

Atlantic Union Committee Formed!

From *Freedom & Union*, April 1949

The Ides of March -- a dangerous day for dictators, as Julius Caesar, the first of the Kaisers, Czars and Commissars learned 1992 years ago -- were marked this year by a notable advance in the unending struggle for human freedom. But it differed promisingly from the futile blow that Brutus struck. It was creative, not destructive only.



It was the announcement of the formation of a powerful "Atlantic Union Committee for a Federal Convention of Democracies." It was the launching of organized citizen political action to transform the ideal of a Federal Union of the Free into living constitutional law and government, and thus deliver freedom and peace from the absolute national sovereignty and dictatorship that threaten both today.

With it, the basic ideas that *Union Now* and FREEDOM & UNION have been championing, entered the field of practical politics.

The decision to form the Atlantic Union Committee was taken by a group of citizens from coast to coast who met in private recently at the Barbizon Plaza Hotel in New York under the chairmanship of Justice Owen J. Roberts. They unanimously adopted the following resolution:

"Resolved that an action committee be formed for the purpose of

"a) enlisting public support for a resolution to be introduced in Congress inviting the other democracies with whom the U.S. is contemplating an alliance, to meet with American delegates in a federal convention to explore the possibilities of united with them in Federal Union of the Free, and

"b) continuing this support until such a Federal Union of Democracies becomes and accomplished fact."

The officers and Board of Directors they then elected gave the Atlantic Union Committee the strongest leadership that any American citizens organization in the international field have begun with in more than a generation.

The president is Owen J. Roberts, former Justice of the US Supreme Court. One vice president is Robert P. Patterson, US Under Secretary of War from 1940 to 1945, then Secretary of War from 1945 to 1947. The other vice president is Will L. Clayton who served as Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs. He was a father of the International Trade Organization and helped both inspire and work out the Marshall Plan. He retired from diplomatic service only a few months ago.

Together these three leaders bring to the support of the Atlantic Federal Union program deep knowledge and broad practice in the fields of constitutional government, justice, international trade, economics, diplomacy, politics in the highest sense. Their names carry weight abroad as well as here, and not only the White House and the key Departments of State, Defense and Commerce, but in both Houses of Congress and both parties.

The Treasurer of the Atlantic Union Committee is Elmo Roper, well-known marketing consultant and public opinion surveyor. The Committee's secretary, Walden Moors, is a former Democratic candidate for Congress and former professor of political science at the University of Rochester, NY.

The other 13 members of the Board are Herbert Agar, author and lecturer, former editor, Louisville Courier-Journal; Edgar Bissantz, architect, Pacific Coast Director of Federal Union, Inc; Sevellon Brown, editor, Providence Journal & Evening Bulletin; Gardner Cowles, editor and publisher, Look Magazine, President, Des Moines Register, Minneapolis Tribune Co.; Dr. A. Powell Davies, clergyman, author, lecturer; Henry C. Flower, Jr., Vice President, J. Walter Thompson Co.; Hugh Moore, Chairman of the Board, Dixie Cup Co.; Edmund Orgill, President, Southern Hardware Dealers Ass'n.; Harry Scherman, President, Book-of-the-Month Club; Clarence K. Streit, author of Union Now, editor, lecturer; Dr. Harold C. Urey, Nobel Prize Winner, atomic scientist; William L. White, editor, author; John Orr Young, public relations counselor, cofounder of Young & Rubicam, President, John Orr Young & Associates.

Mr. Agar was founder and president of the Fight for Freedom Committee in 1940-41. Hugh Moore was chairman of the executive board of the Committee of Defend America by Aiding the Allies in 1940. Then he was president of Americans United for World Organization which mobilized support for the United Nations. Later he became a member of the executive committee of the American Association for the United Nations, and he was treasurer of the Committee for the Marshall Plan which Judge Patterson headed last year. Mr. Streit was the founder of Federal Union, Inc. in 1939 and has been its president since.

