

Herter's Work to Unite Atlantica

By Clarence K. Streit
Freedom & Union, June, 1959

The advent of Christain A. Herter as Secretary of State brings new cause for rejoicing to Atlantic Unionists, tempered through it must be by the truly tragic fate of John Foster Dulles. To his wife and family go our deepest sympathy for their cruel ordeal.

Mr. Herter as a Member of the House was among the first to announce his support of the Atlantic Union resolution, when it was originally introduced by Senator Kefauver and others in 1949. When the same text was re-submitted in 1951, Representative Herter was one of a bipartisan group of nine Members of the House each of whom individually introduced the resolution. He thus committed himself to its proposal even more—much more—than did Mr. Dulles, who when an unsuccessful candidate for Senate in 1949 stated that he would vote for it if elected. He never went further publicly than that.

Congressmen Herter's 1951 resolution, moreover, was much stronger than the current Humphrey-Morgan bill on which he must give Congress his view now with the usually decisive authority of Secretary of State. The Herter resolution asked the President to invite the Atlantic democracies to a convention with U.S. delegates "to explore how far their peoples...can apply among them, within the framework of the United Nations, the principles of free federal union."

The preamble of the 1951 Herter resolution also contained such forthright clauses as these, which are absent from the 1959 text:

Whereas the principle on which our American freedom is founded are those of federal union, which were applied for the first time in history in the United States Constitution; and

Whereas our Federal Convention of 1787 worked out these principles of union as a means of safeguarding the liberty and common heritage of the people of thirteen sovereign States, strengthening their free institutions, united their defensive efforts, encouraging their economic collaboration, and severely attaining the aims that the democracies of the North Atlantic have set for themselves in the aforesaid [NATO] treaty; and

Whereas the United States, together with the other signatories of the treaty, has promised to bring about a better understanding of these federal principles and has, as their most extensive practitioner and greatest beneficiary, a unique moral obligation to make this contribution to peace;...

All this is, of course, as true now as it was in 1951—and since then the rise of Communist atomic, missile, economic and propaganda power has made the danger only graver, as Secretary Herter is being reminded daily in his Geneva meetings on the Berlin crisis.

Since leaving Congress to become Governor of Massachusetts and later Under Secretary of State, Mr. Herter has never indicated any change of heart or lessened interest in the Atlantic Convention proposal. Quite the contrary.

In 1956 we presented to many key leaders a copy of the great book, *Formulation of the Union of the American States*, the little known and only official collection of all the documents on the establishment of our Federal Union, including the whole of Madison's Journal of the Convention. Each copy was personally inscribed, significant parts were marked, and on the inside cover we pasted the cover of the July 1955 FREEDOM & UNION. On that cover appeared this text:

UNION HOW?

It cost 4,435 lives in the Revolutionary War, before the 13 States would "sacrifice their sovereignty" enough to form the alliance, or league, or the Articles of Confederation.

Thanks to the courageous leadership of these Great Four of 1787-89 [referring to accompanying pictures of Franklin, Hamilton, Madison and Washington], the 13 took the still more revolutionary step from alliance to Federal Union, without sacrificing a life.

It cost 53,403 lives to bring the League of Nations Covenant before the Senate, but this was not enough to get it ratified.

When 293,986 more U.S. soldiers had been slain, the Senate ratified the United Nations league, 89 to 2.

What will the step from alliance to Union cost now?

Shall Atlantic Union cost no sacrifice of life, thanks to President Eisenhower, Secretary Dulles and Senator George [then chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee] courageously calling for exploration of it now, as did the late Justice Roberts.

Or shall Atlantic Union com only after millions have been slain?

Governor Herter was among those to whom the book went with this message. He replied:

Dear Clarence:

I have read the greater part of the extremely stimulating volume which you sent me and found that there was a great deal in our history which I did not know and that I was very interested to learn...Your comments stimulated many thoughts and perhaps the day will come when I can put these thoughts to good use.

Christian A. Herter

Secretary Dulles and Senator George let their great opportunity slip out of their hands. Thus far this is true too of President Eisenhower, to whom this book was also sent. But the day has happily come when Secretary Herter is in position to put to good use the thoughts that *Formation of the Union* stimulated in him only three years ago.

He is in better position to do this for two powerful reasons. A little before he became Secretary his old friend, Senator J.W. Fulbright, who had co-sponsored with him the Atlantic Convention resolution of 1951, and has given it his support ever since, became Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. In the House, as we announced last month, Thomas S. Morgan, the new Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, introduced the current resolution himself. And so there is new hope that millions need not be slain before we turn to Atlantic Union; it may yet come as did the American Federal Constitution, without any sacrifice of life. If so, unborn millions also will have Secretary Christian Herter to bless.—**Clarence Streit.**