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# CONGRESS OF EUROPE

THE HAGUE — MAY, 1948

## RESOLUTIONS

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### EUROPEAN MOVEMENT

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THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE



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# CONGRESS OF EUROPE

*Organised by*

## THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE MOVEMENTS FOR EUROPEAN UNITY

composed of representatives of  
the following organisations:

*Conseil Français pour l'Europe Unie*  
*Ligue Indépendante de Coopération Européenne*  
*Nouvelles Equipes Internationales*  
*Union Européenne des Fédéralistes*  
*Union Parlementaire Européenne*  
*United Europe Movement*

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*Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee*

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*Chairman of the Cultural Committee*

PROF. SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA

*Chairman of the Netherlands Organising Committee*

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*Honorary Secretary*

DR. J. H. RETINGER

The Congress of Europe met at The Hague from May 7th to 10th, 1948. It was attended by some 750 persons of almost every European nationality. In addition, there were observers from the United States of America and the British Commonwealth, and a distinguished company of some 250 journalists representing the Press of the world.

Those present included well-known statesmen, among them a number of former Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers and several ministers in office; Members of Parliament of all shades of democratic opinion; bishops and prominent churchmen of all denominations; prominent industrialists and trade unionists; eminent lawyers, economists, university professors, scientists, artists, poets and authors; and members of a wide variety of women's, youth and other organisations. Whilst all were invited in their individual capacity, they could, as a gathering, claim to represent with authority every important aspect in the life and opinions of Europe.

The plenary meetings of the Congress were held in the historic Ridderzaal in the Netherlands Parliament Buildings. The opening session on the afternoon of May 7th was addressed by Mr. Churchill and leading members of the principal organisations campaigning for European unity. It was attended by Their Royal Highnesses Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, and members of the Diplomatic Corps.

During the next stage discussions were conducted in three Committees—political; economic and social; and cultural. These were presided over respectively by Monsieur Ramadier (late Socialist Prime Minister of France), Monsieur Van Zeeland (former Prime Minister of Belgium), and Professor Salvador de Madariaga. The Committees considered Resolutions based upon reports submitted to them by the International Committee of the Movements for European Unity. Many amendments were moved and the discussions continued throughout May 8th and 9th, and on both nights lasted on into the early hours of the morning.

On the afternoon of Sunday, May 9th, a Mass Meeting, attended by some 40,000 people, was held in the main square of Amsterdam. The gathering was addressed on the subject of European unity by leading figures from the Congress and from Dutch public life, whose speeches evoked great enthusiasm.

The detailed Resolutions prepared by the Committees were submitted to three plenary sessions. The determination of the members of the Congress to overcome their wide political differences and to work together for the cause of Europe, was shown by their unanimous adoption of all three Resolutions.

The proceedings ended with a short session at which plans for the future campaign were outlined. A Message to Europeans, summarising the Resolutions of the Congress and appealing for general support, was passed by acclamation.

## POLITICAL RESOLUTION

The ravages wrought by six years of war and by the occupation, the diminution of world food production, the destruction of industrial capacity, the creation of huge debts, the maintenance of military expenditure out of all proportion to the resources of the people, the shifting of economic power, the rancours left by war, the progressive evils of nationalism and the absence, despite the work of U.N.O., of an international authority sufficiently strong to provide law and order, constitute an unprecedented menace to the well-being and the security of the peoples of Europe and threaten them with ruin.

In accordance with the principles and objectives set out in the Political Report submitted by the International Committee of the Movements for European Unity:

### THE CONGRESS:

- (1) RECOGNISES that it is the urgent duty of the nations of Europe to create an economic and political union in order to assure security and social progress.
- (2) NOTES with approval the recent steps which have been taken by some European Governments in the direction of economic and political co-operation, but believes that in the present emergency the organisations created are by themselves insufficient to provide any lasting remedy.

### Sovereign Rights

- (3) DECLARES that the time has come when the European nations must transfer and merge some portion of their sovereign rights so as to secure common political and economic action for the integration and proper development of their common resources.
- (4) CONSIDERS that any Union or Federation of Europe should be designed to protect the security of its constituent peoples, should be free from outside control, and should not be directed against any other nation.

(5) Assigns to a United Europe the immediate task of establishing progressively a democratic social system, the aim of which shall be to free men from all types of slavery and economic insecurity, just as political democracy aims at protecting them against the exercise of arbitrary power.

