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**PROBLÈMES
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THE RELAUNCHING OF EUROPE

A statement issued by the Committee on the Christian
Responsibility for European Cooperation,
following its meeting in Geneva,
October 20-22, 1956

Bulletin du Groupe d'études sur la Responsabilité chrétienne pour la Collaboration européenne
Informationsbrief der Arbeitsgemeinschaft: Christliche Verantwortung für Europäische Zusammenarbeit
Bulletin of the Committee on the Christian Responsibility for European Cooperation

NOTE

It is the purpose of the Committee on the Christian Responsibility for European Cooperation, through its statements and reports, to engage Christians and churches in discussion of European problems. Your comments about the statement printed here will be most welcome. Address comments or enquiries to the Committee on the Christian Responsibility for European Cooperation, Case Postale 16, Geneva 17, Switzerland.

This Committee is an unofficial body of European Christian laymen concerned with the Christian witness in relation to the movement for European cooperation and unity. It is composed of two or three members from each of the several Western European countries. The membership represents a cross section of social and political opinion, including socialists, liberals and conservatives, and of churches so far as nations and confessions are concerned. It is also representative of the different views which are held in Europe today regarding the need for and the means of attaining European unity.

The following officers and members of the Committee were present for the meeting in Geneva at which this statement was drawn up: Chairman, Prof. André Philip (France); Vice-Chairman, Dr. C. L. Patijn (Holland); Dr. Max Kohnstamm (Luxembourg), Sir Kenneth Grubb (United Kingdom), Mr. Kenneth Johnstone (United Kingdom), Prof. Roger Mehl (France), Prof. Mario Rollier (Italy), Dr. Walter Bauer (Germany), Dr. Reinhold von Thadden (Germany), Dr. Hans Herman Walz (Germany), Dr. Franklin Littell (Germany), Mr. Ole Bjorn Kraft (Denmark), Mr. James Dickson (Sweden), Mr. Denis de Rougement (Switzerland), Rev. Paul Abrecht (Geneva), Secretary.

The following visitors were also present: Dr. Robert S. Bilheimer (Geneva), Dr. H.H. Wolf (Geneva), Mr. Philippe Maury (Geneva), Obenkirchenrat Heinz Kloppenburg (Germany), Mr. Richard Davies (USA), Prof. Harold Berman (USA).

THE RELAUNCHING OF EUROPE

A statement issued by the Committee on the Christian Responsibility for European Cooperation following its meeting in Geneva, October 20-21, 1956

at our last meeting in January, 1956, in Paris, the Committee discussed the necessity of a supra-national European organization for the peaceful development of atomic energy and the need to establish a large common market in Europe. At that time experts were studying the possibility of realizing these ideas. Since then important headway has been made. A report on both questions has been published and has been accepted as a basis of negotiations by the six countries, members of the Coal and Steel Community. The Conference in Brussels under the presidency of the Belgian Foreign Minister, P.H. Spaak, has been instructed to work out treaties establishing a European community for the peaceful development of atomic energy called Euratom, and a European common market. The task of Euratom is to exploit the great possibilities opened up by the use of atomic energy to produce power. These possibilities demand a huge effort, as, for example, in developing qualified manpower, and in large investments, all of which can only be obtained through common action, since our nations individually cannot satisfactorily assume this task.

The common market would gradually, during a transition period of ten to fifteen years, provide for free exchange of goods, manpower, and capital across national borders, and so make it possible for Europe to profit from the enormous advantages inherent in modern technology. Common institutions will supervise the process of integration, and there are provisions to safeguard labour against the difficulties which will arise during this process. At the same time these institutions will form the nucleus from which a common economic and social policy for Europe will be developed.

The treaties embodying these proposals will in all probability be submitted to the national Parliaments in the first months of 1957. Already the principles underlying the Euratom treaty have been accepted by the Parliaments of the six countries. It is significant that the resolution upon which the German Parliament voted had been signed by the leaders of the government-party as well as by those of the large opposition party, the S.P.D.

It is also significant that, on the question of the common market, the United Kingdom Government, which has always shown reluctance to join in projects for European integration, is now consulting other Commonwealth countries, as well as the leading labour and industrial organizations in Britain itself, with a view to linking the United Kingdom to the common market through a free trade area. This proposal, revolutionary in British economic policy, indicates at least that the project for a common market is considered by responsible British opinion to be a serious one which is likely to be realized. But even apart from any calculation of interest, it is remarkable and encouraging to note that already the proposal has met with a warm response from other important sections of British opinion, including especially Labour and trade union circles, and among the younger generation.