The executive director, Earl E. Hart, managed Harold Stassen's Washington, D.C. office during his campaign for the 1948 Republican nomination. Before that he managed the campaigns of Harold Burton, now Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, for mayor of Cleveland and Republican Senator from Ohio, winning against great odds. During the 5 years that Mr. Burton served in the US Senate, Mr. Hart was his secretary.

In the early stages of the AUC's formation, Justice Roberts and Mr. Clayton journeyed to Washington to make obvious soundings there.

As a result of these soundings and of the rapid development of the negotiations for the Atlantic alliance, the AUC Board, which at first had planned to have its resolution calling for an Atlantic Federal Convention introduced at once in both houses of Congress, decided to defer this until after the Pact was ratified. The feeling was that the alliance had apparently committed itself too far to the other governments negotiating the Pact to be deflected from it now.

Therefore, to clear the stage sooner, it was agreed that the AUC, while believing alliances inadequate in themselves, would support the Administration's proposed Atlantic Pact "as an important first step toward Atlantic Union." At the same time it would keep the goal of Union before the world by announcing formation of the committee before the Pact was submitted to the Senate, and by beginning at once to prepare and mobilize public opinion for the subsequent Federal Convention move to transform the Alliance into a federation of democracies.

In announcing the formation of the AUC at a press conference in Washington, Justice Roberts expressed belief that the alliance would be an immediate step to prevent war and would serve to bring the democracies closer together. But, he declared, it would not be enough to insure permanent peace.

"After Congress has acted on the Pact," he said, "this Committee will ask Congress to pass a resolution calling for an international convention to explore how far the U.S. and other democracies could wisely go at this time in forming a true federation of the Atlantic democracies. Such a federation would be formed within the framework of the U.N.

"Such a federation," he continued, "would offer three immediate benefits. It would strengthen the U.N. It would raise the standard of living and lower the cost of military security for all. When organized, the Union would admit other nations which protect individual liberty by law, and practice representative government. In the meanwhile, it would make democracy so powerful that the Kremlin could not hope to start war with any prospect of success.

"We want to hear," the Justice said, "from all Americans who want to join with us."

Judge Patterson stated: "Union of the democracies will convince the Kremlin that the democracies mean business. The Kremlin will immediately see that the creation of a federal defense force for a union of nations would be far stronger than any staff agreements between separate nations.

"Yet nothing," he added, "could be more in the spirit of peace symbolized by the U.N. than form some of its members to reach the ultimate degree of understanding involved in the formation within the U.N. of a federal union by mutual consent. The calling of a federal convocation of Atlantic nations to discuss union would immeasurably strengthen the U.N."

Mr. Clayton, unable to be present for the conference, issued a statement saying in part:

"The preservation of peace and freedom is the only thing that counts in the world today. Russia is on the march determined to communize the world. Russian communism opposes the civil freedom and the religious freedom which democracy holds dear. There is only one way to stop Russia short of war. Democracy must be made to work in all those lands which are still free.

"In economic terms, democracy works when people have more to eat, more to wear and better homes in which to live. This rising standard of living can only be realized in the modern world by releasing the world's productive capacities through striking off the shackles of economic nationalism, and by reducing armaments. This calls for an economic merger of democracies.

"I favor union of the free, believing it to be the only road to world freedom, world prosperity and world peace. I believe such a union is the next step forward in the spiritual, economic and social development of the human race."

Mr. Streit explained that, in accepting membership on the Board of the Atlantic Union Committee and urging his supporters to get behind it, he was acting in his private capacity, not as President of Federal Union, Inc. He described the latter as a non-profit membership association and research in the principles of individual liberty and international federalism, as distinguished from political action.

"Federal Union, Inc. leaves political action entirely to others," he said, "and will continue its educational work as an independent organization. The bright prospects opened up by the formation of the new committee make further adult education in our free federal principles, here and in Western Europe, all the more urgently necessary. And once the Convention is called, we shall face the greatest task and opportunity of public education in America's principles of freedom and federal union that the world has ever known-and even greater opportunity than the U.S. Federal Convention of 1787 provided."