(6) Affirms that the integration of Germany in a United or Federated Europe alone provides a solution to both the economic and political aspects of the German problem.

(7) Declares that the Union or Federation must assist in assuring the economic, political and cultural advancement of the populations of the overseas territories associated with it, without prejudice to the special ties which now link these territories to European countries.

### European Assembly

(8) Demands the convening, as a matter of real urgency, of a European Assembly chosen by the Parliaments of the participating nations, from among their members or others designed

(a) to stimulate and give expression to European public opinion;

(b) to advise upon immediate practical measures designed progressively to bring about the necessary economic and political union of Europe;

(c) to examine the juridical and constitutional implications arising out of the creation of such a Union or Federation and their economic and social consequences;

(d) to prepare the necessary plans for the above purposes.

### Charter of Human Rights

(9) Considers that the resultant Union or Federation should be open to all European nations democratically governed and which undertake to respect a Charter of Human Rights.

(10) Resolves that a Commission should be set up to undertake immediately the double task of drafting such a Charter and of laying down standards to which a State must conform if it is to deserve the name of a democracy.

(11) Declares that in no circumstances shall a State be entitled to be called a democracy unless it does, in fact as well as in law, guarantee to its citizens liberty of thought, assembly and expression, as well as the right to form a political opposition.

(12) Requests that this Commission should report within three months on its labours.

### Supreme Court

(13) Is convinced that in the interests of human values and human liberty, the Assembly should make proposals for the establishment of a Court of Justice with adequate sanctions for the implementation of this Charter, and to this end any citizen of the associated countries shall have redress before the court, at any time and with the least possible delay, of any violation of his rights as formulated in the Charter.

### World Unity

(14) Declares that the creation of a United Europe is an essential element in the creation of a united world.

# ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESOLUTION

Europe is now confronted by a great crisis and a great opportunity. Its old economic system has been shattered by the war. Thanks to the generous assistance of the United States of America there is a unique opportunity to build a new and better Europe if Europeans work together under a common plan to develop the economic strength of the Continent. There is no hope of recovery if each country simply strives to rebuild its national economy by the old methods. Under modern conditions Europe can only achieve the standard of living which it ought to enjoy if its industrial and natural resources are developed on continental lines. But progress in this direction will only be achieved if it is accompanied at every step by a parallel policy of ever-closer political union. Europe must unite if it is to regain and surpass its former prosperity and re-assert its economic independence.

The exigencies of modern economic development must be reconciled with the integrity of human personality. In any economic organisation such as we envisage it must be decided where the responsibility rests; and in order to avoid any tendency towards totalitarianism and to safeguard the economic independence of the individual, the workers and their representative organisations should be closely associated with the setting-up and development of the economy of United Europe.

## THE CONGRESS:

- (1) RECOGNISES that no attempt to rebuild the economy of Europe upon the basis of rigidly-divided national sovereignty can prove successful.
- (2) AFFIRMS the urgent need for an economic union in Europe.
- (3) DECLARES that this union must maintain and progressively adjust the economic ties which at present link the countries of Europe with the Dominions and associated States or dependent territories overseas.
- (4) WELCOMES the initial measures taken by certain Governments towards closer economic co-operation, or towards regional groupings;

and expresses the hope that the work of the Conference of the sixteen nations will lead to conclusions favourable to the success of European Union.

## Immediate Recommendations

- (5) URGES all the Governments concerned forthwith to proclaim their determination to promote economic union and to put into effect the immediate economic measures required. These should include measures designed:

- (a) Trade
  - (i) To remove step by step and, as soon as possible, finally abolish the obstacles to trade within the Union which result from quotas and import or export prohibitions.
  - (ii) To reduce and, wherever possible, completely eliminate customs duties between the member States.
- (b) Currency
  - (i) To restore budgetary equilibrium which is a first essential for the stability of currencies in each country and to reduce by all available means—including monetary policy—the disparities of prices and wages which are incompatible with the freedom of the exchanges.
  - (ii) To take early steps to establish multilateral clearings or, through the adjustment of exchange values, to set up areas within which the exchange of goods shall not be handicapped by currency controls.
  - (iii) Thus to pave the way for the free convertibility of currencies and the gradual restoration of freedom of trade among the countries of Europe.
- (c) Production
  - (i) To promote a common programme for the development of agricultural resources and the provision of the necessary equipment, in order to provide Europe with the highest possible nutritional standard.
  - (ii) To encourage technical or regional industrial specialisation and the renewal and modernisation of the technical means of production.

