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We publish below a report on an international Conference for European Federation recently held in Paris, it is to the credit of the French Committee for European Federation to have called this meeting.

It is only natural that almost every problem which was on the agenda of this Conference needs further comment and clarification. We want to confine ourselves here to some observations on the German problem. In our opinion the suggestions made at the Conference confuse two different sets of problems. Firstly, what measures can be taken to prevent any future aggression by Germany? The answer is - unfortunately it was not adopted by the Conference - that Germany must be completely disarmed and her war-industries, actual or potential, placed under strict international control.

The second question concerns ways and means by which Germany might be democratised and made a country without any aggressive and expansionist intentions. The decentralisation of Germany and the removal of Prussia from her position of hegemony would be important measures to achieve this aim and conducive to the federalisation of Germany. Such a federation, however, would be no guarantee against renewed German aggression as long as the system of power politics is maintained in the rest of Europe. No such danger would exist, however, if a European Federation were created to which a completely disarmed Germany would be admitted. For it is impossible that sixty million Germans, without weapons, could attack several hundred millions of Europeans, who would be, moreover, protected by an International Armed Force.

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The Paris Conference on European Federation

At the end of March a Conference on European Federation was held in Paris, under the auspices of the French Committee for European Federation. The French participants were widely representative of the progressive parties, the trade unions and the resistance movements. They included Daniel Mayer, Secretary of the French Socialist Party, André Philip, Joseph Zaksas **[1]** and several other members of the Consultative Assembly such as Baumel **[2]**, the acting secretary of the Mouvement de la Liberation Nationale, Gazier **[3]** of the C.G.T., representatives of the Christian trade unions, of the agricultural trade unions and editors of the most important progressive news-papers and journals, such as Albert Camus, of "Combat", Em[m]anuel Mounier **[4]**, of "Esprit" **[5]**, Michel Collinet **[6]**, of "Volonté" **[7]**, Brizon **[8]**, of "Libertés", André Ferrat, of "Lyon Libre" **[9]** and members of the staff of "Témoignage Chrétien" and "L'Aube" **[10]**. Other personalities who could not be present at the Conference gave their support to its resolution and will in future cooperate. They include M. Frenay, Minister for Prisoners of War and Deportees, Vincent Auriol and Robert Verdier **[11]**, both of the Executive of the S.F.I.O. (French Socialist Party).

A political leader of the Resistance Movement of Northern Italy, John Hynd **[12]**, a British Labour M.P., and some Austrian, Spanish, German and Greek anti-Fascists were also present. Owing to transport difficulties a number of friends and sympathisers of the movement were unable to attend.

Reports and Discussions

The main interest of the Meeting was centred round the two detailed reports given by André Ferrat and A. Antonelli **[13]**.

André Ferrat (member of the Executive of the Mouvement de Liberation Nationale, leader of the S.F.I.O. in Lyon and Socialist delegate to the Comité d'Entente between the S.F.I.O. and the Communist Party of France in that city, editor of "Lyon Libre", and author of "La Republique a refaire" **[14]**, a study on the structure of the French State, which has been just published by the N.R.F.) stated that the situation of Europe after two World Wars which originated in our Continent, called for a genuinely new analysis of the cycle of European revolutions, counter-revolutions and wars. As long as the specific causes of the European chaos are not recognised and removed, said Ferrat, this Continent will remain a centre of unrest, despite agreements between great Powers. There would thus arise the need for continuous foreign intervention in Europe, with the possibility of growing frictions between the intervening powers which might eventually lead to another war. We European should therefore

