

WORLD FEDERALISTS' CONGRESS, STOCKHOLM, 1949

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THE arresting beauty of Stockholm reaches out to capture the beholder immediately he comes within range, and the magic of it works unceasingly to detain him or—once he has departed—to urge him to return. It was in this fair city, this jewel of civilisation, set in a Nordic version of Indian Summer, that the World Movement for World Federal Government held its third annual Congress. It was symbolic that the Swedish Government had made available their House of Commons for the plenary sessions, and the entire Parliament Building for the meetings of the sub-Commissions and other Congress business.

But first there was a reception in the world-famous Golden Salon of the Town Hall (Stadshuset), where the Delegates were received by a representative of the Civic Council. Then on that same (Monday) evening there was a public meeting at Stadshuset, in the Blue Hall, the architect of which had mercifully changed his mind concerning the color scheme and left it to glow with the lovely warm red of its hand-made, hand-wrought brick and the gentle pearly splendour of the polished Swedish marble. Between 1,000 and 1,500 people were present, including members of the Diplomatic Corps, High Court Judges, Professors from the Hogskolor (Colleges), and other holders of the key positions which must be won before federalism triumphs.

In his opening speech, Lord Boyd Orr said that Tennyson's vision of "the parliament of Man, the Federation of the World" must be made to come true in our day. Otherwise, atomic bombs and bacteriological weapons would put an end to our civilisation. The common people of the world must take the lead.

In a profoundly-reasoned address Raymond Swing, U. S. Radio Commentor, argued that what is called 'collective security' really involved making half of the world feel collectively insecure. "By misusing the term," he said. "the West is lulled into a false feeling of safety, while the East is given an undeniable fear of danger . . . The one practical way to avert war is to lay the floor of law under international relations, to enforce law against individuals . . . This is the method of peace, and it is also the only method of justice." The United Nations as at present constituted was not a practical solution.

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"No solution of the peace problem is practical which depends on the power to wage a war that massacres innocent individuals."

Henry Osborne, British M.P., pleaded that the statesmen who let us down by creating a second league, after the first had failed, were not really stupid or ignorant: the *people* had not authorised them to do the right thing. The plan for the Peoples' World Convention in 1950 aimed at giving the politicians the necessary mandate. The Crusade for World Government had ten times as many supporters in 1948 as in 1947, and a hundred times as many in 1949. It was setting up a chain reaction of peace. "At this rate of increase", he promised, "we can be confident of the future." Federation could not be achieved piecemeal, step by step. The Peoples' World Convention in 1950 would give the politicians the opportunity to choose either sovereignty for the nations or peace for the world.

The only woman speaker at the Town Hall was Mrs. Elizabeth Mann Borgese, daughter of Thomas Mann, who said that federalists would work as hard as the atomic scientists did in creating the first chain reaction. As an international organ the World Movement for World Federal Government had not yet entered its really active stage. This Congress was intended to lay the foundations for consolidation and consequent expansion into a healthy and representative movement.

The following day the Congress divided into a dozen commissions. While the Finance Committee was drafting its protest that finance, "as at Luxembourg, has been given secondary attention both by those responsible for the Agenda of the Conference and by the delegates," and discovering that "in order that the Council, which we shall elect, may do more than dissolve the movement at the end of one month, it is essential that before they meet on Monday, \$10,000 is raised," the Delegates were dealing with:

- Reports on the Control of Atomic Energy,
- A Report on World Federal Constitutions,
- A Report on Functional Federalism,
- A Report on the Emancipation of Dependent Territories
- A Report on Unemployment and World Trade,
- A Report on Attempting to Reform UNO,
- A Report on Parliamentary Approach
- A Report (by Garry Davis) on the International Registry, and various other similar documents.

Many of these reports had been drawn up under the admirable supervision of Alexandre Marc. If all federalists were as wise, as erudite, as tolerant and broad-minded as he is, the picture might be different. As things are, however, it was no wonder that the delegates were too busy to consider whether the Movement has the time, money and energy to undertake all these grandiose schemes, or whether it would be better to throw overboard any passengers who might be trying to ride on the federalist waggon towards destination known only to themselves. (It was seriously mooted in the lobbies whether the Movement would not stand a better chance of coming back to earth if its headquarters were to be moved to Copenhagen.) It was perhaps natural that the press, like other members of the public were apt to conclude that the Movement was out to create the finest league of nations the world has ever known; that federalists were not only working to solve the problem of security but also to usurp all the other functions of UNO.