(iii) To plan and carry into effect a co-ordinated programme of development for the basic industries of the whole area. This should include the production and fair distribution of the coal resources of United Europe as well as the expansion of its electric power and the co-ordination and rationalisation of communications.

(iv) And in general to draw up an overall production programme utilising the resources and equipment of European countries in conformity with the needs of their peoples.

**(d) Labour**

(i) To raise to the greatest possible extent the standard of living of the populations of Europe in particular by all the above measures which are designed to increase production, and to invite the professional, economic and social organisations of the various countries to study together ways and means of increasing production still further and rationalising distribution while improving social conditions and ensuring a fair distribution of the product of economic activity.

(ii) To promote the mobility of labour to the maximum possible extent, while assuring to migrant workers and their families the standards of wages, social security, living conditions, and conditions of employment prevailing in the country to which they come.

(iii) To co-ordinate their economic policies so as to secure full employment.

**Ultimate Objectives**

(6) CONSIDERS that in addition to these first measures, steps should also be taken to achieve, progressively, within the Union:

(a) The free circulation of capital;

(b) The unification of currencies;

(c) The co-ordination of budgetary and credit policy;

(d) A full Customs Union, involving the abolition of all barriers to the movement of goods between the countries of the Union and the application to non-member countries of tariffs low enough not to interfere with the normal flow or hinder the development of world trade;

(e) The co-ordination of social legislation.

(7) EMPHASISES that all the measures herein proposed for the economic organisation of Europe should be carried out in accordance with the agreements reached or to be reached under the auspices of U.N.O. or of the affiliated organisations and relating to world economy.

**Conclusion**

Such is the economic basis on which the peoples of Europe will find the opportunity—and the duty—not only to put a stop to the present decline in their standard of living, but also to ensure that all shall enjoy better conditions of life, both material and cultural, which is the ultimate and sole aim of every economic activity.

Under these improved conditions, when the petty rivalries of national states have been laid aside, we may look forward to the development of a harmonious society in Europe. In such a society the rights of the family would be respected, the free association of individuals and groups and the protection of the weak and infirm guaranteed, and scope given to all to develop in freedom and concord a full and balanced personality. We look forward to a social and economic existence, in which Europe may play her proper rôle in the world as a constructive element and a force for peace.

**MATTERS FOR FUTURE STUDY**

In addition to the points embodied in the foregoing resolution, the Congress is of opinion that certain other proposals submitted to it might be usefully brought to the notice of the appropriate special bodies in order that their substance and the means of giving effect to them may be examined. These proposals may be briefly summarised as follows:

(1) Establishment of an Emigration Commission to organise migration in Europe and to take steps to promote the absorption and reinstatement of the 14 million Displaced Persons into European communities and overseas.

(2) Economic and social contribution towards the fulfilment of the Marshall Plan.

(3) Study of the laws concerning inventions within the sphere of United Europe.

(4) Free movement of travellers throughout Europe.

(5) Elimination of double taxation, co-ordination of the taxes falling on production and trade.

(6) Institution of an inquiry as to the means of progressively eliminating competition based on disparities arising from low standards of real wages and conditions of employment, which in the past have led to the erection of high tariffs and other barriers to international trade.

(7) Study of the economic aspects of the problems of the Ruhr.

## CULTURAL RESOLUTION

### THE CONGRESS:

Believing that European Union is no longer a Utopian idea but has become a necessity, and that it can only be established on a lasting basis if it is founded upon a genuine and living unity;

Believing that this true unity even in the midst of our national, ideological and religious differences, is to be found in the common heritage of Christian and other spiritual and cultural values and our common loyalty to the fundamental rights of man, especially freedom of thought and expression;

Believing that efforts to unite must be sustained and inspired by an awakening of the conscience of Europe, and that this must be informed, stimulated and provided with the means of expression;

Believing that for this definite purpose, world-wide cultural institutions such as UNESCO cover too vast a field while national institutions are too limited in scope, so that there do not exist in practice European institutions capable of carrying out the above tasks;

Taking note of Article III of the Treaty of Brussels which urges the governments concerned to promote cultural exchanges by conventions between themselves or by other means;

### Cultural Centre

- (1) RECOMMENDS that a continuing body be established to consider *inter alia* the nature and constitution of a European Cultural Centre. Established independently of all governmental supervision, this body would have as its central task to raise the voice of Europe. The European Cultural Centre should have as its immediate task:
  - (a) To promote an awareness of European unity through all media of information, by Press, publications, film and radio and also through all educational institutions for school-children, University students and workers.
  - (b) To provide a meeting-place for leaders of thought enabling them to express a genuinely European point of view on all the great questions affecting the life of the continent, by enlightening public opinion and suggesting action to governments.