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not rely exclusively on the Yalta declaration, although it is encouraging in so far as it states the need for a real democratic development in the whole of Europe and rejects, at least in theory, the division of Europe into spheres of influence. But the chances of reaching a working agreement between the Powers would increase if such structural changes were made in Europe which would remove the main national conflicts inside this Continent. The peoples of Europe, and the world at large, need a Europe "neutralised" in respect to power politics. The reconstruction of civil liberties and economic prosperity is no longer possible within a framework of nationalism, i.e. of spiritual and economic autarchy which would subordinate the whole life of the nation to military needs. Any "functional" approach to the problems of transport and economy will be frustrated as long as the European nations live under the shadow of future wars and retain their full sovereignty in the international sphere. On the other hand, all socialist measures inside most sovereign states would be deprived of their real progressive meaning as they would only ultimately increase the power of a reactionary bureaucracy. As long as the territorial quarrels inside Europe remain preponderant, no people will be prepared for radical changes of its State machinery, because any such revolutionary would indeed weaken its national unity and its war potential.

The real problems of Europe centre round Germany and the attitude of the other countries to the German problem. What are the prospects of solving it? Peace inside Europe, or even inside Germany, cannot be achieved through continuous intervention or through punitive expeditions by outside powers, which means that the problems of Europe cannot possibly be solved without a growing degree of co-operation on the part of the Europeans themselves. Removing the German danger by means of re-drawing Germany's frontiers and large scale annexation in the East and the West involves a considerable draw-back for Germany's neighbours, especially Poland and France: they would through the incorporation of German territories be burdened with problems which

they could not solve. If power politics within Europe are to continue, Germany will sooner or later take a share, and a disastrous share at that, in them. The only way to prevent the re-emergence of an aggressive Germany is to profit by the present disintegration of the German Reich and by the setting up of some kind of international administration of Germany. A European Federal Organisation (whatever its name) could develop the temporary occupation controls into a permanent feature. Many of the necessary centralised functions of a modern state could be assumed by the European Council, thus furthering the much needed decentralisation of Germany.

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A. Antonelli (A leader of the Action Party and of the Committee for National Liberation of Northern Italy who came from German-occupied Italy to attend the Conference. He is one of the founders of the Italian Committee for European Federation, author of a number of political books, mostly written in jail, which are now being published in Rome) gave the second report. He stressed the fundamental difference between the situation within Europe before the present war and the situation which is developing now. Even before this war the solution of the crises in Europe could not be achieved except by creating a federation of the European States. This solution, however, was then deemed utopian, as the European national States were firmly established. Powerful political and economic interests were closely connected with that system. Even the progressive and socialist movements, although they proclaimed international co-operation as their ultimate aim, in practice accepted the international system as it stood and the foreign policy of their States within this system. For this reason these movements concentrated their efforts on home policy, in the hope that progressive measures in the internal field would, as it were automatically, bring about the desired international co-operation. The result of this policy has been completely negative. The prevailing anarchy in the international sphere drove each nation to rely on heavy military measures, which paralysed all social progress. Thus the progressive movements were eventually defeated on a front on which they did not even fight.

To-day, the peoples of the European Continent understand that Freedom and Peace in Europe is indivisible. Of course, we witness in our homelands the attempts of the old conservative forces to resurrect the old national and international order. This order, however, no longer appears to be progressive forces as a solid and unshakable reality. The democratic parliaments, now in the making, should not repeat their old mistake of leaving international policy to professional diplomats, but should immediately set themselves the task of bringing about international agreements and of creating federal bodies. The time for action is now and in the next few years, which will be a period of revolutionary unrest in Europe. This period, as all crises, will be of limited duration, after which the traditional forces will consolidate themselves once more within the national states, and what successes the progressive movements have achieved would in that case prove ephemeral, as happened after the last war.

The discussion following these reports was mainly concerned with the following practical political problems: The relations between Europe and the Big Powers; the role of France within Europe; Germany.

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Some of the participants thought the formula of a European federation too narrow, as the various European countries were too closely and in too many ways connected with the other continents. Two diametrically opposed conclusions were drawn from this

consideration: some advocated that nothing less than a World Federation will suffice, whilst others thought that the aim of Federation should be abandoned and be substituted by regional agreements on monetary and economic matters, within the frame-work of a world peace organisation.

