

The Tragedy of the Middle East

The tragic events in Palestine have shocked to the core all those who believe in the values of peace and the coexistence of peoples. It is clear that we are faced with a situation whose solution cannot be sought within the narrow confines of Israel alone. This is a situation that involves deeply the region's Arab states, the United States — the alliance with and support received from the US is crucial to the survival of the Jewish state — and the European Union — quite apart from all the humanitarian considerations, peace in the Middle East is very much in Europe's interests, as is continued collaboration with all the countries of the region. A further escalation of the violence there would only inflame Arab public opinion still more, endanger the region's moderate regimes and possibly prompt Israel's neighbours to take up arms — and the consequences of that do not bear thinking about.

As always in politics, it is pointless, when faced with tragedies of this magnitude, to seek to apportion blame. Efforts to do so are nothing more than pretexts, their real aim being to strengthen one of the alliances that are inevitably formed in these situations. The truth is that the real victims of this spiral of violence, whichever side they belong to, are mainly innocent men and women, united solely by their desire to live in peace.

But violence leads to violence, creating a vicious cycle that fuels the progressive radicalisation of the peoples involved. This, in turn, leads to a situation, within the political class, in which the hawks are allowed to dominate the doves.

It goes without saying that lulls, attributable to the weariness of the parties involved in the conflict, are inevitable in processes of this kind, and that the periods of relative calm can be consolidated and prolonged through the reaching of interim political agreements and fragile institutional solutions. A definitive end, on the other hand, depends on the coexistence of certain conditions, internal and external. The former are

first, a definitive inversion of the deadly cycle of hate, thanks not to a state of transient weariness, but to an out-and-out rejection of a level of violence that is at last deemed intolerable, and second, the emergence of leaders with great political standing and moral fibre who are truly able to understand the people's deep desire for peace. The external conditions, on the other hand, depend on a change in the international situation. One need only think of how the Second World War and the start of the process of European unification promoted by Monnet, Adenauer, de Gasperi and Schuman brought to an end the centuries-old hatred between the French and the Germans, a hatred that had caused such bloodshed in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth. Or of how the sanctions imposed by an international community no longer prepared to tolerate the existence, in a great country, of extreme forms of racial violence, together with the action of de Klerk and Mandela, supported by the consensus of two communities wishing to live in peace, finally ended, at the start of the '90s, South African apartheid.

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Any provisional solution (such as the creation of a Palestinian state, substantially devoid of autonomy and split into two non-contiguous territories, or the intervention of an international peace-keeping force), however weak and transitory, must clearly be welcomed, in so far as it would mean a reduction of the bloodshed and an easing of tensions. But solutions of this kind cannot remove the reason for the violence. Instead, they allow the original grievances to simmer below the surface, ready, at the first opportunity, to explode once more. These solutions must therefore be pursued with full awareness of their provisional character, and of their role as steps along a road that must lead ultimately to stability of the region and to the peaceful co-existence of its peoples. And yet, as world watches, in horror, the unfolding of events in the Middle East, it cannot help but note the failure of such provisional solutions to emerge. Neither of the two communities caught up in the conflict has, in its efforts to destroy its adversary in order to save itself, yet given any indication of weariness, while the leaders of the two factions continue to give voice to the most extreme groups within their respective alliances, or at least to accept that their views must prevail over more moderate positions. The United States, still reeling from the shock of September 11th, is proving unable to mediate between one of its most established allies, which, moreover enjoys the support of a strong lobby within America, and a

Palestinian leadership that is unable to prevent acts of suicide terrorism on the part of extremist groups, and in some cases is even party to such acts. Furthermore, the United States has driven a wedge between itself and the last remaining support it enjoyed in the Arab world, which now makes no distinction between American and Israeli presence in the region. Europe is divided and powerless. Having been the Palestine's leading source of financial support, it has stood by and watched the fruits of its efforts destroyed in a civil war that it can do nothing to prevent.

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A definitive solution to the Palestinian tragedy is certainly not going to be found quickly, as if by magic. For one to be found at all, a situation will have to evolve in which, on both sides, religion is less closely bound up with politics and the economic conditions of the two communities are not so starkly different. But a medium-term solution can be envisaged, and a broad appreciation of this fact is essential in any endeavour to manage, in some way, the present situation and to lessen the destruction it is causing.

Although it is obviously quite impossible to describe this solution in any detail, we can try to indicate its general nature and the conditions in which it could emerge. First of all, it must be a solution whose scope is not local, but regional. As long as Israel continues to be surrounded by states that would like to see it destroyed, the possibility that it might abandon its militaristic and national-religious approach, and accept a compromise with neighbours it considers enemies, is clearly nil. What needs to be proposed therefore is a project that embraces the whole of the Middle East, and that creates federal ties between the states of the region, including Israel and a Palestinian state. Not only would a solution of this kind guarantee fulfilment of the primary objective (peace); it would also make Israel's economic and technological resources available to Arab countries, while offering Israel a vast market for its products. This is not, let it be clearly understood, an imminent solution. But neither is it an impossible goal, or, therefore, one for whose achievement the region's better forces cannot, immediately, begin to strive.

One need only recall Shimon Peres' proposal (advanced in a 1993 book entitled *The New Middle East*) for a sort of Israeli-Arab union, developed along the lines of the EC, and which would be responsible, above all, for the distribution of water resources, improving agricultural productivity, planning road and rail networks across the whole of the

Middle East and developing programmes and regional infrastructures for tourism.

However, none of this could ever come about without the strong political and economic support of the international community. This kind of assistance, which would guarantee the region's internal and external security and provide it with the means for its economic recovery, could, in an arrangement reminiscent of America's provision of aid to Europe through the Marshall Plan and the OEEC, be subject to the condition that the programme be jointly managed. But it must be underlined that for as long as the current world equilibrium prevails, an equilibrium characterised by the unchallenged, yet fragile, global hegemony of the United States, the unconditional alliance between Israel and the United States, and by growing Arab hatred of both these countries, this intervention, albeit essential, will remain inconceivable.

In order to open up the way towards a solution to this problem, a new actor is needed on the world stage: an actor able to wield considerable political influence and equipped with vast financial resources, an actor that might act in concert with the United States, but that is independent of it, an actor with the capacity to offer the Palestinians and the other Arabs of the region the guarantee of impartiality that the United States is unable to provide. Europe is the only actor that might conceivably have the requisites to play this new role. But it would have to be a Europe that, through political unification, is equipped to live up to its enormous potential — a potential attributable to its advanced level of economic and technological development, the size of its population and its high level of interdependence with the Middle Eastern region — an interdependence that is destined to become increasingly marked as the United States starts to look to “safer” countries (i.e., countries that are easier to control) for its oil supplies.

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Arafat, and other Arab leaders, continue to appeal to Europe to intervene, in a peace-making capacity, in the Middle East. But, ritual gestures apart, Europe (because of its impotence, which is in turn the product of its division) cannot be drawn. While the governments of the Union's member-states murmur their disagreement with US policy, they lack both the clarity of vision and the courage to propose a different policy from the one pursued by the Americans. This stems from their knowledge that fifteen governments united only by weak confederal

links cannot voice a common will and, even if they could, would not have the power to impose it. Thus, all that Europe is able to offer the world is the sorry spectacle of a group of states that are failing to shoulder their historical responsibilities and that consider the quest to ensure that their own national interests prevail over those of their partners as a more important motivation than the values of unity and peace.

In the course of the second half of the twentieth century, European integration advanced to extraordinary levels. Had Europe had the capacity to see this process right through — to federal unity — then it would, today, be in a position to make a decisive contribution to efforts to achieve economic development and peace in the world. Furthermore, it would stand before the rest of mankind, and the Middle East in particular, as an example of how a group of states, historically divided by wars and violence, can overcome their differences once and for all and offer their citizens a secure and prosperous future. But this has not, as yet, come about, and today, because of the turn of events within the Union, and the situation internationally, even the conditions that underpinned Europe's birth and evolution as far as the creation of the single currency are being lost. Unless there is a radical change of direction — and it will take a strong act of will in order for this to come about — Europe, rather than being a factor essential to peace and stability in the world, will run the risk of a return to the nationalism and conflicts of the past, and to an ugly degeneration of civil cohabitation.

The Federalist

The Role of Regional Parliaments in the Process of Regional Integration: The Case of the Central American Parliament.

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1. Introduction: The History of Regional Integration in Central America

The success of European integration and the stability and prosperity it offers has produced followers elsewhere in the world. However, the majority of these regional integration schemes are limited to economic objectives that avoid ambitious political goals. This is particularly true in the American continent where, despite linguistic and cultural affinities, the various regional integration schemes have remained within the framework of intergovernmental, mainly economic, cooperation. A notable exception to this pattern is Central America. This area has produced the most politically advanced integration process seen in the Americas, and it also has several unique characteristics that deserve particular attention, especially on the part of European federalists.

The five countries of the Central American isthmus (Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica) share a long and common past. They formed part of the Mayan cultural area and, following the Spanish Conquest, became a separate administrative unit (the General Captaincy of Guatemala) within the Vice-Royalty of New Spain (Mexico). During the struggle for independence from Spain in the 1820s, Central America, after a brief annexation to the Mexican Empire, declared its independence as a federal state, the United Provinces of Central America. However, fights between political factions and among provinces led to the dissolution of the Federation in 1838. Notwithstanding this initial failure, the dream of Central American union, the “*patria grande*,” inspired a number of attempts to reconstruct the Federation. Each of these failed for reasons similar to those that had earlier led to its demise: local antagonism, lack of communication, absence of democratic traditions,

insufficient economic and political development, foreign intervention.¹

It was only after the Second World War that a successful integration scheme appeared: the Central American Common Market (C.A.C.M.). Founded in 1960, it aimed to create a customs union and, later, a common market, and, at the same time, to coordinate the region's industrialisation and economic development. Though one of the most successful examples of economic integration in the 1960s — it was presented as a successful case of the application of functionalist theories — it failed to transform economic performance into genuine prosperity;² the unwillingness of member-states to deepen the process and to make provision for more democracy in the region led to the eventual break-up of the Common Market in the early 1970s, while the region foundered in a series of civil conflicts.

Throughout that decade and into the 1980s, Central America came to international attention, as civil wars in El Salvador and Nicaragua and external intervention made it a central region in the East-West conflict. Amid concerns that the military escalation might lead to a generalised regional war, the question of regional integration returned to the fore. Following the failure of all external efforts to reduce tension (mainly those of the Contadora group) and faced with a military stalemate, Presidents Oscar Arias Sanchez of Costa Rica and Vinicio Cerezo of Guatemala proposed a peace plan based on confidence-building, internal democratisation and the holding of free elections;³ the Esquipulas-I plan, adopted in the city of Esquipulas in July 1986 during the first meeting of all Central American presidents for a generation, included the creation of a directly-elected regional parliament, the Central American Parliament (also known by the acronym Parlacen, taken from the Spanish *Parlamento Centroamericano*), which became a central point in the reconciliation and pacification process in the region.

2. The Central American Parliament

2.1 Origins.

It is important to underline the significance of this event in the history of the region: for the first time, Central American leaders recognised the link between pacification and internal and regional democratic consolidation. Breaking with the tradition prevailing elsewhere in Latin America, they looked to a regional tool to facilitate and measure democratic progress nationally and admitted that national and international

democracy could not be separated. Thus, the renewed Central American integration process immediately followed a political path and sought popular legitimacy, to be achieved through the direct election of members of the Parlacen.

Furthermore, this step marked a turning point as regards the model of regional integration in the Americas. Until then, the parliamentary aspect of regional integration had been neglected, ignored even: since the goals of most regional integration schemes had been purely economic, parliamentary institutions had played practically no role in them. At the same time, popular participation in integration processes had not only been regarded as undesirable, but also discouraged. In the context of the authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regimes that constituted the norm in Latin America, popular involvement had not, until then, been requested. Even the few regional parliamentary assemblies that did exist were either isolated from any integration scheme (like the Latin American Parliament) or constituted mere consultative instruments created in the wake of the European experiment (for instance, the Parliament of the Andean Pact).

On the contrary, the Parlacen not only drew citizens into the integration process, through the direct election of its members, but also (by linking regional integration to democratisation and peace) expanded the objectives of integration so that they reached into the political sphere. One should bear in mind the similarities with the foundation and subsequent enlargement of the European Communities: it was to avoid another war and to consolidate democracy in Germany that Europe built its first supranational structures; and it was in order to avoid a return of dictatorial regimes that the southern European states (Greece, Spain, Portugal) joined the European Community later. The same objective can, today, be seen in the enlargement of the E.U. towards central and eastern European countries: economic arguments are accompanied by the conviction that joining a larger European family will strengthen democratic institutions.

The year 1986 was a particularly appropriate time for this initiative in Central America. For the first time since 1954, a civilian, Vinicio Cerezo, was elected President of Guatemala. Furthermore, Cerezo, a Christian Democrat, belonged to the moderate reformist tradition of Central Americans who wanted to promote democratic and social changes through peaceful means and within a larger, regional and supranational, context. At the same time, given the impossibility of resolving the regional conflicts militarily, the European Community, for the first time, intervened in Central America, but with different political goals from those of the U.S. and with projects based less on confrontation than on the

desire to build confidence. Finally, Costa Rican fears of being dragged into a regional war led its president, Oscar Arias Sanchez, to abandon traditional Costa Rican neutrality and detachment from events in its region and to propose a plan for democratisation that also included elements of regional integration.

Responsibility for preparing the text for the treaty on the creation of the Parliament was assigned to a committee composed of the vice-presidents of the five states, chaired by the Guatemalan vice-president, Roberto Carpio Nicolle. The European model certainly featured prominently in the discussions of the drafting committee. At a certain point during the debates, the likelihood of a regional parliament with decision-making powers was seriously envisaged, promoted by Guatemala and, in particular, by Carpio Nicolle in person. Costa Rican opposition and a lack of enthusiasm from the other states led to the abandonment of this project and to the diminishment of the Assembly's competencies.⁴ In August 1987 (during the Esquipulas-II meeting of the Central American presidents) the question was debated again, and, between the 8th and the 16th October 1987, the "Constitutive Treaty of the Central American Parliament and other political instances" was signed by the five states.

