

Memorandum by the EPU on the structure of Europe (Gstaad, 17 October 1949)

Caption: On 17 October 1949, Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, Secretary-General of the European Parliamentary Union (EPU), presents a memorandum to the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe in which he defines his ambitions for a new political and economic structure for Europe.

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submitted to the Commission on General Affairs of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, by
THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY UNION

The purpose of this Note is to state briefly the political and economic structure which would best be able to secure for Europeans the highest degree of security and prosperity, and effective protection of their human rights.

1. Security

History teaches that a group of States forming a geographical entity can find no better means of ensuring their peace and security than by using the framework of a federal system.

A semi-federal system, which inevitably causes confusion and tension between the federal power and the sovereignty of the Member States, carries the risk of leading to crises of secession and civil wars, the most recent examples of which are the Wars of Secession of 1847 (Swiss Confederation), 1861 (United States), 1866 (German Confederation). As soon as the federal system was established in these three countries, internal peace was finally restored.

Thus, a semi-federal system in Europe would run the risk of placing the national powers in opposition to the federal authority and would be a source of Inter-European conflicts.

Therefore only a genuine European Federation would be able to ensure the permanent peace of the continent. Integration of the German nation into a European system would seem possible only within the frame of a federation. Would the German people ever agree to becoming a member of a Europe which withheld from them equality of rights? And would the nations who have suffered from German invasion ever grant Germany that equality unless there existed a strong and unquestioned authority, guaranteeing the conditions under which such rights would be exercised?

In particular, the integration of the German war potential into European economy would enable it to be under constant supervision, and would eliminate the risk of its serving one day against Europe itself.

Similar to the disunited Italy of the 16th century, and the disunited Germany of the 17th century, Europe, split up as it is today, is placed between two great Powers.

If the States of Europe were to maintain their sovereign rights in the field of foreign policy, they would be unable to withstand advances or pressure from the outside, and this might in the long run, transform Europe into the battle-field of the Third World War, in the course of which no doubt Europeans and their civilization would be annihilated.

The most effective guarantee against such a disaster would be the establishment of a European Federation, peaceful by reason of its very diversity, but strong by its defensive unity, the consolidated foreign policy of which would be vested in a single Federal authority.

It would therefore be necessary to unify likewise the defense system of Europe, which is at present in a chaotic state.

It should be mentioned, at this point, that hitherto the Council of Europe has refrained from discussing the problems relating to European security.

Consequently, to ensure the peace and independence of Europe, it would require a unified system of defense, a federal army under a supreme command, a rational armament production and a European military budget.

This cannot be carried out by compromises between a dozen sovereign Governments and Parliaments, but solely through the intervention of a Federal Government, which would be responsible before a European Parliament.

2. Liberty

The American War of Secession may serve as a lesson to Europe. It broke out because the Federal Government in Washington was not strong enough to impose the abolition of slavery on the Southern States through mere police action.

If Europe wishes to guarantee Human Rights to all her citizens, she must possess the power to crush any possible resistance on the part of totalitarian States who might seek to subject their nationals to regimes of tyranny.

Europe requires a Supreme Court to establish violations of Human Rights. But a Court without a police force would soon prove powerless; and a Federal police force could not function without the possible support of a Federal army.

Only a federated Europe would be able to guarantee Human Rights to Europeans, without causing civil strife or wars of secession.

3. Prosperity

It is widely recognized that economic recovery of devastated Europe can be accomplished only by the creation of a European market which would enable production to be increased and the standard of living of the population to be raised.

After the periodic devaluations of national currencies, only a currency of a European character could inspire the necessary confidence for the establishment of a stable and prosperous economic system.

Organization of the European market cannot be the result of compromises between Governments who are dominated by regional and particularistic interests; it will be the achievement of a Federal authority, capable of removing by stages the economic barriers between European States, despite all particularistic opposition and obstruction.

Moreover, even the operations of the O.E.E.C., the productiveness of present relations between free Europe and the United States of America within the frame of the Marshall Plan and also the future of such relations, when implementation of the Marshall Plan has been concluded, will be facilitated and guaranteed when the United States will be able to deal with one European Federation whose objectives are united.

4. Organization of Europe

It is therefore obvious that the European question cannot be solved merely by a union of sovereign States, but solely by the establishment of a Federation, and by the creation of the United States of Europe.

The problem of the organization of Europe was examined by the European Parliamentary Union, at its Second Congress which met in Interlaken in September 1948. This Congress added the enclosed programme.

The "Interlaken Plan" provided for a federal system of Europe based on an executive, a legislative and a judiciary Power, a common foreign, military, economic and monetary policy, and on the guarantee of Human Rights for all Europeans.

Implementation of this programme brooks no delay. The economic situation of Europe requires that it be

carried into effect before the final conclusion of the Marshall Plan in 1952. The political situation calls for the establishment of this federal structure prior to the signature of the Peace Treaties with Germany, to obviate that the German people lose hope in a European future, and similarly to the Chinese people, turn towards Moscow.

5. The European Constitution

The European Consultative Assembly is a first step towards federation.

It would appear, however, that the authority of this Assembly would be enhanced when all its Members are elected by their national Parliaments. It would also seem appropriate to double the number of delegates, simply by associating the Substitutes in the work of the Assembly.

Whilst preserving its consultative character, the Assembly should be given forthwith the mandate of preparing a Draft European Constitution. This Draft would then be submitted for consideration by the national Parliaments.

In drawing up this Draft Constitution, the Assembly would be well advised to avoid that a minority vote overrule the majority. Thus the texts should be adopted by simple majority vote.

On the other hand, to ensure its entry into force for the benefit of States who had ratified it, it would be advisable to adopt the condition that approval should be secured for it from States representing at least two thirds of the population represented in the Assembly.

The Council of Europe should continue to function for the purposes of serving as a framework for associating the non-federated States of Europe with the federated States, thus ensuring maximum European solidarity.

6. Declaration of European Union

In Europe's most tragic hour, on 16 June 1940, the most outstanding Statesmen of Great Britain and France adopted the text of a declaration of Franco-British Union, which could still serve as a guide in carrying into effect a European Federation.

The Declaration of Franco-British Union was proposed by the British War Cabinet, presided over by Mr. Winston Churchill, including amongst others, Mr. Attlee, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Bevin, Mr. Dalton and Mr. Morrison, to the French War Cabinet, presided over by M. Paul Reynaud. The latter, and the following Members of his Government: MM. Campinchi, Dautry, De Gaulle, Delbos, Eynac, Mandel, Marin, Monnet and Rio, and the Presidents of the two Chambers, MM. Herriot and Jeanneney, approved it.

If this great plan for Franco-British Union had been carried out at the time, a united Europe would have emerged from the war.

It is not too late to come back to this historic text, adapting it to the European situation of today:

"Henceforth France, Great Britain, Italy, Belgium ... etc., shall no longer be sovereign nations, but one indissoluble European nation.

"A Constitution of Europe shall be drawn up and shall provide for joint organs of foreign, economic, financial and defense policies.

"Every citizen of a Member State will enjoy immediately European nationality.

"The Parliaments of the Member States will be associated.

"All the forces of Europe, whether on land, sea or in the air, will be placed under a supreme command."

This text contains all the essential elements of a European Federation: Constitution; supreme command; joint organs of defense; foreign, economic and financial policies; association of the Parliaments; European nationality, European nation.

It would undoubtedly be better for Europe to revert at once to this text which was proposed and adopted by men who are amongst the most far-seeing in Great Britain and France, in preference to awaiting another 16 June 1940.

Gstaad, 17 October 1949.

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