Attendance at the Congress had been expected to be 350 delegates and observers. Actual attendance was more nearly 500. A score of countries were represented, including India, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Forty affiliated movements were represented, and twenty international organizations sent observers.

The Committees on Policy were the first to report.

The Atomic Energy Commission was chaired by Dr. David Bradley, author of "No Place to Hide," a book resulting from his observations at Bikini. The Report was presented by Dr. Kowarski, assistant to Professor Joliot-Curie (Director of the French Government Centre of Atomic Research). Adopted without amendment, it states, that control of atomic energy by a supranational authority is difficult to achieve without simultaneous surrender of the other weapons of war. The failure of the U. N.'s attempts to control atomic energy "was due primarily to the basic difficulty of treating disarmament as a subject separate from the establishment of a world of law. The World Movement should bring pressure to bear on governments and on the United Nations to extend the discussion of atomic energy control to include ownership and manufacture of all weapons of war . . . Effective atomic energy control is impossible except under a supra-national authority."

The Sub-Committee on a World Federal Constitution was

under the chairmanship of Professor A. Borgese, who in collaboration with Dr. Robert Hutchins, Chancellor of Chicago University, and others, founded the "Committee to Frame a World Constitution" (1945) and is director of "Common Cause" the widely-read monthly organ of the Committee. The Congress decided that research should continue into the many existing drafts of a world constitution (at least 52 have been brought to light so far). It also decided, after having rejected the first report of the Committee on unemployment and world Trade, to continue research into economic problems with a view to deciding whether to adopt an economic policy at the next annual congress.

The Committee on the Refugee problem decided on many tasks which should be done or be done better, by UNO, but apart from a recommendation that the WMWFG should explore "methods to secure the recognition as World Citizens of refugees who cannot acquire national status." failed to show where federalism came into the picture at all.

There was a strong contingent of delegates who appeared to envisage the federal government as a de-luxe edition of a national Ministry of Food, dispensing largesse in exchange for the loyalty of its subjects, and possessing governmental power merely by virtue of its philanthropy. The Commissions on Food and Population and on Functional Federalism had got together and produced a joint resolution that the W.M.W.F.G. should work to transform the "existing but ineffective World Food Council into an organization with the funds and authority to achieve the purposes for which FAO was established." Despite seven preambles commencing "whereas," it ignored the fact that no World Food Board could achieve its purpose unless it operated under the aegis of a supra-national authority. Raymond Swing moved an amendment to the effect that the World Movement should not go beyond its existing functions without authorization by the Congress of the Movement.

The Commission on the Colonial Problem was headed by Dr. Joseph Mitchell, of West Indies origin, Chairman of the League of Coloured Peoples. Among its members were Mr. M. Inagaki from Japan (who brought a message of good-will and encouragement from the Mayor of Hiroshima and 100,000 other Japanese) and Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, Chairman of the Foreign Policy Committee of the Socialist Party of India, and President of the Indian Peasant Organisation. The Congress

approved their recommendations that federalist organisations should, *inter alia*, try to persuade their respective governments to grant independence to non-autonomous territories under their jurisdiction.

The sub-Committees on the Plan of Action began to report towards the end of the week.

The report on "Functional Federalism" (not as might be imagined, a term to describe the Wallace-Mitrany school of thought, but a plan to infiltrate into existing schools) had mentioned that in England the old League of Nations Union used to have 1,000,000 members but that the dwindling United Nations Association has never reached the 100,000 mark. The report of the United Nations Approach Committee contained the remarkable suggestion that UNO, having accomplished "constructive work" in Palestine, was "better than nothing," even though "the method by which it safeguards peace is to make war on a recalcitrant nation." Mr. Fyke Farmer said that a world government would enforce its decisions on individuals, not on governments or communities. That was the main respect in which it would differ from UNO. The Commission recommended the Executive of W. M. W. F. G. to apply to UNO for recognition as a non-governmental body, and to try to secure consultative status. The Movement should work to "transform" UNO so that it will be able to prevent war instead of only punishing the guilty afterwards. In the plenary session one delegate argued that the very existence of UNO was delaying federation. In the belief that the U. S. federal constitution was a revised version of the Articles of Confederation, Miss Wingate contended that the American League of Friendship had "paved the way" for Union, not postponed it for six years.