The majority of the Conference came, however, to the conclusion that the fate of Europe depended upon the ability of the Big Powers to reach a stable co-operation between themselves and that the European States are therefore deeply interested in the creation of a World League of the United Nations which should become an instrument capable of solving the differences between its sovereign member states. But such a World League can not become a Federation because the differences of social and political structure are too great and each of the Big Powers has a wide range of home problems which it can solve within the existing frame-work of its own State and does not feel in the least compelled to submit to a World Parliament or any kind of International Government. The same, however, does not hold good for the European countries, as their main problems have become problems common to them all, whose solution can only be tackled in common, which means in fact, by some kind of supra-national authority. Every other attempted solution would lead straight to autarchy and thus destroy the spiritual and economic premises of democracy. The Conference felt that none of the Big Powers should have any fundamental objections against the creation of a European Federation, which would remain from a military point of view under the joint control of the Big Powers, and which would be far too loose a unit to be capable of carrying out any aggressive policy. Moreover, the forces who would constitute such a European Federation are by their very nature completely opposed to power politics and have by their fight in the resistance movements proved their sympathy with Russia and the Western Powers.

There was agreement that the main responsibility for setting up common European institutions rests with France, because France is the main centre of democratic movements and traditions on the Continent, and is strong enough to be a spiritual leader in Europe, but not so strong as to arouse the suspicion that she may want or that she could use the Federation for securing her own hegemony in Europe.

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With regard to the German problem some participants criticised the Resolution. They felt it an injustice and an anachronism to demand the complete disintegration of Germany, whilst all other States are to retain their national unity. But the majority felt that the disintegration of the German Reich was unavoidable and that the reconstruction of democratic life in Germany would not imply the resurrection of a centralised Reich. Of course, the creation of smaller German units would be reactionary and unpracticable if Germany's neighbours were allowed to retain their complete sovereignty. If, however, the German States were integrated into Europe on a completely equal basis this would be a progress for the German people and at the same time the way to dispel all distrust against the Germans on the part of the other nations.

Resolutions

We give the following extracts from the "Resolution" adopted by the Conference.

"The problem of European Federation has now become for the first time one of practical political importance. The atrocities perpetrated in the course of this war, the danger of general enslavement, the proven failure of every State of continental Europe

to defend its independence show clearly that the system of absolute national sovereignty must be done away with in Europe.

The foundations of the European States were shaken during this war; they are all faced with the necessity of revising their constitution and their policies; this provides a unique opportunity for setting out on a new road.

But open and disguised reactionary forces, both in the political and economic field, will do their utmost to preserve for their own advantage the old system. It is up to the progressive forces who have struggled for the liberation of their countries not to tolerate this restoration.

The progressive movements in the various European countries should henceforth make the struggle for the unification of Europe the centre of their efforts, as this is the indispensable premise for every other social and cultural progress on our continent.

During this period when the horrors of war are in everybody's mind and the traditional national and international relations are in flux the progressive forces should:

- reject and prevent any attempt and any measure advocating a return to a nationalistic foreign policy;
- demand that the resurgent European democracies take those steps which favour the creation of federal links between them;
- establish close international agreements between all movements, parties and States who support a European Federal policy, in order to develop a common and co-ordinated activity."

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The Conference set up an International Committee for the Federation of Europe whose functions are to be:

"1) To take up contact with the various progressive parties and movements of the various European countries to interest them in the struggle for a European federation.

2) To prepare a Federalist congress attended by the delegates of all parties and movements fighting for European democracy.

3) To engage in a broad federalist propaganda in France and elsewhere."

It was stressed that this International Committee does not intend to create new parties and a new International, but that it wants to rally the different democratic and socialist parties for the purpose of common action in favour of the Federalist aim, whatever may be their differences with respect to other questions.