2.2 Attributions.

An analysis of the text of the Treaty demonstrates that it created a symbolic rather than a decision-making institution. Its preamble declares that the Parliament is part of "a pluralistic... democratic process... allowing member-states to debate and decide on economic, social and cultural issues of interest to them... in order to reach a higher degree of cooperation" (Treaty preamble para.s 4 and 5). The Parliament is presented as an instrument "of examination, analysis and recommendation of issues of common interest... and is based on democratic representation and pluralism" (Article 1). It is composed of an equal number (20) of members per country, as well as the president and first vice-president of each member-state after the end of their term (Article 2). Its members should be elected through elections "respecting a wide political and ideological representativeness" and "in a democratic and pluralistic system that guarantees free... elections on terms of equality" for all parties (Article 6). The rejection of the supranational option becomes apparent when scrutinising the Parliament's competencies (Article 5). These consist of a number of consultative tasks, such as, to act as a forum of discussion on issues of regional interest, to offer impetus to the integration

process and allow for further co-operation among Central American countries, to propose draft treaties and agreements among member-states, and to contribute to strengthening the democratic system and respect for international law.⁵

Still, the Parlacen was attributed, nevertheless, a few decision-making competencies: it “elects, nominates and removes the highest executive director of integration organisms, existing or to be created” (Article 5 para. c.). Also, it “examines a yearly report of activities” submitted by the regional integration institutions and reviews the “means and actions taken in view of the implementation of the decisions adopted during the period under consideration” (Article 29).

This brief illustration deserves some comment and a deeper analysis. By opting for a symbolic rather than a genuine regional assembly, the Central American states reneged on their previous determination to build a regional institution based on popular legitimacy. In addition, the absence of any coherent institutional framework for regional integration and the parallel existence of various regional integration schemes — the institutions of the C.A.C.M. still existed, as did various sectorial and technical regional instruments — weakened the institutional basis of the Parliament and limited its potential.⁶

To make matters worse, the ratification process was thwarted by national resistance, stemming essentially from Costa Rica. As the only democratic state in the region, Costa Rica rejected attempts to grant supranational powers to an institution whose majority came from less-than-democratic countries.⁷ As a result of internal disputes over the country’s participation in the Parliament, ratification was blocked for more than two years.⁸ Finally, in order to escape from this impasse, the member-states adopted a Protocol to the Treaty that “froze” all remaining decision-making powers of the Parlacen in exchange for the possibility of allowing it to operate without ratification by all countries. Subsequently, and after elections had been held in Guatemala, Salvador and Honduras, this rump parliament was installed on October 28, 1991.

2.3 The Evolution of the Parlacen.

Compared to initial expectations, the final result, in institutional terms, of the creation of the Parlacen can be considered a disappointment. That said, interesting conclusions, as well as lessons on the possible role of regional assemblies in contexts of intergovernmental regional integration, can be drawn from the road it followed and the activities it

undertook subsequently.

Primarily, it must be recognised that the regional and national contexts in 1991, when the Parlacen was born, were substantially different from those of 1986, the year in which it was first conceived. In 1991, pacification had almost been completed, the Sandinistas had been removed from power through elections and, solely at national level, democratisation was progressing. The presidents who had contemplated and promoted the Parliament had left office, while regional integration had advanced through the usual intergovernmental co-operation mechanisms and through a reactivation of the institutions of the C.A.C.M. Popular support for a regional parliament, always lukewarm, had declined further because of the process used for the election of its members and because of Costa Rican opposition, both factors that prevented it — and here parallels can be drawn with the Council of Europe — from becoming a moral authority for democracy and integration in Central America.

Furthermore, the Parlacen had no decision-making capacity and, because of its operating costs, its continued existence was constantly in doubt. The fact that the Parlacen survived this initial period can be attributed, to a large extent, to the financial and political support provided by Europe, especially by the European Parliament, which saw the Parlacen as a model to be promoted elsewhere.⁹

However, its subsequent development demonstrates the inherent tendency of legislative bodies to fight for more prerogatives. After an initial period of relative inactivity and institutional and political isolation, the Parlacen launched an aggressive campaign with precisely this objective, trying to reach out to all sectors of political and civil society.

This struggle became easier after the renewal of the framework of integration. The Tegucigalpa Protocol, which created the System of Integration of Central America (S.I.C.A.), despite keeping the Parlacen on the fringe of the regional integration process, nevertheless gave it extra institutional space in which to move.

The Protocol brought under a single umbrella the various integration schemes and bodies existing in Central America and created a system that drew a lot from the European Union model (for instance its organs included a Meeting of Presidents, a Council of Ministers, an Executive Committee and a General Secretariat, as well as a Court of Justice and a Parliament). This new framework reconnected the Parlacen with the political developments in Central America. Also, the S.I.C.A. itself no longer set itself purely economic objectives; rather, it represented the bridge between traditional intergovernmental co-operation and supra-

national democracy. The Protocol recognised, for instance, that the aims of development, peace, democracy and integration are indivisible and stressed the need to use regional means in order to achieve them. Its founding principles include, in fact, recognition of the Central American identity and the gradual completion of the process of regional economic integration. This new institutional framework thus offered more opportunities for legislative intervention in the field of integration. Furthermore, the creation of other integrated instruments (in particular the General Secretariat and, later, the Central American Court of Justice) gave the Parlacen some objective allies in the fight to establish a democratic supranational system of integration in the region.

In this new context, the Parlacen started a new life. During the second half of the 1990s the political experience it acquired turned it into a focal point of regional integration. Several other factors also contributed to this development. Nicaragua, in October 1996, and Panama, in 1997, ratified the Treaty on the Parlacen and nominated their first parliamentarians. Thus, not only did the number of MPs increase substantially (from 60 to 100), but their representativeness rose too. Until then, the MPs, often second-rate national politicians in search of a sinecure on the way to retirement, had essentially represented parties from the right wing and centre of the political spectrum. The normalisation of the political situation in El Salvador and the Nicaraguan membership of the Parlacen increased the number of left-wing MPs (and also of women due to the gender policy of the *Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional*) and made the debates livelier and more interesting, as well as passionate and public. The press started to report on debates in the Parlacen, the integration institutions to hold regular meetings with its thematic committees, and governments to meet the members of the Parlacen that represented them.

At the same time, the supranational way of running political activity within the Parlacen had important consequences for political parties. Members of the Parlacen (and this is also true of the European Parliament) are divided into political groups on the basis not of their nationality but of their ideological affinities. Parties from the different member-states that had previously had no contact with one another were thus, as never before, obliged to meet and co-operate on various issues of regional interest and, at the same time, the Parlacen became a forum that encouraged the development of relations among political parties from the same country. The consensual way the Parlacen tended to treat issues at stake and the fact that most parties, be they left- or right-wing, held broadly similar opinions on the process of regional integration eased tensions

between them and permitted them to reach out to each other more readily than at national level.

Contacts between national parties were fostered in other ways too. Since 1992, the Parlacen has organised annual thematic conferences open to all Central American parties, bringing them together on matters that include issues of regional interest, mainly dealing with the deepening of political union, but that also cover more practical issues as well, for instance Central American citizenship and the role of indigenous populations. These meetings, far from being simple social events, constitute for the Parlacen an important channel of action, and for the political parties, often represented by their leaders in person, a key opportunity to develop international relations.

Civil society was the other target of the Parlacen's campaign to expand its role and enlarge the spectrum of integration. Even more than political society, civil society organisations were, previously, completely excluded from the regional integration process. Certainly, the general political situation in the countries of Central America made it difficult for civil society even to exist, let alone intervene in a process considered primarily the province of the executive. The creation of the Consultative Committee of the S.I.C.A., which brought together a number of non governmental organisations and platforms, allowed, for the first time, these non-state actors to have a say, albeit in a purely consultative capacity, over the development of regional integration. The Parlacen seized this opportunity and increased its contact with various local, national and regional organisations and movements, its aim being twofold: to remind them of the existence of the Parliament and to take into account their needs and demands. These contacts were useful: in the past, civil society, especially those movements that challenged the governments in place, had tended to reject all expressions of organised political life and to see the Parlacen as nothing more than a group of highly-remunerated establishment politicians, completely detached from the real needs of the people. The permanent relations thus created broke down, little by little, this diffidence and permitted both sides not only to find common ground for discussion, but also to identify their adversaries and act together on various questions.

Finally, one should not underestimate the efforts made by the Parlacen to reach out to the national parliaments. Aware of the potential dangers of disputes with the national legislative bodies over their respective roles and competencies, the Parlacen began co-operating closely with the national parliaments in a fresh endeavour first to demonstrate that a

struggle between the legislative organs on the legislative control of integration is useless as long as governments rule over the integration process, and second to co-ordinate activities so as to facilitate the exchange of opinions and information between the Parlacen and national parliaments on integration issues. Thus, the two levels held regular meetings and the specialised committees on regional integration that have been created in all the national Parliaments worked in close co-ordination with the Parlacen committees.

2.4 Parlacen: The Focal Point in the Debate on Regional Integration.

These activities allowed the Parlacen to be at the centre of the renewed debate on regional integration when, after 1995, the forms and means of regional integration came under scrutiny, in order to reform or remodel the entire context of the S.I.C.A. These proposals for reforms were assembled in a document prepared by a group of experts under the joint auspices of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the United Nations Economic Committee for Latin America (CEPAL). The proposals had a strong functionalist character and aimed at creating effective intergovernmental structures for regional cooperation, while eliminating those instruments that had no practical impact or that were, according to the authors, premature or obsolete. One of the suggestions put forward was to abolish the direct elections of the Parlacen and to replace it with national MPs, as in the case of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.¹⁰ These proposals were initially approved by the Presidential Summit in Panama, in July 1997.

However, the Parlacen not only resisted these attacks on its very existence, launched by the authors of the Diagnostic, but also mounted a general counter-attack (supported, among others, by the Court of Justice of Central America and several political parties from different member-states). This opposition culminated in the presentation, by the Parlacen, of its own vision of regional integration. In a draft protocol, which it adopted in 1998, the Parlacen requested a substantial increase of its powers. These should include, in particular, the right to vote on the S.I.C.A. budget, to control its implementation and to be consulted on all treaties and agreements relating to regional integration that are signed by member-states. In addition, the Parlacen submitted to the Meeting of the Presidents and to Central American public opinion a draft text of a Treaty of Union that radically modified the regional integration framework. This second text, drafted in the wake of the IDB-CEPAL reform proposals,

contained a complete description of the structure and tasks of a future Central American Union and had a clear constitutional character. It was accepted by the seventh conference of Central American political parties in San Salvador, in September 1998.

Currently, the process of integration in Central America is at a crossroads. Ten years after its creation, the S.I.C.A. can boast a number of significant successes. These include a common external tariff, an almost complete customs union and substantial advances as regards the free movement of persons, capital and services. Furthermore, its integrated institutions have acquired considerable weight. The Court of Justice has shaped a nascent Community legal order and the General Secretariat has gradually become the system's administrative and political core, with the Secretary General obtaining an internationally recognised political status and role. At the same time, intergovernmentalism still holds. The six-monthly Meetings of the Presidents continue to be the motor of the S.I.C.A. and unanimity to be the rule in the decision-making process.

All the same, a "community" attitude is slowly developing, as are a level of popular participation and the concept of Central American identity. The "Managua declaration" of September 1997, made by the presidents of the six member-states, established the Central American Union, which constitutes a step towards the political integration of the isthmus. At the same time this declaration halted the "de-politicising" of Central American integration and thus constituted a reversal of the previous decisions taken in Panama in the July of the same year. Although the declaration has yet to become a political reality, in part due to national resistance and in part due to the backlash following a series of natural disasters in the area, in particular hurricane Mitch, it still remains the beacon of political integration in the region.

Of course, the region continues to face formidable problems, not least the problem of consolidating democracy. Despite the significant progress made, democracy is still fragile and only partly accompanied by social equality: the continued existence of mass poverty practically cancels any democratic achievement. Nationalist resistance continues to be a barrier to full integration, as does the "presidential" character of these countries. More significantly, the prevailing trend towards larger, regional or continental, free-trade areas in the Americas constitutes a major stumbling block to the separate Central American process of political and economic integration: the Central American states are drawn by centrifugal forces towards direct membership of these larger units rather than towards the creation of a separate Central American union.

In this context, the role and presence of the Parlacen can make the difference. Within a relatively coherent framework of integration, like that of the S.I.C.A., it can serve as the catalyst needed to deepen regional integration in a certain Central American nucleus. Sustained by popular legitimacy and — for the time being — lacking real powers, it can reflect on the future of integration and present solutions and projects that go beyond national boundaries. During its brief lifespan, it has managed to build a supranational, integrated political tradition, previously lacking, and succeeded in making integration issues a part of political debate. The proposal for a Central American union confirms that the regional integration process in Central America has now gone beyond mere economic integration and now encompasses more general issues, once belonging to the sphere of national competencies. The Parlacen has been instrumental in this enlargement. It has changed attitudes and brought the issue of integration out of bureaucrats' offices. As such, it is a case model for the role that popular representative institutions could play in similar circumstances elsewhere in the Americas.

3. Conclusions

I. The Parlacen was created, for the first time in Latin American history, to be a representative body that would promote, at regional level, objectives that are usually attained at national level: democratisation, peace and development. These objectives were not achieved in the early period of the life of the Parlacen, because nationalist resistance and the intergovernmental traditions of Central America prevented it from obtaining the decision-making powers needed to play a role in regional developments. The end result of the treaty establishing the Parlacen was a consultative regional assembly that was directly elected by citizens, but that lacked institutional support in the context of integration and had little popular legitimacy.

II. The subsequent evolution of the Parlacen is a paradigm for the almost automatic trend of elected institutions to fight for a stronger role, even in difficult circumstances. Enjoying hardly any institutional support within the region and only little from the European institutions, the Parlacen struggled to make its own way in the renewed context of Central American regional integration. It immediately identified its adversary: the tradition of intergovernmental cooperation that governs regional integration in Central America and that tends to exclude any parliamentary

intervention. It determined, therefore, to break the exclusive hold of governments on the regional integration process. It also started looking for allies. These were found in the civil and political society of Central America. As a result, it built strong links with political parties throughout the region and was instrumental in bringing about closer cooperation among the latter on issues relating to integration. This cooperation extended above and beyond regional integration, tackling issues right at the core of political developments in the region. Furthermore, it presented itself as the institution that naturally supports civil society, encouraging cooperation among organisations within civil society and opening up channels of communication with social movements that, until then, had been neither interested nor involved in regional integration issues. Finally, it multiplied its institutional contacts with other regional assemblies, notably the European Parliament, thus acquiring an international dimension as well.

