for a time Berlin, caught up in a wave of unquestioning and dangerous anti-Americanism, of a divisive stance (divisive both for Europe and for the western world) in their defence of what were clearly their own interests, left me, and still leaves me, amazed and disappointed.

And so, by way of a brief conclusion, I come to one essential, and almost entirely overlooked, point regarding the issues currently on the table — a point that brings me back to the reservations I mentioned at the beginning of this letter.

I do not believe that any argument on the European Union, on European federation, on Europe and its destiny, or even on all that might affect us directly — leaving aside therefore the dreams, voiced by Muslim leaders such as Raed Misk, of one day “leading the soldiers of Islam to Rome” (to Rome, not to Paris or Berlin, mark), and leaving aside Bin Laden's threats, and the alarmist view of Magdi Allan, published in the *Corriere della Sera*: “Extremists join forces, the West is our enemy” — can seriously be developed without careful consideration of the historical period that our world, now a global village, is going through. The problem we are now facing — and it did not need September 11th 2001 to alert us to this fact — is that of a pouring forth, or better a flood tide, of forms of national and religious fanaticism or fundamentalism (not only Arabic-Muslim), combined with the existence and ready availability of weapons of mass destruction, not only of the nuclear variety; it is an explosive combination, entirely without historical precedent. In my view, no Europe, no Union, and no European federation can be considered acceptable or worthy of interest unless it is conceived from the perspective and within the framework of the closest possible alliance and unity, in the area of foreign and military policy (one might think of the Atlantic community or similar solutions), between our state or states and the United States of America, which is, whether or not one likes to accept the fact, a great democracy, and, again like it or not, an essential point of reference for any

responsible design or action whose aim is the establishment of a free and stable world political order.

It goes without saying — even though we all now know where, perhaps poorly concealed behind some ridiculous falsity, the real obstacle lies — that this alliance must be based on conscious and mutual respect for the dignity and equality of the rights of all the participants, the latter aware of the sacrifices that the current conflict and the building of peace today render essential, i.e., the sacrifice of their (apparent) independence and perhaps of their image. All this in accordance with the known formula — Kennedy's or Clinton's, call it what you will — of equal, balanced participation, which I do not intend, here, to go into in any depth. One thing, however, I will say: the prospect of Europe one day having to submit to some "American hegemony" seems to me to be a highly unlikely one. The United States is aware (and at the present time is being made ever more acutely aware) that, in the business of peace-building, Europe — once Europe proves able to decide what it is, and what its role might be, and stops dreaming or fantasising about other alternatives — is every bit as essential to America as America is to European security.

Tony Blair, addressing his own party congress, and in particular the numerous members opposed to Britain's participation in the US-led military intervention in Iraq, recently said: "We who started the war must finish the peace ... terrorism can't be defeated unless America and Europe work together." His words were greeted by a standing ovation, even though, in my lowly opinion, to talk of working together is not to go nearly far enough.

On these points, sir, I diverge from what seems to me to be your firm view, i.e., that "were an out-and-out federal state to be formed, the question of whether or not it would be opportune to preserve institutional ties between Europe and the United States of America would be irrelevant. A European federal state would be able, independently, to provide for its own defence. It would certainly draw up agreements and enter into alliances, but the policies it would follow would be determined, in each instance, by the nature of the interests at stake, and would not necessarily always coincide with those of the United States." I may be mistaken, of course, but I am practically certain in my belief, which you do not share, that the birth of a small federal core would signal a split, neither momentary nor secondary, within Europe: on the one side, France and Germany, and several hangers-on, including Italy (which may well be given the sop of having Rome as the venue for the signing of a few bits

of paper); on the other, the United Kingdom, Spain, Poland, Turkey, and so on. This is certainly food for thought.

The question, in any case, needs to be examined in much more depth. On the political side, this means at least examining the pressing need for greater openness towards and cooperation with the new Russia, and, as regards Europe, considering the crisis of confusion into which the continent's moral certainties have been thrown, a crisis that is undermining, to a greater or lesser degree, the feelings and beliefs that should be feeding its religious communities, in some cases now reduced — in the words of Catholic theologian Hans Küng, used in reference to the greatest (i.e., the most widespread and most influential) of these, the Church of Rome — to "...hierarchical institutions, centralised and ossified in dogmatic obedience, which are losing touch with the people."