Furthermore, the conference unanimously adopted the following statement:

"The International Committee solemnly states that it regards the Federation of Europe to be only a milestone on the road to World Federation. It confines its activities to-day to the struggle for a European Federation in order not to embark upon the pursuance of unrealistic objectives. Moreover, the States of Europe are in the deepest crisis. Their needs in this respect are the most pressing and their potentialities the greatest.

But this Federation must be left open to all nations of the world and must be fitted

into the system of collective security, which is actually under discussion."

Editorische Anmerkungen

- 1 - *Joseph Zaksas, nach „Europe speaks“ Mitbegründer des „Comité Français pour la Fédération Européenne“ (CFFE) (1944), Autor der Résistance-Zeitung Libérer et Fédérer. Mitglied des provisorischen Parlaments (1944-1945). Weitere biographische Daten konnten nicht ermittelt werden.*
- 2 - *Jacques Baumel (geb. 1918), französischer Politiker, Mitglied der Résistance und Führer der Bewegung „Combat“ in Marseille, Generalsekretär des „Mouvement unis de Résistance“ (1943), Teilnahme an der Gründung der L'UDSR (Union démocratique et socialiste de la Résistance, 1945), Abgeordneter in der ersten verfassungsgebenden Versammlung (1945), Vorsitzender der parlamentarischen Gruppe der L'UDSR, Senator (1959-1967), Generalsekretär der l' Union pour la Nouvelle République (UNR), Mitglied der Nationalversammlung (1967-2002), Staatssekretär in der Regierung von Jacques Chaban-Delmas (1969-1972), Bürgermeister von Rueil-Malmaison (1971-2004).*
- 3 - *Albert Gazier (1908-1997), französischer Politiker, Mitglied der Résistance (Libération Nord), Treffen mit de Gaulle in London als Repräsentant der CGT, sozialistischer Abgeordneter (1945-1958), Staatssekretär in diversen Regierungen, Informationsminister (1950-1951), Minister für Soziales (1956-1957), Mitglied des Vorstands des SFIO (1947-1969).*
- 4 - *Emmanuel Mounier (1905-1950), französischer Philosoph, Begründer und Herausgeber der französischen Zeitung "Esprit".*
- 5 - *„Esprit“, 1932 gegründete und von Emmanuel Mounier herausgegebene französische Kulturzeitschrift.*
- 6 - *Michel Collinet (1904-1977), Herausgeber der französischen Zeitung "Volonté".*
- 7 - *„Volonté“, von Michel Collinet herausgegebene französische Résistance-Zeitung.*
- 8 - *Pierre (?) Brizon, Herausgeber der französischen Zeitung "Libertés". Weitere biographische Daten konnten nicht ermittelt werden.*
- 9 - *„Lyon Libre“, von André Ferrat herausgegebene französische Résistance-Zeitung.*
- 10 - *„L'Aube“, Organ du Mouvement Républicain Populaire, von Georges Bidault in Paris herausgegebene französische, christdemokratische, antifaschistische Tageszeitung (von 1932 bis 1951 nachgewiesen).*
- 11 - *Robert Verdier (geb. 1910), französischer Politiker, Mitglied der SFIO (seit 1934), Generalsekretär (1944-1946), Abgeordneter (1951-1958), Mitbegründer der Parti Socialiste Autonome (1958).*
- 12 - *John Hynd (1902-1971), britischer Politiker der Labour Party, Abgeordneter (1944-1970), Minister für deutsch-österreichische Belange (1945-1947).*

13 - A. Antonelli, nach „Europe Speaks“ Führer der italienischen Partito d'Azione (Action Party), Mitbegründer des Komitees für die nationale Befreiung Norditaliens, Teilnehmer und Redner der Konferenz über die Europäische Föderation in Paris Ende März 1945, Autor zahlreicher politischer Bücher. Weitere biographische Daten konnten nicht ermittelt werden.

14 - "La République a refaire", französische Résistance-Zeitung.