III. Having thus established a measure of popular legitimacy and acquired a relatively broader institutional basis, the Parliament proceeded with the next step: the strengthening of its powers in a new institutional framework. By proposing a series of modifications to the legal framework of regional integration, the Parlacen followed, in this field as well, the path taken by the European Parliament. This latter, by voting in 1984, the Draft Treaty on European Union, claimed the right to a series of competencies that traditionally belonged to the legislative bodies and were taken away from national parliaments in favour not of a regional parliament but of regional bureaucracies. Although lacking an authoritative Spinelli-type figure at regional level, the Parlacen followed nevertheless the precedent set by the European Parliament and claimed, among others, the right to vote on the budget of the regional integration system, as well as the right to elect the leadership of the regional authorities.

IV. The presence and activities of the Parlacen reinforced not only the integration process but also interest in the regional developments on the part of various actors not previously involved with these issues. Thus the integration process gained a broader base than it had had in previous times (in particular, during the Common Market period), and covered more issues: not only economic integration but also, among others, political integration, democracy, social justice and foreign relations. The activities of the Parlacen in these fields were certainly made easier by the nor-

malisation of the political situation in the region and the general trends seen in the integration processes that allowed a stronger presence of elected institutions there.

V. The introduction of the parliamentary element into the regional integration process, if combined with a genuine presence on the part of the citizens, increases the number and the intensity of the factors that intervene in the integration process and strengthens relations between them. Thus, the integration debate permeates all sectors of society. It loses its technical character and allows real interests to be built and to converge on a level that is no longer national; it is also through this convergence that the integration process can be consolidated and spread, through an overspill effect, to other fields as well.

NOTES

¹ Edelberto Torres-Rivas (ed.), *Historia General de Centroamerica*, Madrid, Sociedad Estatal Quinto Centenario, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, 1993, Vol. III, pp. 104-106.

² Rafael Rodríguez Loucel "Integración centroamericana: evolución y perspectivas", in *Integración latinoamericana*, NE 201, June 1994, p. 54.

³ Andrés Opazo Bernales-Rodrigo Fernández Vázquez, *Esquipulas II. Una tarea pendiente*, San José, Editorial Universitaria Centroamericana, 1990, pp. 134-143.

⁴ Olga Marta Sánchez-Jaime Delgado Rojas, *Una contribución al debate. Integración regional*, San José, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales, 1993, p. 451.

⁵ Andrea de Guttry, *El proceso de integración regional de Centroamerica. Recopilación de Documentos Básicos con estudio introductorio*. Guatemala, Universidad Rafael Landívar, 1992, pp. 35-50.

⁶ Olga Marta Sánchez-Jaime Delgado Rojas, *op. cit.*, p. 449.

⁷ Luis A. Varela Quiros, "El proyecto de Parlamento Centroamericano: un análisis desde la perspectiva histórica, constitucional y electoral costarricense", in *Revista de Relaciones Internacionales*, School of International Relations, University of Heredia, Costa Rica, 1990, pp. 45-56.

⁸ IRELA Dossier n.24: *El Parlamento Centroamericano: alternativas de constitución y elecciones*, Madrid, April 1990, p. 40.

⁹ European Parliament, *El Parlamento europeo y el proceso de integración centroamericano*, Luxembourg, June 1997, p. 87.

¹⁰ Comisión económica para América latina y Caribe (CEPAL)-Banco interamericano de desarrollo (BID), *La integración Centroamericana y la institucionalidad regional*, San Salvador, S.I.C.A. Publications, February 1998, *passim*.

Notes

THOUGHTS ON THE STRATEGY OF FEDERALISTS IN THE CONSTITUENT PHASE

Any argument on the strategy to be followed for creating a European federation must define two things clearly: the *power* to build Europe and the *will* to build Europe. Taking this elucidation as a starting point, the strategic choice will inevitably be conditioned by the historical-political framework in which it is placed, that is to say, by the concrete, non theoretical, elements characterising the situation in which the need and the chance to take a step (even the definitive step) towards the political objective has emerged.

The *power to build Europe* is not something that is easy to define, since its meaning changes depending on whether it is considered in a static or in a dynamic sense. In the first case, it can be affirmed that there is no such thing as *a* power that can build Europe. In other words, it is impossible to imagine a situation in which someone imposes unity precisely because he has the power to do so. In a process of unification of states, the individual political subjects that are its protagonists, being states, have and retain their sovereign power until such time as the process of unification has been completed. And for this to occur, a simultaneous decision needs to be taken by all those involved.

Considering the question in a dynamic sense, on the other hand, it can be affirmed that the power to build Europe could, at least potentially, begin to manifest itself, were the initiative taken (with a certain amount of determination) by one or more governments, constituting the right response to a pressing problem, to prove able to win the consensus of the others. The concept of occasional leadership is thus the dynamic element that could, in a rather crystallised power situation (that of divided sovereign states), trigger a process that might lead the holders of the old powers to *decide* to create a new power, or, in the phase of constitutional gradualism, to realise an intermediate strategic objective — an objective whose strategic value would lie in the fact that it implied the relinquishing

of sovereignty (for example, in the areas of security and currency).

This question of the initiative is linked, on the one hand, to the objective situation, that is, to the impossibility that national solutions might be found for current problems (the crisis of national power), and, on the other, to the problem of *will*. A favourable attitude towards European unity is rooted in Europe's de facto unity and induces governments to look for unitary solutions. But a favourable attitude, on its own, leads governments only towards unitary solutions that are compatible with the retention of sovereignty. The role, and real importance, of the will of governments emerges solely in situations that involve the transfer of sovereignty. And the moments in which this will is expressed to its fullest extent are the ones that become constituent moments — ripe for the final and irrevocable decision to create a federation.

Naturally, the decision and will of governments are not the only factors to consider: the battle for European unification is not a simple agreement between states, but a constituent battle in which the will of a sovereign people must be manifested through the withdrawal of consensus for national powers and through the expression of the consensus needed to sanction the creation of the new European power. But if this is true, it is also true that in the creation of a state of states, which is what a federation would be, the existing state powers could become the executors of the will of the people (should this indeed manifest itself), in so far as they themselves, as autonomous entities, are willing to embody this will and prepared to opt for their own supersedence.

The formation of the will to create a federation, on the part of governments of historically established states, is, in the sphere of the great historical-political transformations, one of the most difficult processes. A rational analysis of the power situation that evolved in the wake of the Second World War ought to have prompted, and indeed should prompt, the holders of power at national level to share (and thus to act on) the idea that their lost sovereignty can be recovered only through the building of European sovereignty. While to do this would mean activating their own self-destruction, what actually prevails in the life of individuals and groups is the spirit of self-preservation. It must be noted, moreover, that this same spirit of self-preservation is what has underlain the progressive advances in the process of European unification and in the formation of a pro-European consciousness. But it is a false consciousness, one that was, and still is, based on the belief that unity can be achieved without facing up to the problem of the renunciation of national sovereignty.

This is why, now that we have reached the crucial moment at which only such a renunciation can save Europe's historical enterprise from total collapse, the true enemies are not the openly declared adversaries of Europe — these are easily taken on — but rather those who profess their Europeanism while also continuing, through the advancing of ambiguous proposals and formulae, to defend national sovereignty. These are the ones who must be considered the true enemies, first because it is more difficult to expose them for what they are, and second because a false consciousness is more difficult to permeate and less responsive to rational argument.

Nevertheless, federalists, coldly aware of these difficulties, still find themselves faced with the task of “forcing” the governments to make the right choice. But what, in concrete terms, does “forcing” mean? And how can this be compared, on the contrary, with “imploring”? If Machiavelli is to be interpreted literally, the difference between the two approaches depends on whether or not they are founded on an autonomous action. But there is nothing to say that an autonomous action, per se, cannot be directed at interlocutors and antagonists in order to make them play their assigned roles. If we link the idea of “forcing” with an “act of force” on the part of a revolutionary mass that, like a flood tide, would have enough power on its own to sweep away the national powers, then we can discount the other actors who have central roles in the process of unification. In such a scenario, the “revolutionary people” would be the only unprejudiced, free and innocent agent, the only agent with the capacity to free itself from the shackles of the national perspective, the only agent that federalists can look to for an act of force.

This extreme interpretation of the “revolutionary people” idea has already been seen within the European Federalist Movement — during the post-Maastricht debate on strategy. And, albeit in a more muted terms, support is also growing for the idea that mobilisation coincides with mass public demonstrations. The latter can be considered part of a strategic action if, and only if, they become the natural outlet of widespread and coherent action at all levels — an action that must be aimed not solely at demonstrations, but above all at the issuing of the right rallying cry.

On the other hand, a similar interpretation is masked by the view that the Convention established at the Laeken summit might “seize power” and become a constituent assembly. But this idea, too, incorrectly viewed as the concrete implementation of the constituent method, is characterised by a failure to take into account the elements and political subjects involved in a process of unification of states.

When we affirm that the *constituent method* (as opposed to constitutional gradualism) is the only method that, in situations involving the renunciation of sovereignty, can and should be used, we must, if we are to avoid running the risk of losing touch with reality, be aware of the true significance we are attaching to the term.

In a letter dated July 19, 1980, written to Spinelli at the start of his constitutional campaign within the European Parliament, Mario Albertini, alerted him to this danger. “Your action — he wrote — needs: a) credibility, a measure of belief, however small, in the chance of victory, and thus, b) a relationship with the power process that allows one to imagine that fighting for victory is a real, however remote, possibility. Otherwise, the constitutional action, having set fire to straw, would burn itself out, albeit remaining present, like a shadow to which shape must be given.

In short, your action can be compared to the creation of a pocket within enemy territory — the European Parliament, as long as it continues to be dominated by national powers, will remain in the hands of the enemy — that is to say to a manoeuvre that can be carried out by a small select force but that must be linked, in conceptual and practical terms, with the global action of the greater part of the forces — one’s own and those of the enemy. In other words, an external relationship must be established *with those who can decide, those who control the power process*.

Let us look at the question in more concrete terms. You talk... of achieving a mobilisation of public opinion through an ad hoc organisation, and feed this hypothesis with ghosts from the past. Quite apart from the fact that organisations (like Europe) do not ‘spring from nothing,’ it is important to realise that public opinion (like any other social force) can be mobilised only in support of one power against another power. In practice, if you form a group within the European Parliament (where there is no scope for unilateral decisions), and you link this with an outside group that has no role in the power control process, then you are effectively summing two impotent forces. As a result there is no credibility and the action dies out. If, instead, you link your European Parliamentary group with a section, even a small one initially, of the individuals and organisations that control the power process, then you are releasing and uniting two forces — two currents — that can grow; this will enable you progressively to obtain a level of mobilisation of public opinion (and of the channels — information, etc. — that serve it) that is commensurate with the degree to which the battle has advanced. In fact, all things being well, the European Parliament would become, in this case, the outlet for

an action whose other decision-making centre is to be found in the spheres of politics that wield power at national level.

There can be no escaping this power logic. Power needs to be driven out from where it currently lies (with the states) and transferred to where it is needed (Europe). It follows that linking, and at the height of the struggle unifying, two decision-making centres (the new European centre and the occasional leadership of some national ones) is one of the fundamental strategic imperatives in the struggle for Europe.”

In short, to call for a constituent assembly (or to call upon the European Parliament, in the past, or the Convention, today, to fulfil a constituent role) is not enough. It is useless, unless the question is posed of how this assembly might be arrived at, that is to say, the question of the power situation that is needed to promote and to sustain it.

Today, on the brink of enlargement, identifying the power situation in which a constituent assembly might be arrived at means identifying the framework within which historical and political responsibility can emerge. Of course, there exists, as yet, no active expression of this responsibility: if there did, the decision to create a European federation would, in the wake of the creation of the single currency, the conflicts in the ex-Yugoslavia, the events of 11th September, etc., already have been taken. But to identify this framework, which is that of Europe’s six founder nations, is nevertheless the first, indispensable step, because it means identifying a potentially active power framework that can be set against the inert one of the current Union and the totally unswayable one of tomorrow’s enlarged Union.

If this is the case, we must draw the necessary conclusions and focus on the formation of the core that can take the initiative. The difference in relation to the past — in which each strategic phase has, at a certain point, always been characterised by the emergence and then by the accentuation of the problem of the federal core — lies in the fact that the real and definitive renunciation of national sovereignty is a more difficult step than those that the states have taken thus far. This makes the task of federalists more difficult and the responsibility to make the right strategic choice more dramatic. Today, it is no longer possible to imagine or to accept the prospect of a slow advance: there are now too many urgent problems that threaten to lead Europe, if it proves unable to deal with them, to its own ruin. And this would be to deprive the whole world of the moral example and political contribution that its unification would provide.

Having identified the subjects with whom, in the last instance, the

final decision rests (the governments) and having identified the framework in which the initiative can be launched, we must a) place the question of a European state on the agenda, b) unite citizens and political forces around this objective, or rather organise and give voice to the consensus for the objective of a European state, and c) hold the field with this objective until such time as someone, from the ranks of the holders of national power, embraces and adopts it. This is what federalists have always done, successfully, whenever a possible advance of the process of European unification was at stake, and it is what they can and must do in the constituent phase as well.

Nicoletta Mosconi

WORLD ORDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE

In 1992 in Rio the Earth Summit set the aim of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases to 1990 levels, to begin to ease the climatic impact of human activity. After ten years this target is quite far from being reached. Firstly because the industrialized countries — the United States, the European Union member countries, and Japan — have continued to increase their carbon dioxide emissions, one of the gases that most contributes to the greenhouse effect.¹ Secondly because there was no involvement of developing countries in the climate defence front. This is despite the Kyoto protocol, signed by over a hundred countries in 1997, fixing ecological convergence criteria and a deadline for the stabilization of atmospheric pollutants by 2012.² At present the situation is this. As far as the developing countries are concerned, China (the second biggest world greenhouse gas polluter) and India have not pledged to carry out any reduction. Russia, that according to the protocol was allowed to increase its own emissions, has highlighted how the slowing down of economic development is not an acceptable price to pay socially and politically to stop pollution. Japan, where not even the slowing down of economic growth was enough to allow re-entry to within the pollution limits set in Kyoto, is finding emissions reduction a problem. In the European Union, where on average the emissions reduction demanded for all member countries is about five per cent, the targets to be reached

differ from country to country and no continental policy is expected. The USA, lastly, have made things even more uncertain, openly denouncing the failure of the Kyoto protocol and proposing a national plan for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions that has thrown perplexity on its effectiveness and doubts on the will of the American government to continue to cooperate at the international level in order to reduce the risks of climate change.