This fact seems, moreover, to be a decisive element both in the inability of the entire western world to grasp, consciously, its own identity and, as a result, in the current impossibility of profitable cultural exchange and dialogue (crucial in whatever form) between the Euro-Atlantic community and the Islamic world. Such dialogue must be open to all religious aspirations, but divorced from the demands of paralysing mythology and/or vague ideology, and conducted in full recognition of and respect for the principle from which it arises and the conditions needed for it to take place, first and foremost full recognition on the part of all of the supremacy of reason; the only form of dialogue able to contribute, or at least to hope to contribute, to a movement towards forms of democratic cohabitation in those countries and among those peoples (Muslim) that today find themselves in a state of permanent revolt, even against themselves.

We have come, as you can see, to the basic question and essential theme that runs through our entire history of struggles, and our tradition of freedom: in other words, to the question of the relations between reason and faith, from Ancient Rome and Greece to Berengario of Tours (XI century...); a question dear to the humanists, the Socinians, to Bruno, Spinoza, Leibniz, and Kant, right up to Giuseppe Mazzini and Piero Martinetti: "A faith that is original and absolute is inconceivable" (an affirmation, in my view perfectly valid in itself, and one that must be accepted if there is to be fruitful dialogue).

But all this leads us on to questions of an altogether different nature which, if you wish, we might discuss at some future time.

My warmest good wishes,

Guido Bersellini

NOTE

¹ Editor's note: This letter was written at the end of October and thus refers to the situation and events at that time.

* * *

Dear Sir,

I would like to express my gratitude to you and the editorial team for the publication of Albertini's hitherto unpublished text in No. 2/2003 of the review. Reading a text written by Albertini in 1964 was an emotional experience for me and gave rise to certain considerations which I wish to share with you in my open letter.

Albertini indicates the task which the Movement must carry out and shows that the Movement will only be able to grow as an organisation and make its mark on the course of history if it can carry out this task adequately. Albertini explains this task within the context of scientific research which the Movement must conduct in order to be able to "understand the structural aspects" of our modern society and to be able to formulate its own "theory of federation." The Movement must thus study the knowledge society in order to understand its structural aspects and therefore it must analyse the course of contemporary history so as to be able to construct the theory of federalism.

It is clear that if the scientific laboratory of the Movement produces a political thought steeped in truth, the number of its followers will increase and its influence on civilised society and the very *raison d'être* of the Movement will be clear in its political importance.

Albertini points to the fact that the object of research which the Movement must undertake is represented by the study of the "course of history," and that this study must be carried out with a scientific spirit. That is to say, the course of history must be studied "for what it is," without deforming it, without the false consciousness of ideologies, without prejudice and only for the purpose of understanding it.

Furthermore the course of history should not be studied in economic terms, or rather within the Marxian simplification of class struggle, but should be studied while mindful that the mode of production of each society influences society's total way of being, its scale of moral values,

its legal principles, its institutional organisation. Albertini writes that "the mode of production far outweighs the economy" because it involves all the modes of producing and reproducing social life. This notion of production is far broader than that of economic science.

Albertini's thought (which dates back to 1964!) is so amazingly anticipatory and profound as to be able to predict that the mode of production of modernity is about to undergo structural change because a scientific-technical (post-industrial) mode of production is already in its gestation. His words on the matter are revelatory: "the mode of production in gestation is a scientific-technical one" and this new mode of production will determine new ways of cultural and political existence in modern society. New society will produce behavioural models different from those of the world of manufacturing and will break the ties with roles that until now have prevented us all from "having an open, free and scientific mentality."

The new mode of production will change roles in society: work will no longer consist of the availability of muscle power, but will be a time for the agents of innovation, for researchers, academics and scientists to come together; the cultural level of civil society will be incomparably and generally higher than that of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. About this Albertini writes: "the new scientific-technical mode of production will transform the workers into technicians, just as industry had changed most farmers into workers;" so a civil society, first European and then global, will be born and will be the cultural and political referent of federalism.

Therefore to build the "federalist theory" Albertini tells us what the object of our studies must be and that it is the new mode of production of the society of the scientific-technical revolution, which is to attempt to intercept the course of history, to understand its new values in their gestation, to be able to point the way towards European and World Federation.

This great, exciting and demanding task which Albertini has set us requires the Movement to concentrate on an effort of study and elaboration. It needs to launch itself once again as a scientific laboratory in order to be able to be a political movement capable of gathering consensus and having an influence on civil society.

If Albertini were still among us he would certainly be able to re-constitute that laboratory of political thought the Movement used to be in its day, and which we all, with our same moral and political values, remember as unforgettable days. I therefore maintain that it is our duty to

try and take up the constructive debate again just as it had been put on the agenda by Albertini 40 years or so ago. I am sure dear Editor that your Review will succeed in providing the place and the occasion for this constructive debate to be re-proposed and thoroughly undertaken.

Yours with affection,

Alfredo Viterbo

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