- (c) To exercise vigilant care over the words actually used in discussion without which no pact can be concluded.
- (d) To affirm (a) the right of every citizen to ascertain the true facts of current events, uninfluenced by interpretation or commentary and (b) the duty of every government to secure for its people the exercise of that right free from any kind of pressure.
- (e) To encourage free circulation of ideas, literature and works of art between one country and another.
- (f) To facilitate the co-ordination of scientific research into the condition of twentieth-century European man, especially in the spheres of Teaching, Psychology, Philosophy, Sociology and Law.
- (g) To support all efforts towards a federation of European Universities and towards a guarantee of their freedom from State or political pressure, and to encourage a close co-operation among all teachers on a European level, having among other objects the revision of history text-books as has already been done by the Scandinavian countries.

### European Youth Institute

- (2) RECOGNISES that the future of Europe depends on the coming generation and that the formation of physical, moral and intellectual character depends on the mothers and teachers:
- (3) RECOMMENDS
  - (a) that both mothers and teachers should be called upon to take a large part in the work of all conferences and cultural activities;
  - (b) that a European Institute for Childhood and Youth Questions be created:
    - (1) to co-ordinate all efforts now being made in this direction and to study the best methods of solving at the European level current problems of child nourishment, character-building, reform of young delinquents and the rehabilitation and adoption of war victims, such as orphans, stateless and abandoned children.
    - (2) To encourage exchanges between the young people of all classes in Europe, by providing finance and accommodation for their study, apprenticeship and travel.

## Human Rights

- (4) Affirms that human rights are the essential bases of our efforts for a United Europe and that a Charter of Human Rights is insufficient unless rendered legally binding by agreement to be reached between the member-states of the European Union.
- (5) Considers it essential for the safeguarding of these rights that there should be established a Supreme Court with supra-state jurisdiction to which citizens and groups can appeal, and which is capable of assuring the implementation of the Charter.

## MESSAGE TO EUROPEANS

Europe is threatened, Europe is divided, and the greatest danger comes from her divisions.

Impoverished, overlaid with barriers that prevent the circulation of her goods but are no longer able to afford her protection, our disunited Europe marches towards her end. Alone, no one of our countries can hope seriously to defend its independence. Alone, no one of our countries can solve the economic problems of today. Without a freely agreed union our present anarchy will expose us tomorrow to forcible unification whether by the intervention of a foreign empire or usurpation by a political party.

The hour has come to take action commensurate with the danger.

Together with the overseas peoples associated with our destinies, we can tomorrow build the greatest political formation and the greatest economic unit our age has seen. Never will the history of the world have known so powerful a gathering of free men. Never will war, fear and misery have been checked by a more formidable foe.

Between this great peril and this great hope, Europe's mission is clear. It is to unite her peoples in accordance with their genius of diversity and with the conditions of modern community life, and so open the way towards organised freedom for which the world is seeking. It is to revive her inventive powers for the greater protection and respect of the rights and duties of the individual of which, in spite of all her mistakes, Europe is still the greatest exponent.

Human dignity is Europe's finest achievement, freedom her true strength. Both are at stake in our struggle. The union of our continent is now needed not only for the salvation of the liberties we have won, but also for the extension of their benefits to all mankind.

Upon this union depend Europe's destiny and the world's peace.

Let all therefore take note that we Europeans, assembled to express the will of all the peoples of Europe, solemnly declare our common aims in the following five articles, which summarise the resolutions adopted by the Congress:

## PLEDGE

- (1) We desire a United Europe, throughout whose area the free movement of persons, ideas and goods is restored;
- (2) We desire a Charter of Human Rights guaranteeing liberty of thought, assembly and expression as well as the right to form a political opposition;
- (3) We desire a Court of Justice with adequate sanctions for the implementation of this Charter;
- (4) We desire a European Assembly where the live forces of all our nations shall be represented;
- (5) And pledge ourselves in our homes and in public, in our political and religious life, in our professional and trade union circles, to give our fullest support to all persons and governments working for this lofty cause, which offers the last chance of peace and the one promise of a great future for this generation and those that will succeed it.

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