Finally neither the engagements undertaken in Rio, nor those confirmed in Kyoto, have produced the desired effects. The age of ever tighter international cooperation even in the environmental field inaugurated in the Eighties by Reagan and Gorbachev, to be funded with the dividends of the end of the cold war, seems to be ending. Why? What are the chances of restoring a suitable international framework of cooperation for tackling the serious problems brought by increasing ecological imbalances?

Politics and Climatic Risk.

Observations on the changes to the climate are highlighting two factors. The first is that no significant reduction, not even of half the quantity of carbon dioxide introduced into the atmosphere, would allow humanity to return to an equilibrium comparable to that of before 1850. The second is the uncertainty of the available models for carrying out climate change predictions.

1. Climatologists have established that, since the mid Nineteenth Century, the planet has entered a new warm age after the small ice age that governed climatic cycles for almost five centuries. How and to what extent man's activity has influences and is able to influence the evolution of this new age is not clear. The fact remains that we have entered into an age of climate changes, accelerated or emphasized by man, that are destined to alter cycles of production, habits and lifestyles in many regions of the world. Historically they are situations that humanity has already faced and that have caused crises in some activities or regions and good fortune in others.³ In fact rarely has humanity experienced long periods of climatic stability: even in well defined climatic ages, warmer and colder decades have been alternating due to unpredictable phenomena (volcanic eruptions, solar activity etc.). But since the start of the industrial age, the increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has been so much as to be considered, by experts, to be the main cause of the anomalous temperature increase with respect to natural variations. If

this is true, humanity faces a difficult task: to establish the acceptable level at which to stabilize the quantity of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and subsequently to plan the economic sacrifices and energy policies to propose to the citizens of the various countries. But identifying this level depends on future climate predictions that must necessarily be more based on political than scientific hypotheses. We only need to think that the margin of fluctuation of temperature increase indicated by scientists — between 1,4° C and 5,8° C by 2100 — is the result of projections carried out starting from scenarios of economic development and world balance of power that depend on what the states decide to do or not to do in the next century.

Politics therefore represents the true variable of the future of humanity.

2. The more data are collected and the more studies are produced on the history and evolution of weather phenomena, the more the predictions seem to become uncertain. This is true of the case of recent observations by NASA researchers who, on the basis of satellite surveys over the last twenty years, have concluded that the models currently used to study the climate are more uncertain than we had thought. These models used are therefore not adequate to form long term policy and this situation does not seem set to change in the near future.⁴ In reality they should not be necessary to establish climate changes that can be recorded from the surveys already available and from the historical climate indicators. Thanks to these data and indicators today, unlike in the past, we can establish for example what consequences an anomalous and repeated fluctuation of the flow of oceanic and air currents in the Northern Hemisphere would have on agriculture and fishing. We can also reasonably expect that should global warming continue, some northern regions of Europe and America would benefit from it, while others would be damaged. If warming should then reach the levels foreseen by the more pessimistic predictions, the effects on climate could be so unpredictable as to put the lifestyles, productive cycles and the feeding habits of even a large part of humanity in danger, with unimaginable political, economic and social repercussions. But all these predictions refer to areas much greater than the present states, that are still the ones that make decisions.

Safety and Environmental Policy.

As had already been indicated, the Kyoto protocol set the limits to pollution that could only have been adhered to if all the signatory states had been able to direct coherent national policies all together and

simultaneously. It was and still is a condition which is hard to create, as was already seen in 1997, when the US Senate denounced the Kyoto agreements even before they were signed⁵ and when in Europe the umpteenth intergovernmental debate opened to share the burdens of the emissions reductions set out.⁶ The fact is that global targets were fixed whilst maintaining national decision-making instruments: this is the contradiction the states do not want to escape. This contradiction emerged when the problems of military security took priority over everything.

The signal of the change in direction came from the USA. It is well known that the USA have long been the greater producers of greenhouse gases and that, alone, they contribute to a quarter of global pollution. But their ratification of the Kyoto protocol would have surely meant a heavy engagement both in economic terms⁷ and in political terms, due to the strong internal inertia to accept drastic energy saving policies. According to the protocol they would have had to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by seven per cent compared to 1990 levels: a now impossible undertaking if we think that from that year they have increased emissions by a further twelve per cent. What government in America, in the present international framework, could succeed in imposing federal policies for development and energy capable of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least twenty per cent by the end of the decade? Today the conditions simply do not exist for a consensus in American public opinion sufficient to support policies adequate for achieving such a target. We therefore need to take heed of the fact that the USA have no intention of sacrificing their world technological, military and economic lead on the altar of an agreement to reduce the risks of climate change, that represents by now more of a diplomatic challenge than an effective tool for climate management.⁸ The reasons for this choice are clear in the economic report presented by President Bush to Congress to indicate the objectives of American policy. This report begins with an explicit reference to the new priorities of the nation and is strongly sceptical towards the role of the present international institutions: "The events of 2001 brought new challenges for the U.S. economy and for economic policy. The war against terrorism has increased the demands on our economy, and we must do everything in our power to build our economic strength to meet these demands." And further on: "concepts such as a worldwide tax on greenhouse gas emissions or a worldwide tradable permit system, sometimes advertised as solutions, are at best useful theoretical benchmarks against which to measure alternative, practical approaches. At worst, they can be a distraction from meaningful, realistic steps forward. Why

are such proposals impractical? Because they fail to recognize the enormous institutional and logistical obstacles to implementing any sweeping international program. Institutionally, it is important to learn to walk before trying to run.”⁹ The report insists more than once on the necessity of using suitable technologies to confront the problem, making overall reference, however, to the successes already achieved in the USA, and of strengthening international institutions, but not indicating any global target to reach.¹⁰

Climate Management and a World Development Policy.

Bush’s plan does not aim to promote policies that contribute to the short term reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in absolute terms, but puts faith in the continuation of the positive trend in the improvement of technological efficiency, that has already allowed considerable reductions in the intensity of emissions per unit of production during the last century to be obtained. We only need to think that from 1930 until today the USA, although tripling the quantity of carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere, has considerably reduced the amount of gas emitted per million dollars produced. On the basis of these results the federal government has decided to remain faithful to the environmental policy that since the Seventies (Clean Air Act Amendments) has allowed the drastic reduction of a series of pollutants that were threatening to poison the environment. This policy has, since the end of the Eighties (Global Change Research Program), further boosted the study of the relationship between climate and human activities. But to truly reduce greenhouse gas emissions we would need a world policy capable of promoting a transition to new types of global energy consumption similar to those that occurred (over about a hundred years) during the passage from the carbon fossil economy to that based on oil. Instead the policy of the USA and of the industrialized countries generally continues to be orientated more towards exploiting the spontaneous trend towards the reduction in the intensity of emissions (seventeen per cent less over the last ten years, and eighteen per cent less over the next decade in the USA) than to develop a world policy in this field.¹¹ All this confirms that economic and technological developments are necessary but not sufficient conditions for reducing global pollution, that is now strictly linked to the phenomenon of the globalisation of the growth of individual consumption. Governments and national public opinion are aware of this fact, but they are imprisoned by solutions that are totally impassable at the internation-

al level, like the imposition of taxes and of common or market rules. It is certain that the introduction of a tax on carbon dioxide produced from various activities and production would encourage both the employment of technologies and fuels from the point of view of greenhouse gases, and less polluting consumption. But experience has shown how difficult it is to introduce such a tax at the continental level in the absence of strong international pressures — as the countries of the European Union well know and as the Clinton administration experienced at the beginning of the Nineties when it tried to introduce an energy tax in the USA. The same goes for the idea of creating an international market for pollution permission credits, first opposed and then accepted even by the Europeans and by the main environmental movements. This mechanism, already tested in the USA to resolve the problem of acid rain in North America, has allowed the most efficient enterprises to trade pollution permits (released preventively by the federal authority, however). Now, the premise for the success of such a mechanism is based on the very existence of a solid and efficient governmental framework — we only need to consider that is not possible to grant tradable pollution permits without a register of all the polluters. Today this framework exists neither at the European nor at the World scale. The result of all this is that the WTO for example cannot play a lead role in the solution of global ecological problems, but can only go as far as protecting the commercial interests of single states or groups of them.¹²

Conclusion.

The hopes raised by the world environment summits from Stockholm (1972) to Rio (1992) and Kyoto (1997) were not quashed by a decreased awareness of the risks that the planet is facing — indeed this awareness has been increased and in some cases radicalised, but by the failure of the political premise that had made them a possibility: the *détente* beforehand and the end of the USA-USSR confrontation afterwards. The collapse of the USSR and Europe's impotence have created such a power vacuum in the last decade that the United States could not have filled it alone. International cooperation, indispensable premise for the consolidation of a climate of trust between the States and therefore for the very functioning of international institutions, is in crisis. This is shown by the increasing tensions and the sparking of local conflicts, from the former Yugoslavia and from the Middle East, to Afghanistan, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missile technologies worldwide. It is

true that in the meantime the opportunities for regional and international scale meetings have multiplied. But these facts, like China's entry into the WTO, do not as much show the attempt to guarantee a more stable world government as the need to defend national interest everywhere by every means, starting with the diplomatic ones. In essence it is the return to traditional international competition, based on mutual distrust and fear between states. The inability to confront environmental problems should therefore be placed in the wider framework of the current redefining of the balances of forces at the world level. A phase in which Europe is playing an ever more marginal role. One could say, using the words of Norbert Elias, that "even in our day, just like in the old days, the constraints of interdependencies push us towards parallel conflicts, towards the formation of monopolies of coercion extended to ever greater regions and therefore, through all the horrors and wars, towards their pacification. And behind the tensions at the continental level and partly mixed in with them there already loom tensions belonging to a next level. We can begin to foresee the first shadows of a system of tensions extended to the entire globe and linked to alliances of states, to suprastatal unities of various types; we can foresee the symptoms of struggles for the elimination and the hegemony on a world scale of a central political institution extended to the whole globe as the premise for the formation of a world monopoly of coercion and therefore also being the premise for its pacification."¹³ These words by Elias, that retake the Kantian analysis of humanity's march towards peace, should make us think about the urgency with which Europe should arm herself with the necessary tools to go back to being an active subject of world politics, in order to contribute to reaching the final objective of peace through less violent and unjust routes, i.e. through an evolutionary cooperation between large continental states. But this aspiration risks becoming unrealistic if we do not untie the knot that paralyzes Europe: its political division.

The lack of political unification in Europe after fifty years of integration has produced enormous damages. Europeans not only have still not been in a position to provide an adequate political response to the growing degree of interdependence reached at the continental level. With their division they have hindered the formation of a more balanced world order, weakening international bodies with their absence. Either Europeans will be able to found a federal state at the continental level, or it will become ever more difficult to avoid entering the tragic path described by Elias.

Franco Spoltore

NOTES

¹ “Human pollution is washed out of the atmosphere by rain and lasts only a week. So it has to be continually replenished if it is to have an effect. In contrast, the lifetime of carbon dioxide is over a century, and so it builds up inexorably,” Kevin E. Trenberth, of the National Centre for Atmospheric Research and member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, in *IEEE Spectrum*, March 2002.

² In 1997 the Kyoto world summit on climate change ended with a commitment — the Kyoto protocol — that was seeking to reassure national public opinions: something important could be done for the environment without paying too high a price in economic terms and whilst waiting for a greater involvement by developing countries. Among the opinions expressed after Kyoto, the positive comments underlined the novelty of an international protocol that was setting deadlines (2008-2012), precise percentages for the reduction of greenhouse gases (8-7-5%) and was pointing to a specific group of countries prepared to undergo this regime (all the biggest industrialized countries). The negative comments were that the Kyoto protocol was in any case inadequate to prevent the risks of climate change since, even if respected, it would not have been in a position to invert the trend towards the increase of harmful emissions within the foreseen deadlines. Neither the positive nor the negative comments bothered to clarify whether there was an adequate framework of power to put the Kyoto agreements into motion.

³ “Climate change was a subtle catalyst, not a cause, of profound change in a European world where everyone lived at the complete mercy of a subsistence farming economy, where the ripple effects of poor wine harvests could affect the economic welfare of the Hapsburg empire. The Little Ice Age is the story of Europeans’ struggle against the most fundamental of all human vulnerabilities.” Brian Fagan, *The Little Ice Age — How Climate Made History 1300 -1850*, New York, Basic Books, 2000, p. 59.

⁴ This will be true, according to experts, even when the USA have a simulation system that will allow to go from the six present monthly climatic simulations, to beyond fifty simulations of climate evolution in the next century or when — probably by 2005 — a new satellite network capable of significantly increasing the collection of data about the atmosphere of our planet is installed.

⁵ In the resolution approved by the American Senate through 95 votes for and 0 against in July 1997, it was declared that “the United States should not be a signatory to any protocol to, or other agreement regarding, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change of 1992, at negotiations in Kyoto in December 1997 or thereafter which would: (1) mandate new commitments to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions for the Annex 1 Parties, unless the protocol or other agreement also mandates new specific scheduled commitments to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions for Developing Country Parties within the same compliance period; or (2) result in serious harm to the U.S. economy.”

⁶ So *Le Monde* (5/3/02) described the ratification of the Kyoto protocol by the European Union as follows: “The decision to ratify allows Europe to maintain its leading role in environmental policies. The aim is to make sure that the Kyoto protocol becomes operational in time for the world conference on sustainable development that will be held in Johannesburg. Currently 47 countries out of the total of the countries responsible for 55% of carbon dioxide pollution have ratified it. To reach this agreement, European ministers have had to reach a political compromise: the text was voted by a qualified majority — as Germany wanted — rather than by unanimity, as many states wanted. But the fifteen states have established that the decisions taken and that will tackle the application of the Kyoto protocol, will be adopted by consensus. This rule, that was prevailing in 1998, when the

Europeans were sharing the burdens of emissions reduction, made sure that some of them will simply be able to stabilize their emissions, while others will have to greatly reduce them, and while others still will even be able to increase them.” See also the data produced by GRID-Arendal in collaboration with the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) for the seventh conference of the parties involved in the ratification of the Kyoto protocol (COP-7) at the Convention held in Marrakech, Morocco on the 29th of October to the 9th of November 2001 (<http://www.grida.no/db/maps/collection/climate6/index.htm>).