Perhaps the most dramatic moments occurred in the plenary session on the Peoples' World Convention. The majority report, presented by Henry Osborne, M.P. as Chairman, and by Fyke Farmer (U. S. A.) as Rapporteur, met with opposition from a minority group consisting mainly of American United World Federalists, who held cautious views on the financing of the project and on the timing of the Constituent Assembly, and who doubted the wisdom of the Committee's support of the law passed by the State of Tennessee, at Fyke Farmer's instigation, enabling three Tennessee representatives to be elected to attend the World Constituent Assembly in 1950. They cast reflections on the constitutionality of this law, but Mr. Fred

Carney, U. S. A., pointed out that the only way to test the constitutionality of an American law was to put it into operation.

Dr. Borkon (U.K.) thought it a mistake to query the legality of an action taken by the good burghers of Tennessee before the U. S. High Court had questioned it. Mr. Farmer pleaded that we had no time to waste. The statesmen were fondly trying to merge two incompatible concepts: peace and national sovereignty. "History will move on, and the statesmen haven't the time to keep up. The common people must do the catching up themselves. In the U. S. A.'s own history, even Washington and Hamilton doubted. Not all the States got to the Constituent Assembly on time, and two states never got there at all."

Mr. Farmer related the dialogue between himself and the Governor of Tennessee when the Bill was submitted for signature.

"Mr. Farmer," the Governor had asked, "what if only American delegates go to this Convention in 1950"?

"Wal, Governor", Mr. Farmer had replied, "I sure guess we'd feel kinda lonesome!"

"And what if our three Tennesseans are the only ones to attend?" the Governor continued.

Fyke Farmer's reply was typical of him: "If this is the right thing to do, I'd say we ought to feel mighty proud if we were the only people doing it."

The motion to amend was defeated by 44 votes to 31 on a show of hands, and by a conclusive margin on a card vote. The majority report was then carried.

During the debate on the Statutes, the name of the Movement was changed; then, on a motion to re-consider, it was changed back to the original title. New Statutes were adopted, substantially based on the draft by Mrs. Borgese. The main object of the Movement is "to work for the creation of World Government, having a constitutionally defined sphere of jurisdiction, functioning through a legislature to make world law, a judiciary to interpret it, and an executive with adequate powers to enforce it upon individuals."

The Sub-Committee on the Regional Approach, encouraging all regional movements in so far as they are designed as a first step towards world federation, was carried almost unanimously. So was the report of the Parliamentary Action Committee, outlining the technique to be adopted by the Movement in its

approach to Parliamentarians, and in lobbying the Interparliamentary Conference to be held in Stockholm the following week.

Under the Chairmanship of Sally Trope (who had come to Europe to give concerts with Garry Davis's sister Virginia) and with Ruth Allenbrook of the Direct Action Corps as Rapporteur the Sub-Committee on World Citizenship produced a resolution (adopted unanimously) pointing out that "in a democratic world federation every individual will enjoy the legal status of world citizen in addition to that of national citizen. In the meantime, the concept of world citizenship implies . . . a desire to see loyalty to mankind expressed politically . . ." If anyone wished to renounce national citizenship as a political protest, this would be a purely personal act.

In his capacity as Chairman of the Action Commission, Monsieur Alexandre Marc (French philosopher and author of many works on federalism) concluded the debate on the Plan of Action, pointing out how the different trends and methods of approach could contribute to the efficiency of federalist action. The spirit of tolerance was of the essence of federalism.

The Congress ratified the selection of a World Federalist emblem—a diagonal superimposed on two concentric circles (which had already become well known as the federalist badge.) Abbe Pierre supported this design, pointing out that as a Christian priest he might have been expected to press for a vertical cross. However, he fully recognised that a world government must embrace all creeds and special pleading in favour of a Christian symbol would savour of intolerance.

The Congress then passed resolutions in favour of Esperanto, fair representation for women, a plan for yet one more world professional organisation, and votes of thanks to the Swedish Government, Parliament, people, press and radio, and a particular vote of gratitude to the Swedish federalists for their organisation of the Congress.

Lord Boyd Orr was re-elected President. (Chancellor Robert Hutchins of Chicago University had accepted nomination, but on hearing that Lord Boyd Orr had agreed to stand again, withdrew, as did also Odd Nansen, son of Frithjof Nansen).

Your reporter had the privilege of welcoming, on his arrival at the Grand Hotel, Stockholm, the Indian Ambassador to Moscow, Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, who was on his way there, and who made no bones about the fact that he had signed the

"Plan in Outline" for a Peoples' World Constitutional Convention, in 1950, and had worked and broadcast in the cause of international federalism for two years prior to taking up his diplomatic post. During his ensuing conversations with various delegates during the week, he showed a keen interest in the progress of the Congress.