



John Foster Dulles on an Atlantic Union of Democracies in his introduction to *The New Federalist*, January 1950

"Great peril often calls for the bold application of great principles of universal scope.

Today there is great peril. Seven hundred million people, or about one-third of the entire human race, have already come under the rule of a group whose practices derive from an atheistic and materialistic philosophy, who believe that their dominance must be extended to the entire world and who believe that violence is not only a permissible but a necessary means of achieving their "one world."

The peril from that expanding and hostile unity cannot be easily overcome. We are trying to bolster up, by military and economic aid, some nations which we hope will be a barrier to Soviet Communism. The European Recovery Program, the North Atlantic Treaty and the Military Assistance Program are important steps in a good direction. But even these measures do not provide the reality of dependable common defense. Unity remains a contingency, not a fact.

When our founders had only disconnected sovereignties with which to face the aggressive empires of their day, they found strength by adopting the principles of federalism. That was a flexible formula that made it possible to have unity with respect to selected matters that were of common concern while leaving state sovereignty undisturbed as regards all other matters.

The Federalist papers that expounded that thesis contain an unparalleled wealth of political wisdom upon which we should continue to draw. The authors pointed out the unreliability of mere promises by sovereign states to stand together when peril strikes. Such promises, they showed, are rarely kept unless, when the event occurs, national self-interest coincides with the promise. Thus no member of an alliance or league can plan dependably on common defense. They concluded that the only way to achieve the strength that our States needed was to create a measure of organic unity before the happening of the events which might be disruptive of unity.

Fortunately for ourselves and the world, our country still produces men of political vision, wisdom and courage. Among them are the authors of this book, Owen J. Roberts, John F. Schmidt and Clarence Streit. They bring to present problems the spirit of the authors of The Federalist papers. Indeed, one of the present chapters is a textual reproduction from Alexander Hamilton. The present authors explore the possibility of invoking, at this juncture, the federal principle as between at least some of the peoples who face a common peril and who have like political institutions. They conclude that there exists a basis for the unified handling of matters which, in the present state of the world, are very much of common concern to them all.

Whenever the federal principle is invoked there arise differences of opinion as to precisely what matters are clearly of such common concern as to call for common governance. In our own country that debate started when our federal Constitution was conceived and it has gone on ever

since. Inevitably there would be comparable differences of opinion as to the possible extension of the Federal principle as between a group of nations which are now wholly independent. There can, however, be little doubt but what this principle of federalism ought to be thoroughly explored as providing a possible way for free peoples to gain the added strength needed to meet the severe tests that fate may hold in store for them. Most Americans have forgotten, and few Europeans have known, how light, but yet how strong, can be the bond of federation.

There is now pending in Congress an Atlantic Union Resolution which calls for a Federal Convention of those nations which sponsored the North Atlantic Treaty. This makes especially relevant the present book. It deserves, and I trust will receive, widespread consideration.