⁷ These policies would have cost 4% of the Gross Domestic Product according to the *Economic Report of the President Transmitted to the Congress, February 2002, together with The Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisers*, Washington, USA Government Printing Office, 2002.

⁸ “The effect of the Kyoto Protocol on the climate would be minuscule, even if it were implemented in full. A model by Tom Wigley, one of the main authors of the reports of the UN Climate Change Panel, shows how an expected temperature increase of 2.1°C in 2100 would be diminished by the treaty to an increase of 1.9°C instead. Or, to put it another way, the temperature increase that the planet would have experienced in 2094 would be postponed to 2100. The Kyoto agreement merely buys the world six years. So the Kyoto agreement does not prevent global warming, but merely buys the world six years. Yet, the cost of Kyoto, for the United States alone, will be higher than the cost of solving the world’s single most pressing health problem: providing universal access to clean drinking water and sanitation.” Bjorn Lomborg, “The Truth About the Environment”, in *The Economist*, 2nd of August 2001. This analysis has been harshly criticized by environmentalists, but more because of the idea that the coming into effect of the Kyoto protocol could have promoted new agreements, rather than their refuting the prediction of poor results arising from its application.

⁹ See the cited *Economic Report*, p. 15.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 20.

¹¹ Even in China economic development is developing energy saving systems similar to those we know in industrialized countries, but overall, as we have seen, this will not serve to hinder the ascent of China to being first in the list of polluting countries. “Projections suggest that China will surpass the United States and climb into first place within the next two decades. China’s CO₂ emissions climbed steadily at a rate of some 4 percent a year over the last two decades, but in the last few years this trend turned around. In 1998, China’s emissions dropped by 3.7 percent, despite robust economic growth of 7.2 percent. One important factor in the decline was a recent \$14 billion cut in annual coal subsidies.” Hilary French, in *Vanishing Borders*, New York, WW Norton Company, 2000, p. 105.

¹² “The WTO has reported a massive proliferation of regional trade agreements in recent years, with an average of one per month being notified to the organization. A recent study by the WTO Secretariat identified a total of 172 regional trade agreements currently in force (including some that have not, or not yet, been notified to the WTO), and this number could well grow to about 250 by 2005. On the basis of the 113 regional trade agreements notified to the WTO and deemed to be in force as of July 2000, it is estimated that some 43 percent of world trade occurs within such agreements. This share would rise to 51 percent if all 68 or so of the regional trade agreements currently under discussion and scheduled to be in force by 2005 were already in place... The potential gains to the United States from these discussions are indeed sizable, in part because the multilateral negotiations promise to reduce barriers to U.S. trade around the entire world. One study finds that if a new trade round reduced world barriers on agricultural and industrial products and on trade

in services by one-third, the gains to the United States could amount to \$177 billion, or about \$2,500 for the average American family of four.” *Economic Report, cit.*, pp. 276-279.

¹³ Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, consulted in the Italian edition, *Il processo di civilizzazione*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1988, p. 778.

THE NEW AMERICAN POLICY FOR DEFENCE AND SECURITY

United States foreign policy shows a great continuity, which in actual fact transcends the changes of administration. Even when it seems that a new presidency wants to start the elaboration of a new American world strategy, it is reduced, in fact, to attempting to make tendencies developed in the previous years more explicit and structured. This principle also goes for the present administration. Although the attitude of Bush seems so different from that of his predecessor, the reality is that he is confronting the problems relating to the foreign and security policy of the United States with the same formula that Clinton had immediately after the end of the cold war. The difference is that Clinton was able to exploit the fact of still not being pressured by urgency, and therefore he could afford not to make definitive choices. But after ten years of American unipolarism in the world, during which the USA have, on the one hand, sought to confirm their hegemony, using the instruments of military and political superiority, but have at the same time struggled to find a precise and consistent strategy that would unify the different elements of their politics, it has become inevitable to seek to define the American doctrine suited to the new phase of international relations. Bush therefore inherited the problem of clearly establishing American priorities in the world, first of all the alliances, the enemies and the dangers for national security, and then the arms and defence policy.

The fact of having underlined the continuity between Clinton’s and Bush’s approaches, which therefore only superficially differ in their conception of America’s role in the world, does not mean that different attitudes in tackling the matter are not possible, as shown by the Bush administration’s internal dialectic itself. It does mean, however, that the international framework of power relations brings any alternative in American foreign policy back to the problem of how to reinforce Ameri-

can hegemony and that the differences are only to do with wrapping this will in a more internationalist and democratic ideology or with emphasizing its unilateral and imperialist aspects. These are differences, above all, that diminish more and more, since the compulsion of the imperialist and unilateral spur becomes ever greater with the power vacuum created at the end of the cold war — a vacuum that, at the moment, no-one, apart from the USA, is able to fill. It is in this way that the first steps of the Bush administration frightened the world: a hail of refusals of treaties and international protocols, from the Kyoto protocol on the environment, to that pertaining to the restrictions on light arms trafficking, to that aiming to introduce control mechanisms in the context of the Convention on bacteriological weapons, to that for the banning of nuclear testing, right up to the announcement of the US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty in order to be able to instigate the national missile defence project (NMD). All this was decided in the name of national interest and imposed on the rest of the world with the arrogance of one who knows he cannot be stopped. These moves by America have provoked a lot of worry in Europe, in Russia and in China, they have increased the sense of trouble and hostility towards American superpower in many areas of the world and are strongly criticized by a section, even if a minor one, of American public opinion itself, which is perhaps the most lucid and consistent in denouncing the imperialist drifts of the country, but have not provoked any reaction capable of stopping them. The iron logic of the power that can only be matched by a countering power, which at the moment does not exist, makes it so that the United States cannot listen to the voice of those, especially at home, who demand not to continue down the imperialist road — which, in perspective, can only put world security and therefore American power itself into crisis — instead demanding to contribute to the birth of a more balanced world order, favouring the birth of new poles of responsibility in the world in order to share the weight of world leadership and to increase the possibilities for international stability, and to free a part of the country's energies spasmodically involved in the military effort to favour projects of civil and social development. The brake for the American drift can only come from the outside, from the actual appearance on the international stage of new forces able to confront the United States and to take on autonomous initiatives; until these appear the alternatives do not have any space.

The State of the Union Address recently held by Bush is a test of this. In one way, the dramatic events of September the 11th have facilitated the decisions to the American administration, thanks to the fact

that they created a strong sense of alarm in public opinion and, consequently, strongly increased the approval the President enjoys and cemented the spirit of the country into a new nationalist fervour. What appeared in the eyes of public opinion in the country, after the attempt, is that the United States, although deeply hurt and shaken, were able to demonstrate their power to the world: They have strongly employed their military supremacy, redesigning the front of their strategic alliances, acting unilaterally, without bothering with the agreement of international organizations, and have been able to defend American interests globally. In this climate Bush's appeal to continue the war on terrorism to the bitter end could only win enormous domestic consensus of opinion, thus creating the climate for the approval of choices in the fields of foreign policy, security and defence that in reality were already the intentions of the administration well before the attack on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, but that without them it would have been much easier for public opinion at home to objectively evaluate and criticize them.

In fact, in the scenario drawn by Bush in his speech, the only variations in the tendency already demonstrated at the beginning of his mandate are the accent on the privileged relations with Russia, China and India ("a common danger is erasing old rivalries. America is working with Russia, China and India, in ways we have never before, to achieve peace and prosperity"), and the impression of having decided to return to the priority of the Asian chequerboard, that some months ago he seemed to want to put into second place after the pan-American framework. In essence, the United States renounce the temptation of isolationism and accept to take on the role of world leadership that the relations of force dictate to them; but in doing so, they choose without hesitation the way of hegemony and unilateralism, of the identification of national interest with the assertion of their own crushing superiority, alone against everyone, without partners or true allies. The budget proposals that will have to be discussed by Congress, the declarations of the Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld on the new military strategy, the indiscretions that have come out in the Pentagon report already approved by the White House and submitted to Congress at the beginning of January greatly confirm this. It is worth trying to briefly examine them in order to better evaluate the Americans' options.

* * *

The budget presented by Bush is centred on military expenditures.

Inverting (and exploiting) the trend of the Clinton Presidency years, that had levelled the public deficit and even reached a notable surplus, the current plan expects a return to public finance deficits, that in the predictions could be gradually levelled out over the next four years. For defence an increase of 15 per cent is expected, much of which will be destined to internal security (whose costs will double, reaching almost 38 billion dollars) and to the missile defence shield project (where a further 7,5 billion are due). It is the most conspicuous increase in military expenditures in the last forty years, that will ultimately further increase the gap between the USA and the rest of the world; the budget for American defence will thus now surpass the sum of those of the fourteen greatest military powers in the world. To make this development in defence expenditures compatible with the maintenance of the program of strong reductions of taxes already announced by Bush in his electoral program, the budget foresees cuts in many areas of public expenditure not linked to defence, among which education and health, where unproductive costs are sought to be eliminated. This has provoked a strong reaction especially in the ranks of the opposition, and many retain that a part of the proposals advanced in this direction will be rejected; we can foresee, therefore, a situation in which, on the one hand, it will be difficult to contain the deficit within the figures expected, also because they are based on overly optimistic projections (here the administration is accused by many parties of masking the existence of public debts with accounting tricks worthy of the Enron case), and on the other there is no will or project to confront the knots of public expenditure long held to be priorities (such as social security for example).

The problem is not minor, not only because these choices could have serious repercussion on the development of the American economy in the medium term, but more especially because the terrorist attacks suffered by the United States, including the Anthrax case, have highlighted the serious weakness of the structures of the American federal state, and the proposals contained in this budget show that the awareness of the necessity to tackle the problem has still not matured. On the internal security front alone a great development is called for, especially one directed to the security of frontiers and transport and the defence against attacks using biological weapons. However, neither is the traditional role that characterizes the American view of the state, limited to the defence of citizens, questioned again, nor are important interventions foreseen that strengthen those state areas weakened from years of progressive dismantling of the federal structures. Just as an example, after September

the 11th, the republican right, supported by Bush, rejected the democratic project of giving official federal status to 28.000 badly paid and even more badly prepared private agents that airports use to guarantee security; just as it is not the intention of the federal power to create a national identity card, despite its strong favour in public opinion. The dominant idea continues to be not so much that of a reinforcement of the role of the federal state, as much as an increase in the participation of the private sector and local communities in the effort of collective security; without however considering either the problems of coordination that at present exist between the federal level and local communities (for example, in the dramatic moments immediately following the attacks, Mayor Giuliani had to implore Washington until the FBI agreed to collaborate with the New York police), nor the impotence of the federal level in promoting serious reforms in areas of national interest, like for example health (whose structural weaknesses were dramatically highlighted during the Anthrax case). America's strategic choices therefore risk putting a heavy cost on the development of US state life and it is foreseeable that in the medium term they are a strong factor in the weakening of American power itself.

* * *

The stress Bush puts on the reinforcement of US military supremacy seems to involve, in turn, a series of risks of international regression that are destined to turn against American security itself. Last January the 31st, Rumsfeld illustrated for the first time in public the USA's new military doctrine to spearhead the "war against the terrorism." After having explained that the old doctrine, born out of the cold war, that was based on the ability to lead two conflicts at once, now had to be replaced, Rumsfeld affirmed that the United States "today should get organized in order to have a deterrence capability on four important fronts. This deterrence capability should be supported by the ability of defeating two aggressors at once, and of being in a position to lead simultaneously a wide scale counter-offensive and to occupy the capital city of an enemy and install a new regime there" (*Le Monde*, 1-2-2002). How America can be in a position to employ such power, was understood a few weeks later after some indiscretions pertaining to the *Nuclear Posture Review* leaked out to American newspapers. This was a report, secret in theory, that the Pentagon prepared for the White House and that Bush has already passed to Congress in the first days of January for them to have a look at.

In this report (that has provoked harsh reactions in every country, especially in China, and in world public opinion — *Le Monde* defined it “a document worthy of a state prey to panic” — with the exception, obviously, of the 15 countries of the European Union, that have avoided comments with the excuse that it still was not an official text) the Pentagon seeks to put the basis of the new American military strategy in a global situation. Here, because there is no longer a definite enemy to confront, there is a need to face more insidious and unpredictable enemies, that try to both equip themselves with weapons of mass destruction that could threaten the American territory, and to challenge the security of the United States on the basis of the techniques of “asymmetrical warfare” that allow, indeed, terrorist attacks of every kind, including acts of piracy and computer sabotage, extremely difficult to anticipate and able to have devastating effects on the country. The strategy therefore goes from Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD), on which deterrence at the time of the cold war was based, to a sort of unilateral assured destruction, in which the United States should show themselves to be in a position to hit whoever threatens their interests absolutely effectively and credibly (which implies, amongst other things, low losses of human life on the American side). This result is attainable, according to the report, on the basis of a “new triad,” that sees a decrease in the number of nuclear weapons — but with the prediction of a partly new use, which we will come back to —, a new generation of advanced conventional weapons and a new system of defence against the weapons of mass destruction, including missiles.

As regards the reduction in the number of atomic weapons, the United States hope to be able to negotiate with Russia, the only other country that possesses a large nuclear arsenal, a cut that would bring the number of warheads from the present 6000-7000 to 2200 and then to 1500 over ten years. Americans however want to stipulate an agreement in which warheads are dismantled but not destroyed, to retain the possibility of rebuilding their arsenal in case new and unexpected threats emerge that make it necessary. Clearly it is a clause that creates serious problems for the Russians, interested in decreasing their respective arsenals, especially in the way in which such measures are accompanied by the definitive elimination of nuclear weapons considered excessive. In this way the United States certainly do not ease relations with a country which is not only considered no longer a threat, even if obviously we cannot exclude the idea that it can return to being one, but one that could even have a very important role in the support of the struggle against international terror-

ism. Beyond words, America does not therefore seem bent on seeking to build a real partnership with Russia.

