

## How Federal Union Affected my Career

By  
James R.  
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*“When Strausz-Hupé, in *The Zone of Indifference*, alluded to Clarence Streit’s works, this struck a distant chord: in high school, in the autumn of 1940, I had debated the thesis of Streit’s current book of that time, viz. that the United States and Britain should form a federal union. Streit’s [broader] work urged that the Europeans, the Canadians, the Americans, plus the Australians and New Zealanders, should without delay form a federal union. Streit influenced many important people of his day, including John Foster Dulles [ . . . ] I was to meet Streit in 1955 and Strausz-Hupé in 1956, to become and intimate friend of both, and to deepen my understanding of this great concept...and also, later, to become convinced of how extremely difficult it would be to bring it about. But it has always been a grand, noble plan to which I have attached my life.” (An Architect of Democracy... p. 45)*

The story starts in 1940. I was a 16 year old high school senior in my home state of Washington. In those days, most high schools around the nation participated in an annual round of "debates", to help us learn about public life and hone our speaking skills. I was on our team, and in the fall of 1940, we were required to debate this question: "Should the United States form a federal union with Great Britain?" I read some, if not all, of Clarence K. Streit's revised edition, arguing cogently for this Union. It was an interesting idea. I liked it. The publisher of

Time and Life magazines, Henry Luce, backed Streit and his ideas; soon there were chapters of Streit's opinion-rallying organization, Federal Union, all over the United States.

But the next year, when I had just started university, along came Pearl Harbor. In the turmoil of those years, plus a couple in the U.S. Navy for me, I quite forgot about Streit's message. In 1946, back at the university, I became marginally involved with the World Federalists. A trip to Europe in 1948, plus the effort of a new job in state government and the beginnings of a family, caused me to forget about Atlantic or World federalism; I couldn't imagine how to help the European peoples think big thoughts when their nations had been so terribly damaged. Suddenly, in the summer of 1950, the Korean War started. I decided to go into international work to try to help the world deal with an obvious set of crises looming; trying to help improve domestic conditions in the U.S. now seemed less important to me than to find some way to help the world find a way forward. Some graduate work led to an offer from the Department of State to go to Germany, at the beginning of 1952, to help the Germans rebuild democracy and rejoin the international community. I was in Germany for four years, learned a great deal, and loved my work. (Today, I think any fair-minded person can say that the Germans have wonderfully rehabilitated their country, and that we Americans also played an important role.)

While a young diplomat in Germany, I became convinced that it was imperative for Germany (and the rest of Western Europe) to join the proposed European community (now Union) and also to become part of the new NATO. But I didn't see exactly how these European and Atlantic ventures added up, in terms of American involvement.

A friend gave me a copy of a fine book by Robert Strausz-Hupé, *The Zone of Indifference*, a volume more philosophical, visionary, and historical in content than his later important works on the Cold War. He wrote about Clarence Streit's idea of an Atlantic federal union, and suggested that this was the way to go. Later, on my return from four years in Germany, I met Clarence and began a long friendship and intellectual give and take which only ended with his sad death years later. Clarence flattered me, asking if I'd like to be his executive director in the movement. I said no, rather reluctantly, and stayed in the Foreign Service six more years, then went on to many other tasks in Europe and in the United States. But from 1955 and onward, I have known that Clarence's formula is the right one long-term, and I have never ceased doing what I can to promote the idea, and work towards it in my own way.

Later, when I left the diplomatic service, I became a Board Member of Federal Union. When I wrote a book called *Uniting the Democracies* (1980), several fellow Board members decided they wanted to change Federal Union's name to "Association to Unite the Democracies", I suppose because I had suggested that that process was going to be a long and very involved one. The change, incidentally, was never my idea; in fact I thought it was a mistake.

I tried in those days to chart out for myself, and perhaps for others, the things that would have to be done to cultivate a sufficient degree of "likemindedness" among Americans, Canadians, and Europeans to get them to entertain such a vast idea as a common federal union.

I have always been convinced that we would need a sociological transformation in thought and behavior for Americans (and now, Europeans and Canadians and others, too) to make a federal union of democracies a viable political concept. Therefore I spent many years, in various capacities, trying to hone three related ideas: (1) an appealing, flexible concept that would attract sensible leaders of thought and civic enterprises; (2) creation of a series of international institutions that would gradually unite the core democracies of the West and then others; and (3) the development of a multinational leadership group to educate people and to run the integrating institutions as they became denser and more and more supranational.

Still later, in the 1980s, I became involved in more career changes. I became disappointed with the federal union movement at one stage, perhaps because I couldn't see it progressing much



From left to right: Erik Johnson, Tiziana Stella, James Huntley, Colleen Huntley

From:  
***An Architect of Democracy:  
Building a Mosaic of Peace***

*“I was tremendously impressed with Streit and his federal recipe for the Atlantic democracies, and we maintained a cordial tie until his death in 1986.” p. 109*

*“Streit’s great idea animated many initiatives with more than just a whiff of “federal union.” NATO was one; the continental European Union – coupled with the idea of an Atlantic Partnership – was another.” p. 425*

further at the time and because I felt I had to call my shots carefully. (This happens to most people, I think, as they grow older.)

Well, the rest of the story is too long to tell here, but suffice to say I never lost sight of a federal union of the mature democracies, as the core for a larger union as more and more countries evolved towards free and stable systems of government. Several friends, some inside and some outside the Federal Union circle, shared this dream. We started a series of corresponding committees around the world from 1979 to 1991, the Committees for a Community of Democracies (CCD), to explore these ideas together. For several years beginning in 1991, AUD provided our main base of operations. In 2000, a few of us set up today's "Council for a Community of Democracies". Our scheme was to strengthen the links between the experienced democracies pragmatically, and then to bring more and more democratic peoples around the world, to work together on common problems and dangers, and to strengthen their own practices of democratic government.

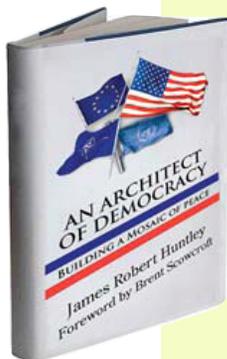
At Warsaw in the summer of 2000, a large meeting of 106 democratic governments and NGOs, inspired by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and her Polish counterpart, met in Warsaw and formed a loose "Community of Democracies." The present

NGO, CCD, helps this idea along, watching all the time for ways to strengthen the core of the movement, to attract more members, and to reach out to those countries that need encouragement. Fortunately, there are now a number of NGOs, in the United States and elsewhere, that are helping to strengthen democratic institutions and behavior around the world. Our CCD concentrates on the links among these nations, and their common interests, and is virtually unique in doing so. However, I think we at CCD have a good deal in common with the Streit Council, which concentrates on the long-range, grand scheme that began with Clarence and his bold new ideas in the Thirties. His principles on Atlantic federal unity were far in advance of political leaders of the day but nevertheless have already been incorporated in some of the most powerful international institutions, such as NATO.

Good luck and good sailing to the Streit Council!



On June 14, at DACOR Bacon House, Washington, DC, Jim Huntley celebrated the publication of his autobiography with a book signing.



### ***AN ARCHITECT OF DEMOCRACY: Building a Mosaic of Peace***

By *James Robert Huntley*

Foreword by Brent Scowcroft

(ADST Memoirs and Occasional Papers Series, from New Academia Publishing, 2006)

A detailed chronicle of the working life of an idealistic, action-oriented World War II veteran's lifelong search for peace through strengthening democracies and the international institutions that unite them.