With China the situation is even more ambiguous, because beyond the strategic alliance linked to the war in Afghanistan, the United States neither renounce feeding Chinese susceptibility as regards Taiwan (contravening it both in the agreements taken on the sale of weapons, and creating, certainly not by chance, diplomatic incidents), nor deny considering China a dangerous antagonist in the medium term, due to its capacity of developing strategic objectives capable of threatening the security of the United States and its military supremacy in Asia. In this sense Bush maintains an absolute continuity with Clinton that, in a report five years ago, which was then a secret, named the Presidential Decision Directive (PDD-60), foresaw precisely a shift in the strategic attention from Russia to China and was introducing for the first time the identification of five rogue nations indicated also by Bush (Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Libya and Syria) as possible objects of an American attack. Even for the previous administration, nuclear arms (that Clinton himself was wanting to reduce drastically) were the cornerstones of the American security system. Bush just considers a greater number of possibilities in which they could be used, compared to Clinton. In the *Nuclear Posture Review*, in fact, the possibility of a first pre-emptive strike is not excluded, especially with the utilization of the mini-bomb (the *Bunker-Buster*) in mind, which fuels the dream of surgical bombing that minimizes human losses (especially on the American side). They are in fact weapons able to penetrate deep into the ground and destroy the hidden arsenals of the potential enemy. In this way the Pentagon renounces the international agreements that ensure atomic weapons are not used against countries that not have them, and unduly claims the right to choose without any constraints how to guarantee security.

Even if actually the difficulty of identifying the potential dangers that can jeopardize American security make the definition of an effective military strategy complex, the fact remains that the options that the United States are heading towards, that confirm the will to impose on the rest of the world their own supremacy and their own strategy, can only feed international tension. Hence they can trigger off a new nuclear race and ultimately make the threat to the United States themselves stronger. It is difficult in fact to believe, despite the display of force, that the United States can really shelter themselves from the risks of an “asymmetrical conflict” and moreover, as many observers stress, the diplomatic cost that America will pay for these projects will be extremely high, and

will certainly not contribute to making it stronger.

* * *

The missile defence project also threatens to have a similar effect. Even in this case, Bush picks up again a project that was begun in Eisenhower's time. The idea of being able to stop enemy missiles and even make the American territory absolutely invulnerable belongs to the realm of dreams that every President seeks to realize. But despite the enormous technical progress, this remains just a dream, and to pursue it can only have two effects: to give Americans themselves the illusion of being stronger and more secure and, simultaneously, to push other countries towards a race for rearmament that can only make the international situation more unstable and increase tensions. It is clear, in fact, that such a system of defence, however much perfected (and the problems are so many and so big as to make us believe that it is impossible to perfect it truly to satisfaction) will only be seen to be really effective when it actually stops enemy missiles, which are an unknown entity by definition. The success of tests, in this light, is only a very partially significant result, because the tricks for evading the Missile Shield are almost infinite, and the factor of surprise and unpredictability especially constitute a risk that, by definition, cannot be completely assessed beforehand. Therefore, such a system of defence, will have the effect of being taken seriously enough by the enemy potential to trigger off a counterbalancing race for rearmament, but at the same time will not be able to make America, who will never be certain of its chances of success, feel calm.

We then have to add that, clearly, this shield will be no use against a massive attack, as could come, for example, from Russia, but is destined to act as deterrent against so-called rogue nations. Now, it is obvious enough that in a conflict with these countries it is much safer to directly destroy their nuclear arsenal on the ground, without waiting for them to get to launch missiles against the United States, or their allies or even only their own neighbours. The defence system thus conceived therefore seems to be a choice based on ideological motives, rather than on a rational strategy. In fact, if the hope that make America more secure appears to be unfounded, the costs to pay in terms of the increase in international tension and investments foregone in more crucial sectors (among which, for example, intelligence) are instead very real. Once again it seems that in the United States the most extremist current is emerging and the temptation to display their force and technological

supremacy to the rest of the world is gaining the upper hand over political arguments and the pursuit of American interest as it is more lucidly understood. America, in this way, seems to want to exorcise or hide, especially to herself, her own inability, or better still impotence, in the face of world instability.

* * *

Faced with this political weakness by America, which is marked moreover by an increasing divergence in terms of military power with respect to the rest of the world, countries like Russia and China, although reacting with ill-concealed worry, can offer no alternative, because they are still too busy in their own process of consolidation and reinforcement. Europeans, in turn, show that they are not able to intervene with independent initiatives. Indeed, things being as they are, their role and weight becomes ever more marginal strategically speaking. The meagre importance — and the meagre respect — that the United States attribute to the Europeans is evident; with lashing imagery (reported by *Le Monde* last 1^o March) an American diplomat thus summarized the manner in which the situation is seen in the United States: “The US fights, the UN feeds, the EU funds.” It is no coincidence, therefore, that Bush did not even mention the Atlantic Alliance in his State of the Union Address, nor that he did not have any need for NATO during the war in Afghanistan. The gap between American and European military capacity continues to increase, so much so that the American ambassador to NATO, Nicholas Burns, recently declared that without drastic interventions to reduce capability gap existing at present, there is a risk that the alliance “is so thrown off balance as to hinder us, in future, from fighting together” (*New York Times*, 16th of March 2002).

But the problem is not military. It is true that Europeans spend a lot less and a lot more badly than Americans on defence; and is true that the weakness of the European states from the technological and operational point of view is enormous. But the reason for this situation is political: if Europeans saw it as vital to modernize their own military forces they could even do it separately and within the present Union. Certainly, it would always be a modernisation directed toward complementarity with the USA, therefore not thought of as independent European defence, but nevertheless, it would already be a considerable improvement strictly from the point of view of operating capacity. But the point is that Europeans do not see their military sector as being vital, and therefore do not

invest in this field, because they do not see themselves as having such international responsibilities as to necessitate an army worthy of this name.

Europeans are paying for the division that hinders any vision and political project of theirs. They choose to be financiers, however, although naturally in a manner subordinated to American political decisions, thus raising the spectre of that policy of cooperation and support to development that would be in the very DNA of a Europe capable of action. But they are unable to do any more than that. Security policy cannot be separated from foreign policy, and foreign policy can neither be set by a bickering confederation nor by 15 insignificant little states. For Europe to have defence worthy of this name it should first make itself into a state and take on *ipso facto* its international responsibility, that is to say become an independent pole of world policy; this is the only alternative to the present situation and the only real contribution Europeans can give to world peace and to the United States themselves, to stop the inevitable process of degeneration that they are undergoing.

To do this states that started the European process of integration more than fifty years ago by now need to have the courage to put the problem of the transfer of national sovereignty to a European federal state on the table; the time available to complete this step, before the crisis overwhelms the present balance, is probably about to expire. We should all be aware of this and know that whoever wants peace today should struggle more than ever for the founder states of the European Community to take on the initiative to found the first nucleus of the European federal state.

Luisa Trumellini

Viewpoints *

SOVEREIGNTY, SELF-GOVERNMENT AND GLOBAL GOVERNMENT A WORLD FEDERALIST PERSPECTIVE

We offer a concept of sovereignty and, derived therefrom, views on self-determination, self-government, and ultimately a democratic, federal system for governing the world. This reflects a *Weltanschauung* quite different from one with a concept of sovereignty and its consequences still found in many circles.

Breakdown of the Concept of the Omnipotent Sovereign.

For three centuries after the treaties of Westphalia, as the concept of the absolute monarch was gradually eroded, the focus of sovereignty — the authority to rule and powers that proceed therefrom — gradually passed from the ruling “sovereign” to the government of his territory or even to the territory itself, especially to the nation state. Nevertheless, while the post-Westphalian state-centered concept of sovereignty persisted in most circles, two paradigm changes were gradually being felt. First, the Reformation had broken the totalitarian control asserted by the Papacy and its clergy, who had intervened not only in the affairs of faith but also in the affairs of state and demanded absolute fealty, claiming to be agents of a sovereign deity. Later, although the Protestant clergy claimed to inherit the powers of their Catholic predecessors in the secular realm, after the Renaissance restored knowledge of Greek democratic government and the Roman Republic, the Enlightenment led to the gradual separation of the clergy from secular affairs and helped break down the monopoly or oligopoly in the sphere of government asserted by families of the monarchy and aristocracies.

* This heading includes contributions which the editorial board believes readers will find interesting, but which do not necessarily reflect the board’s views.

Democratization of Sovereignty.

These socio-cultural developments contributed to the two major revolutions of the 18th Century, which resulted in the United States of America and the French Republic — secular republics that discarded hereditary rulers and established religions. In them, the authority to rule — to establish governments and make laws — passed from persons at the centers of the polities to their individual members, the citizens, namely, the People. At the same time, a new political entity was created in America — the federation — to unify and accommodate the people of a large and diverse territory, instead of either a weak league or confederation of states (as previously in America) or a highly centralized unitary state (as in France).

The concept of First Principles — the sovereign authority and the legislative power of citizens to create and alter governments, constitutions, charters and laws¹ — was widespread during the American Revolution. The Virginia Declaration of Rights, largely drafted by George Mason and adopted by the Virginia Constitutional Convention on 12 June 1776, asserted that “All power is vested in, and consequently derived from, the people...” and “When any government shall be found inadequate or contrary to [the common benefit, protection, and security of the people, nation, or community], a majority of the community has an indubitable, inalienable, and indefeasible right to reform, alter, or abolish it...”²

Three weeks later, the Declaration of Independence by thirteen of the American colonies, drafted by the Virginian Thomas Jefferson, proclaimed not only that “all men are created equal” (a universal principle of equal rights), but also: “Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed...” and “It is the right of the people to alter or abolish [a destructive government] and to institute new government.”

Since the weak American Confederacy under the League of Friendship and Articles of Confederation wasn't viable, James Madison and Alexander Hamilton promoted a new federal constitution in Philadelphia in 1787. In seeking to have the sovereignty of the people reflected in this basic document, Madison was supported by two other delegates who promoted democracy, Mason and the Scottish-Pennsylvanian James Wilson.

In covering letters to Jefferson, Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph, and General George Washington in April 1787, Madison called his working paper (which became known as the Virginia Plan) perhaps

the earliest draft of “a Constitutional Govt for the Union... to be sanctioned by the people of the States, acting in their original & sovereign character.” In the Constitutional Convention, he and Wilson proposed that the authority of the “first branch” of the legislature (eventually the House of Representatives) flow from the legitimate source of all authority — the People. Madison also insisted that the Constitution be ratified “by the supreme authority of the people themselves,” not by the legislatures of the member states. And when a delegate questioned on what authority could a recently independent state accede to the new federation when that state’s constitution had no provision therefore, he responded: “The People were in fact, the fountain of all power... They could alter constitutions as they pleased. It was a principle in the Bills of rights, that first principles might be resorted to.”³

When assuming the task of drafting the first amendments to the Federal Constitution as a Representative in the 1st Congress in 1789, Madison sought to have the above-cited words from the Virginia Declaration of Rights inserted at the beginning of the Constitution. However, conservative legislators watered down the reference to the powers and rights of the People to what became the 9th and 10th Amendments.

Barely two months after Madison’s drafting, as the French populace revolted against their perceived domestic oppressors — the monarchy, the aristocracy, and the clergy — the new National Assembly promulgated the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, which proclaimed: “The law is the expression of the will of the community. All citizens have a right to play a role, either personally, or by their representatives, in its formation.”

In both instances, exercising their sovereign authority, the People delegated powers to governments of their communities, including their (member) republics and the federal republican union, in the case of the U.S.A., or to their unitary republic, as in France.

A century and a half later, in 1948, these principles were recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was approved by the United Nations General Assembly. Article 21 states: “The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government...” “Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, either directly or through freely chosen representatives...”

Application of Sovereignty to Governing the World.

The notion that nation-states are sovereign continued to dominate

thought throughout the 20th Century. Consequently, at the San Francisco Conference in 1945, the Charter of the United Nations Organization perpetuated the example of its doomed predecessor, the League of Nations, by basing the U.N.O. on “the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members.”⁴ The drafters of the Charter’s Preamble did give a nod to the Preamble of the United States Constitution by opening with the words “We the Peoples of the United Nations” (reportedly made at the insistence of an American citizens organization rather than by delegates of governments). Yet, in practice, by perpetuating the obsolescing concept of sovereignty, the Preamble might just as well have retained the traditional form of introducing treaties, as in the opening words of the League’s Covenant, namely: “The High Contracting Parties.” The Charter was not a democratic, nor potentially democratic, constitution by the people(s) of the world, and it effectively lacked the means of being transformed into one.

Another significant event was a publication at the end of the devastating Second World War by Emery Reves, the Hungarian-born news entrepreneur. He declared in *The Anatomy of Peace* that it was time for another revolutionary concept, a new paradigm shift in thinking, to be realized. If the people could delegate powers to make, execute and adjudicate laws to governments of their local communities, provinces, and nation-states, they had the same authority to transfer some powers to a government of their global community — the world.⁵

World Federalist World Views.

Such democratic and global ideas contributed directly in the decade of the Nineties to three major pronouncements by activists in different groups of World Federalists. Already during World War II the Student Federalists in the United States had called for a radically different democratic world government. Subsequently, in 1947, several American groups merged into the United World Federalists (now the World Federalist Association — W.F.A.). Also in 1947 the U.W.F. and World Federalists in Canada, Western European and Asian countries became affiliated with the World Movement for World Federal Government (now the World Federalist Movement — W.F.M). However, the momentum for a democratic federalist global campaign was soon stalled as Stalin, the dictator of the Soviet Union, launched the Cold War by forcibly occupying East-Central Europe and imposing Communist governments, while labeling the World Federalists as Fascists. Fortunately,

at the start of the Nineties, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, who himself came to advocate a form of democratic world government,⁶ brought about the ending of the Cold War (and the inadvertent collapse of the Soviet Union and its empire in Eastern Europe). Now, for the first time in a half-century the realization of two goals appeared possible, namely, implementing throughout the world the 18th Century concept of sovereignty vested in the People, and planning for the world itself to be democratically governed.

In 1997, in an effort to move from the conventional wisdom that sovereignty is absolute and lies in the nation-state, the W.F.A. issued an updated definition: “SOVEREIGNTY — The authority to form and change the government of a state or other political unit and to govern it in internal and external affairs,” limited by generally accepted moral principles, the civil rights of people, customary international law, and applicable inter-national treaties (including the United Nations Charter). Although rulers of unitary authoritarian states and empires may claim sovereign powers over their subject populations, in democratic states or other self-governing political units, sovereignty is “the legitimate authority of the citizens, who may exercise their powers to govern directly, as in small units or, more usually indirectly, by delegating and entrusting powers to their representatives and officials in accord with a constitution.” In democratic federal systems, sovereignty is “the legitimate authority of the citizens, who delegate, entrust, and distribute powers among the governments of the central union, and the member political units in accord with a federal constitution.”⁷

A committee of the World Federalist Movement, whose members came from a dozen countries on four continents, drafted in 1998/99 a statement of principles on *Federalism and the Right of People to Self-Government*. Among the principles it proposed were: “The source of sovereignty — legitimate authority to govern — is the citizens, who associate together and delegate and entrust powers outward to institutions of government in increasingly larger communities. In a federal system, powers are distributed to governments of communities at different levels... Each inhabitant may be a citizen not only of smaller communities but also ultimately of the Earth’s polity. Citizens have a right to democratic government and to participation, either directly or through freely chosen representatives, in the governments of their respective communities...”

“Indispensable elements of democracy include periodic free and fair elections, by secret ballot, with universal suffrage for adult citizens and

regulation of campaign financing, equality before the law and an independent judicial system, civilian control of the military, freedom of belief, speech, and assembly, and free media. Also desirable are: separation of the state and religious authorities, limited terms of office of officials (appointed as well as elected), widely available education, the initiative, referendum, and recall, and ombudsmen to assure accountability of officials, protect human rights and safeguard against corruption.

An oppressive ruler often insists that his/her regime is ‘sovereign’ with license to rule the subject people, immune from ‘interference in its internal affairs’ by the outside world. However, having been usurped from the people, his/her power is illegitimate. Thus the world community through the United Nations should feel obligated to find a means to restore to the oppressed people their basic rights. In a democratic world federation the rights of all groups would be safeguarded, precluding the rise of tyrants.”⁸

A public benefit corporation founded early in the Nineties in California primarily by World Federalists, *Philadelphia II* by 2000 was promoting the *National Initiative for Democracy*. Following First Principles — the authority of the people to create, alter, and dissolve their governments — as exercised by the Framers of the Federal Constitution (in Philadelphia I) and by the ratifying conventions, Philadelphia II has drafted the Democracy Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the Democracy Act. The Preamble of the latter proclaims: “We, the People of the United States inherently possess the sovereign authority and power to govern ourselves. We asserted this power in our Declaration of Independence and in the ratification of our Constitution through the exercise of First Principles...”⁹

The proposed law would reform and extend the initiative process to all jurisdictions within the United States. Comparable direct democracy movements are at work in other countries, especially in Europe. It follows that First Principles can be construed to apply universally.

Democracy Vs. Tyranny.

Despite all the declarations of the right of people to self-government, resistance remains great among pessimistic devotees of *Realpolitik* — both politicians and academics — to enfranchising millions of the disenfranchised. Apologists for oppressors repeat their shibboleth, that their regimes, being “sovereign,” may work their will on unfortunate subjects free from outside interference in their internal affairs.

Opponents of the right of self-determination claim that if it were exercised, violence might result. However, as observed in 1999 by a Filipino civic activist referring to East Timor, and as asserted by numerous Americans and Europeans in recent decades with Tibet and Palestine in mind, “violence is a result not of the exercise of the right of self-determination but of the attempt to suppress or deny it.”¹⁰ Finally, in certain cases of gross discrimination and continuing violations of fundamental human rights, especially ethnic cleansing, recognition of this as a basis for a remedial right to secession is growing.

Moreover, in 1991, not long after Idi Amin and Pol Pot wrought disaster on their peoples with impunity, and after Saddam Hussein attacked the Kuwaitis following his ethnic cleansing of Kurds, the Foreign Ministers of Canada, Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union all asserted that the world community should take action for humanitarian purposes against such tyrants.¹¹

Meanwhile, in 1999 with Slobodan Milosevic, the destroyer of Yugoslavia, still in power, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, before the General Assembly, called for balancing the concept of state sovereignty with individual sovereignty, declaring: “State sovereignty is being redefined by the forces of globalization and international cooperation. The state is now widely understood to be the servant of its people, not vice versa. At the same time, individual sovereignty — the human rights and fundamental freedoms of each and every individual as enshrined in our Charter — has been enhanced by a renewed consciousness of the right of every individual to control his or her own destiny.” The core challenge to the United Nations in the next century, he continued, is “to forge unity behind the principle that massive and systematic violations of human rights — wherever they may take place — should not be allowed to stand.” We are in “an era when strictly traditional notions of sovereignty can no longer do justice to the aspirations of peoples everywhere to attain their fundamental freedoms.”¹²

The Future.

What about the future? The federation of American states arose out of their War of Independence. The European Union — evolving into a European Federation — was born from two destructive World Wars. The system of anarchy that persists in the world today makes it difficult to take action against perpetrators of crimes against humanity. Nevertheless, in addition to the intermediate step of putting an International

Criminal Court into operation, the answer to world crimes — along with solutions to global problems that countries acting alone cannot solve — may lie sooner rather than later in the People of the World becoming aware of the need for, and striving to exercise their sovereignty through, a federal system of governing the world, a system of the People, by the People, and for the People.

John O. Sutter

NOTES

¹ See Philadelphia II, “First Principles”, in www.p2dd.org/firstprinciples.htm

² Sections 2 and 3.

³ James Madison, *Notes of Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787*, New York, W.W. Norton, 1987, pp. 16, 70, 74, 97, 348, 564.

⁴ Article 2.1 of the Charter.

⁵ Emery Reves, *The Anatomy of Peace*, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1945/46.

⁶ Speaking in Fulton, Missouri, in May 1992, Gorbachev observed: “On today’s agenda is not just a union of democratic states, but also a democratically organized world community... An awareness of the need for some kind of global government is gaining ground, one in which all members of the world community would take part.”

⁷ See *Toward Democratic World Federation*, San Francisco, Autumn 1997, p. 8.

⁸ See “Issues” in www.wfanca.org.

⁹ See Philadelphia II, *Democracy Act* in <http://p2dd.org/nationalinitiative/act.htm>

¹⁰ *The Human Rights Agenda*, Manila, October 1999.

¹¹ See *Toward Democratic World Federation*, San Francisco, Winter 1992, p. 5. Hans-Dietrich Genscher of Germany declared: “Today sovereignty must meet its limits in the responsibility of states for mankind as a whole and for the survival of Creation. When human rights are trampled under foot, the family of nations is not confined to the role of spectator... It must intervene.” Gianni de Michelis of Italy suggested revising parts of the U.N. Charter in order to accommodate “the right to intervene” in the internal affairs of states “for humanitarian ends and the protection of human rights.” The international community “must have the power to suspend sovereignty whenever it is exercised in a criminal manner. The international community must be on the side both of democratically elected parliaments and of oppressed nationalities.” Barbara McDougall of Canada and Boris Pankin of the U.S.S.R. spoke in a similar vein.

¹² From a speech before the U.N. General Assembly, 20 September 1999.

Thirty Years Ago

POLITICAL REPORT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE BUREAU EXECUTIF, MARIO ALBERTINI *

I

This XIII congress of the MFE must not limit itself to discussing and adopting a political line on the basis of the current European situation. It must also seek to make a contribution to the unification of all federalists; to achieve this, everyone, including we ourselves, must identify the foundations that will allow federalists, as necessary, to choose concrete shared policies.

Our past is, after all, marked by the experience of a scission. We must thus build our reunification on more solid foundations than those of the past, also overcoming the difficulties deriving from the fact that, ever since 1956, the experiences of federalists have — for reasons that our division into separate organisations has prevented us from understanding in depth — differed.

First of all then, we must recognise the existence of these theoretical and practical differences and, with loyalty, accept them, since no one, in the sphere of federalism, has the right to excommunicate others. At the same time, we must seek out and find everything that, beyond these differences, unites us, so as to found our unity on indestructible bases.

We cannot seriously criticise Europe's division while we, too, remain divided. But there is something more. Our unity, simply by existing, has great political and historical significance. In the history of the European system, ours is the first, and still the only, supranational political organisation. Our organisation is thus concrete proof that the national position can, within political engagement, be overcome. As such, it constitutes a challenge for everyone, for us first and foremost.

It is a challenge for us because we have to show that we can maintain

* Report presented at the Congress of Nancy (6-9 April 1972), published in French in *Le Fédéraliste*, XIV (1972).

our supranational unity, develop it and employ it effectively in the struggle. For the parties, and for every other political group, including the parties that could emerge within the protest movement, because it will become impossible for them, faced with our supranational unity, to mask indefinitely with apparent internationalism, the national substance of their politics.

Naturally our unity does not exclude diversity; on the contrary diversity is a part of our unity, as the latter could not be founded on monolithic or dogmatic views. Federalism is the highest form of freedom, because it represents the unity of all freedoms, all differences. It is thus a unity that must be won gradually, in stages, constantly forging new links between the experiences — necessarily diverse, given life's constant changes and new developments — of every group and every single federalist. This kind of unity cannot exist without mutual trust and maximum clarity on the part of everyone.

Differences lead to division when they are not openly admitted, when ideas are concealed, totally or in part, out of fear of being judged by others, or in order to dominate others, leaving them in the dark as to one's real intentions. While differences divide men who are not free, they unite men who are free: men who do not need to hide their own views because they are not seeking either to dominate or to serve; men who are not inclined to scorn the ideas of anyone because they never see themselves as superior to others; men who know that making mistakes is part of the process of learning the truth.

As far as we are concerned, clarity is a duty that obliges us to declare openly, and without hesitation, how we have interpreted federalism over recent years. I am not, of course, in a position to define the global significance of the MFE from 1956 onwards. This is an issue that we can all, quite happily, leave to the historians of tomorrow. Instead, what each of us must do is relate his own federalist experience, which also means, as far as possible, and always with a readiness to admit to one's own mistakes, to relate his interpretation of the experiences of other militants and, first and foremost, of the great theorists who laid the foundations of federalist thought.

This is the first thing that must be done if we are to regain, and retain, our unity. The difficulties that have to be overcome in order to create a supranational movement, not only on paper but also in the concrete sphere of actions and struggle, are huge, and so far we have overcome them only in part. To overcome them completely, we need to understand one another better. The federalist experience that I myself, together with

other militants, have had has been labelled, by others, “Hamiltonian.” It is true that we have studied Hamilton’s thought, and that we regard it as fundamental to all federalists, but it is equally true that, were we obliged to choose as our label the name of a single theorist, we would go for that of Kant and not Hamilton.

As a theorist of politics and law, Kant is a federalist. Kant is the only thinker to have developed a federalist idea of history’s dialectical evolution towards the ultimate objective: the universal affirmation of peace, freedom, equality and reason. Many people today think that politics can be pursued without the need for great theoretical principles. This is a view that is, unfortunately, also present among federalists. But shouldn’t we be asking ourselves whether this is an attitude that ought to be overcome. Shouldn’t we be asking ourselves whether it constitutes a sign, perhaps the biggest sign, of the decline of a divided Europe, of a yielding to powers that are increasingly detached from society, from what is, for many men, the meaning of life — a yielding to powers that are becoming increasingly technocratic and less and less human?

In our view, our strength, and that of Europe, which is still looking to unite, is, in the final analysis, the strength of theoretical principles, and thus, above all, the strength of Kantian thought and of the thought of all the great theorists who, in his wake, have made real contributions to the concept of federalism, that is to say, to the only concept — that of unity in diversity — through which Europe can be united.

II

It is not easy to set out briefly what is, for us, the meaning of European unity. It is easy to think, upon realising that European unity is necessary, and that it can be guaranteed only by a federation, that one has got to very the crux of the matter, reached a conclusion. But this is not the case. All one has actually done is locate the starting point of a new experience, and it is only in the course of this experience that, gradually, the meaning of European unity is revealed.

I will thus relate what European unity meant to us at the start of our experience, and what it means to us now. European unity is not a new concept. In its modern, federalist, form, it dates back to the problems resolved and the problems created by the French Revolution. This is, thus, a part of history that is very much our concern, a past with which we should be familiar, and which we should endeavour to analyse.

It is known that the concrete affirmation of the modern principle of

nation — which came with the founding of the people's state, or nation-state — was also accompanied by the affirmation, as an idea, of the United States of Europe principle. It is, in this regard, possible to trace a continuous thread that starts with the cosmopolitan component of the French Revolution and Saint-Simon's European utopia and from there runs unbroken. It is reflected not only in the great utopians, in the inspirers of peace meetings and in jurists' conventions of the end of the last century, but also, between utopia and political reality, in the ideologies that have, in turn, emerged as the dominant political thinking. It has fed liberal, democratic and socialist thought, which could not, after all, have been developed and proposed as anything other than solutions valid for all men (Europeans in particular), and not just for the citizens of one country or another.

This internationalist core, tendentially federalist, of the ideologies that moved the historical process of the last century is, if it is indeed true that Lenin, in 1915, felt the need to adopt a stance on the "United States of Europe watchword," far stronger than it is usually thought to be. The force of this watchword was still such as to constitute an obstacle to the affirmation of his political line, and Lenin, writing on the subject, neither wished, nor perhaps was able, to deny the positive significance of the United States of Europe, limiting himself instead to an affirmation of the need for a prelude, i.e., a socialist revolution in Europe, something he considered to be imminent, thus putting off the battle for a United States of Europe to some, foreseeable, near future time.

To what might we attribute the historical endurance of this ideal, so contradicted by events both in the last century and the first half of this one? Our hypothesis is that the contemporaneousness — still little in evidence but nevertheless true — of the practical affirmation of the modern nations and the ideal affirmation of the United States of Europe stemmed from an ideal need that is easy to grasp: the nation, as a new concept of the state, needed a new concept of international society. This was not only an ideal need, but also a practical one. What has not yet been sufficiently highlighted — although Proudhon, as events unfolded, sensed it, and Mazzini overcame the obstacle with his brotherhood of peoples prediction — is that the nation-state, as a political formula, is incompatible with the traditional European equilibrium, based on absolute, but limited, states.

Because the aristocracy constituted a Europe-wide community that had a suprastate sense of European solidarity, this incompatibility was particularly evident in the sphere of international politics. Until the

French Revolution, political personality was based ultimately and fundamentally not on an attachment to the state, or even to nationhood, but on an attachment to Christianity, or to the lay version, Europe's "republic of scholars." Metternich still thought in this way, and truly believed in the existence of an order — even a legal order, European law — at suprastate level.

This incompatibility could, on the other hand, also be seen in the internal conditioning of international policy, both because popular culture (nationality) was not yet crucial to the state, and because the merging of the economic interests of all parties with the motivations behind the states' policies, (which accompanied the Industrial Revolution and the full realisation of the modern bureaucratic state) had still to occur.

The fusion of state and nation put an end to these limitations, which had excluded many civil and material values from the sphere of the state. Relations between states became very difficult. Europe experienced a division the like of which it had never known before. This aspect of the last stage in the life of the European system of states — which had by this time become a system of nation-states — should, in my view, be borne in mind more, and studied in depth. One thing, however, is certain: the affirmation of the national principle in Italy and in Germany, marking the definitive end of the international politics of enlightened sovereigns, resulted in the First World War, and serves as an explanation of the new, generalised, and total nature of that war. Moreover, the spread, as a result of the First World War, of the national principle throughout Europe led to the Second World War, and the end of Europe, whose chances of once again playing an active historical role now depend on its capacity to resolve, through its unification, the international problem generated by the creation of the nation-state.

Power, that is to say effective decision-making power at international level, has emigrated from Europe to North America, to the territory previously covered by the Czarist empire and which now makes up the Soviet Union, and, albeit still in an embryonic form, to China. This is not a circumstance that we can, even now, slot into the theory of historical cycles, citing it as an example of the exhaustion of old historical-social forces and the advent of new ones. Instead, what we are witnessing — and the game is not yet over, since Europe can still be unified — is the historical end of a political formula, the nation-state formula, and the irreversible historical affirmation of new forms of state that are larger and more complex, and that have an implicitly or explicitly plurinational basis — China, like Europe, is a civilisation and not a nation and, within

certain limits, the United States of America can, as some have said, be likened to a successful European federation — and a federal or, hidden behind a veil of ideology, practically imperial structure.

At the start of our federalist experience, we found ourselves faced with this reality, with these consequences of a historical past that was still not clear to us. But one thing was clear to see. As far as Europe was concerned, division now spelled its historical death. The ills of Europe's division were, and still are, there for all to see. But what was not, and still is not, there for all to see was the fact that these ills are mortal ills, that the states have no future unless they federate in time. The nature of this reality was, in essence, discernible in the thought of a prominent Italian. It is worth recalling his thought briefly, given that it was, despite representing a lifetime's reflection, expressed with lapidary concision in what was a dramatic moment: that of the dreaded, and imminent, failure of the EDC. These are his words: "In the life of nations, the mistake of not seizing the moment is usually irreparable. The need to unify Europe is evident. The existing states are dust devoid of substance. None of them is able to bear the cost of its autonomous defence. It is only through union that they can endure. This is not a problem of choice between independence or union, but of choice between existing in unity or disappearing. Italians paid for the hesitation of and discord among the Italian states at the end of the fifteenth century with three centuries of lost independence; then the time for deciding lasted, perhaps, just a few months. Now, the time will be ripe for European union only as long as western Europe continues to share the same ideals of freedom. Can we really be sure that factors working against the ideals of freedom will not, unexpectedly, gain sufficient strength to prevent union, consigning some countries to the sphere of North America and others to that of Russia? An Italian territory will still exist, but not an Italian nation; the latter is destined to go on living as a spiritual and moral unit only providing we are able to forgo this absurd military and economic independence." These words are taken from a note written on March 1, 1954, by Luigi Einaudi while serving as President of Italy. We had, for a long time, been familiar with this historical opinion of Luigi Einaudi. We realised that we were faced with the possibility of Europe's historical death, and that time was running out. We knew that we had to fight for unity, and that there was no time to lose, even though all the political forces were wasting time (and are still wasting time) by repeatedly putting national ends before the true European objective, and regarding unification as a very long process, so long as to seem impossible.

Through us at least, European unity should have had an immediate

lease of life, because only life can defeat death. And in fighting against everything that divides Europe, in our attempt to deny the division of Europe, an idea was sown within us of what the life of Europe could mean. We were, and still are, against the exclusive nation-state. Our whole cultural experience is based on our negation of the nation-state. It is through this negation that we evolved and seek to express ourselves.

Moreover, our work constitutes, if I am not mistaken, the only serious attempt to demystify this type of state. Naturally, intention to negate is not the same thing as succeeding in the endeavour. Others, not we ourselves, are the judges of that. All I can do is set out, briefly, our ideas. One of these is that the passage from the nation-state to the European state implies a material and historical transformation of great importance, a real grass-roots social change. There is a tendency to consider the word “social” as synonymous with “class” and “class struggle.” But the reality is far more complex, because to confuse these terms is to forget the huge social importance of the fact of the nation.

The nation-state is the political community that attempts, and in part manages, to render homogeneous all the communities that exist within it. Basically, its tendentiously totalitarian nature is already evident in the fact that this type of state is able to survive only if it succeeds in establishing a single language and uniform customs throughout its sphere of action (even though, as far as the latter are concerned, it is a semblance of unification more than real unification that it has actually managed to impose). This artificial social basis is what makes a man born in Turin feel like a man born in Palermo and different, in his human origins, from any man born in any other state (even though, in reality, and leaving aside the common origins of all men, the difference between a man from Turin and a man from Palermo is greater than that, say, between someone from Turin and someone from Lyons).

A European state could not, on the contrary, be founded on this social basis, and neither could the formation of this social basis be induced by and helped along by a European state. Although Italian and French were, starting in Florence and Paris respectively, turned into national languages, no development of this kind could ever occur on a European level. There is no centre of power that has the capacity to impose a single language in Europe, the capacity to make the French stop speaking French and the Italians stop speaking Italian. Even more so, there is no centre of power with the capacity to create in Europe the illusion of, or even a degree of, uniformity of customs. This is a situation that can be illustrated neatly in a formula that federalists never tire of repeating: what

will be possible in Europe is the formation of a people of nations, not a national people, a federal, pluralist people, not a monolithic people.

This is the first concrete aspect that needs to be taken into consideration. The second is of an institutional nature. First of all, it needs to be said that the accusations of “institutionalism” levelled at federalists are quite meaningless. It is obvious that institutions cannot exist without an underlying social basis and also that institutions cannot be fought for without the belief that there exist the necessary social foundations on which to build them and make them work. The supreme duty of politics is, often, to destroy institutions that are stifling new social developments and to create new institutions in response to new developments. It also needs to be pointed out that those who refuse European institutionalism are, in fact, and even without realising it, accepting national institutionalism, regarding as “organic” a process — that of the nation — which in reality demands a preliminary institutional condition: an organised national framework for the expression of historical forces.

That said, a quick pointer on this question is provided by Anglo-Saxon culture, in comparison with which the culture of continental Europe is found to have a gap. In Anglo-Saxon culture, a clear distinction is drawn between the unitary (national) principle and the federal (pluralist) principle. In the nation-state, sovereign representation is unitary. The idea of the republic being “one and indivisible” is the natural consequence of this. But this republic reduces the division of powers, the thing that should constitute the political guarantee of freedom, to a mere outward appearance. And, with truly diabolical results, it entrusts schools even, and culture, to the centre of power that “wields the sword,” that is the army.

This kind of state is bound — aspirations in any other direction are insignificant, vain — to use schools, culture, to turn citizens into good soldiers. And it does precisely this. The history of the nation, which hounds us throughout our education from primary school to university, lays bare, starting with the edifying tales aimed at youngsters, the submission of historical-social culture to the practical, authoritarian and bellicose needs of the state. It is this same culture that we see emerging in state-related areas of social behaviour — national elections, national military service — and in political rituals.

It is this culture again that emerges in the arbitrary application of universal facts — historical facts and current facts of political and social importance — to national frameworks, in a way that is all the more insidious because this manipulation, not being openly uplifting, quells

fears of having served power rather than truth. This culture, which depends on the state, makes the nation-state the lord of all individual consciences.

The federal state, on the other hand, represents a splitting of the sovereign function, of sovereignty. Politics is not restricted to a single framework and political battles are not fought for a single power, which, through its prefects, controls all lower powers. Instead it operates in the federal framework and in the framework of the member states. The difference is fundamental. This territorial, as opposed to exclusively functional, division of power is supported by a solid social basis. And this territorial distribution of power, in its most typical form, cannot survive without the primacy of the Constitution.

Its unity is based, in fact, on a rule — that of the distribution of power among all the member states and the federal government; in the unitary state, on the other hand, unity lies in a centre of power to which everything is subordinate, and which is judge and party at the same time. It is not mere chance that the birth of the theory of the judicial review — and not just the Constitutional Court, a late fruit of the decline of the nation-state — coincided with that of history's first federal state, the American federation. Neither is it mere chance that the American federation, embryo and remains of the first federal pact, has no education minister, no home secretary and no prefects.

This is the social basis, institutional character and legal distribution of power that Europe could have. It constitutes a reasonable forecast of a realisable situation, even though, admittedly, it still would not constitute a perfectly federal solution. It is a forecast, not a dream, because this is a situation that would stem not from individual will, but from the objective impossibility of forming a centralised and unitary European nation-state.

But this conclusion is not an adequate explanation of the meaning of European unity. Federalists assume responsibility for Europe's imperfection, to which I alluded earlier, and for the fact that this imperfection corresponds, in truth, to a failure to negate completely the authoritarian and bellicose values of the nation-state. This is why their argument extends, and in a very precise manner, beyond the confines of Europe. This is why, when horizons are narrowed by the requirements of political struggle and there emerges the need to look far ahead, we say that there is still a need to conduct politics in order to pave the way for the day in which men will no longer be forced to engage in politics. We are fighting for the European federation only because our revolutionary conscience

does not allow us to run away from reality.

In this regard, there are two things that I would like to underline. The first is that nobody will oblige federalists — even should the Europe they are fighting for become, with their contribution, a reality — to support a future European government. Even at the risk of attracting derision, as has occurred in the past, the most responsible among us have always maintained that the place of federalists, in Europe, will always be among the ranks of the opposition. Europe will allow this because Europe will have an opposition. What is peculiar is the failure of the Continent's left-wing parties to see this; and this leaves them envisaging a European state that will be more compact, more totalitarian, than the nation-state. What the left-wing parties in Europe's nation-states should actually be thinking about is how much more effective a European opposition is likely to be compared with the national oppositions. But I want to explain the paradox of our participation in the building of a state that we already know we will have to criticise. There is nothing absurd about this. It is the paradox that accompanies every advance made along the road of revolution. The revolution is global and universal. This is why every advance made towards it immediately becomes meaningless to those fighting for it — and this is something that, in one way or another, always occurs — unless they are able to accept that their destiny is to continue to be in the ranks of the opposition even after fulfilling their task.

This will become clearer, I hope, as I move on to my second point. Important stages in revolutionary progress have always had two meanings: one that is practical, immediate, verifiable in the new institutions and in new political and social behaviour, and one that is theoretical and can be seen only on a cultural level (culture being taken to mean that which drives, deep down, the formation of human thought). The end result of the French Revolution, if viewed in the light not of life prior to it, but of the fierce revolutionary ideals that inspired it, was rather unexceptional: the state that, despite recognising the barriers it brought down and the historical forces it freed, we today condemn as “Jacobinic-Napoleonic.”

In any case, the “Jacobinic-Napoleonic” state did not destroy the global significance of the French Revolution, which led to the affirmation, within the culture of mankind, of the democratic principle. Despite its imperfect realisation, despite all the defeats democracy has suffered, this principle became strongly rooted in the hearts of men, where it has remained firm. Fascism, which openly repudiated it, has been swept from the scene. One-party socialist states, which repudiate it in practice, are

unable to negate it in theory and in the rituals of political life.

Similar observations can be made about the Soviet Revolution. So great is the distance that separates the revolutionary aspirations from the resulting soviet state that the obvious conclusion now is that what was realised in the Soviet Union was not communism, but a rigid form of state capitalism. However, the expression “state capitalism” highlights an empirical aspect of the soviet situation that reduces its historical significance. We know that communism has not become a reality. But we should also be aware of the fact that, in the wake of the Soviet Revolution, private ownership of the social means of production has, in a cultural sense, lost its legitimacy. True social ownership of the means of production is still a long way off, as is, moreover, genuine democracy. But, in the same way as absolutism died in the hearts of men, in my view for good, so the principle of the legitimacy of private ownership of the social means of production is now dying out in the hearts of men.

Reality can accept the democracy, imperfect, guided and manipulated, of the West; and the management, guided and manipulated, of collective production in the East. Culture cannot. And it is culture that separates that which is and that which should be, and that thus motivates life's deepest currents.

In the light of these observations, I do not feel that we can evaluate the future European state without considering, alongside that which it will negate in practice — as negated practice that shows its possible practical reality — that which it will negate in theory, thereby highlighting not only what it will practically and immediately affirm, but also what it will affirm in the sphere of culture. In practice, the European state will negate — with consequences that have already been discussed — the nation-state. In theory it will negate the nations, or rather, the fusion of nation with state — the enslavement of the nation (which stands for culture and universality) to the closed, unitary state (which, per se, is synonymous with power and particularism). It was for precisely this reason that, in his 1954 Christmas message, Pius XII — a controversial pope, but one who must be listened to if and when he speaks words of truth — defined, correctly in my modest opinion, this type of state as one of the most diabolical creations in the history of mankind.

What is the significance of this theoretical negation? For historical reasons, this is not a question that can be answered on the basis of consideration of the American federation. The American federation came into being in what was still a side road of history, sheltered from the great conflicts between states and classes. And it negated — this is the real

point — thirteen small states that had no state or national history. The European federation, on the other hand, will, from the outset, have to negate France, Germany and Italy: the great historical nations. The great historical nations embody the culture of the political division of mankind. Their negation will thus be the negation of this culture.

It is true that the European federation will be a state among states. It will create a dual loyalty in the citizens, introducing European elections alongside national ones. It is possible to imagine that, putting an end to obligatory military service, it will also put an end to the “citizen equals soldier” equation. But, as a power among powers, it will have to defend its autonomy with military means too. In practice, it will remain on the terrain of the political division of mankind, even though examination of its *raison d'état*, something worthy of a separate discussion, suggests that it will be less brutal and, in social terms, less constricted than the Soviet Union or the United States of America.

In theory, however, the terrain of the European state will be the terrain of the negation of the political division of mankind. This is, historically, the most important thing. The culture of the political division of mankind is the culture that, by mystifying liberalism, democracy and socialism, has, in fact, legitimatised the duty to kill. The culture of the negation of the political division of mankind is the historical negation of this duty; it constitutes the affirmation, in the sphere of thought, of the right not to kill, and thus the historical framework of the struggle to affirm it in practice — beyond the European federation — through world federation and the emancipation of all men.

For us, this, and this alone, is what life of Europe should mean.