Political leaders of all the major parties and trade union leaders all over Europe are following the drafting of these treaties with keen interest. They are well aware of the fact that these treaties will be extremely important and fundamental in determining the future economic, political, and social structure of Europe. The leaders of the countries most concerned have together formed an Action Committee for the United States of Europe, presided over by Mr. Monnet of France, to encourage and to supervise this process.

New elements in the situation between East and West

The new activity in the field of European economic integration has partly been caused by a shift in East-West relations from military to economic policies. The profound antagonism between the communist bloc and the Western world has not basically changed, but the awareness in East and West of the existence of an atomic stalemate has reduced the urgency of military considerations. In the Soviet Union the emphasis is laid more on production than on doctrine, and communism is preparing itself for economic competition with the Western world in Asia and Africa.

At the same time, the ideological process of destalinization has led to a declaration that every country is free to find its own path to socialism. This declaration has given rise in most of the satellite countries to a renewed search for the expression of personal freedom and national independence, while in Eastern Germany, on the contrary, the Russian grip has been tightened with a correspondingly restrictive effect on the evolution of the other satellites. Events in Poland at the present time bear witness to the gravity of this crisis, the outcome of which may be either a reorientation of the former satellites or an attempt to block progress toward their national independence. In either case we cannot remain silent.

In view of these new elements in the situation, it is essential for the countries of Western Europe to work out a common policy in the interest of justice and peace on the following points.

The external relations of a European community

While the process of destalinization and the relaxation of the Russian grip on a few of the Eastern European states is not yet to be considered as political disarmament, we are bound to make use of the opportunities for contact with Eastern Europe which the new policy affords. The need of a greater openness between East and West is evident and it may bear fruit in the end. For the atmosphere of freedom which in an open society permeates the whole of life, is likely to have some effect in relaxing fears and suspicions even in a totalitarian society.

Meanwhile the diminishing tensions should not make us forget that peace is a by-product of justice and liberty. As long as in Eastern Europe and in Eastern Germany basic human rights, as laid down in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, and free elections are denied to millions of people, our world is out of joint. Co-existence is not a satisfactory or definitive solution. We may have to live side by side for a time in a divided world, but our goal must remain that the countries of Europe live together in a real community based on common principles. As we think of Europe we think of the whole of our continent, and institutions for European collaboration must always be open to those people of Eastern Europe who are able and willing to join them of their own free will.

Another point which is fundamental in any consideration of the position of a united Europe is that its influence must not be directed against other parts of the world. After all we have gone through in our past history, the European community must not fall a victim to a European nationalism. We must resist anti-Americanism in any form. The responsible action of the United States is essential for the preservation of freedom and stability, and the Europeans know very well how much they owe to their American friends in this respect. But again, a united Europe must not be directed against Russia, not merely because this would be suicidal, but still more

because different political systems and present antagonisms cannot obscure entirely the fact that Europe and Russia have been living for centuries out of the same spiritual traditions.

A common European foreign policy will finally have to point out clearly and unmistakably that Europe accepts the new Asia and Africa. This does not mean that Europe will have to condone every act of nationalism. But if Europe itself is to be the homeland of pluralistic democracy, it must respect the principle of self-determination for other peoples of the world. At the same time a united Europe will be able, and should be willing, wholeheartedly to assist the underdeveloped parts of the world to raise their standards of living, without using its help for political purposes.

More particularly, the character of the solutions which are derived and applied in North Africa will largely determine whether Europe is regarded by underdeveloped peoples as the old colonialism in a new disguise or as a centre of attraction and as a force with which they wish to collaborate.

Misunderstandings with regard to the motivations for a European community

It seems necessary to point out in this way time and again what would be the relation between a united Europe and the rest of the world, since even in the churches many people still believe that the idea of European unity stems from fear and would consolidate the present division of the world. In fact, the contrary would be true, since the motivation for a European community is to establish conditions of freedom from fear and want which are no longer to be found within the systems of small and unrelated national states (Kleinstaaterei). A European community will be less antagonistic in its external contacts than most of the present European states, since it would have every reason to feel more secure than the smaller units, and since its statesmen would be in a position to deal with world problems on their own merits instead of having to face them from a narrow national viewpoint. It is a profound misunderstanding of the present situation to see the movement for European cooperation as an attempt to form a power bloc threatening peace. On the contrary, a European community will have far better chances to serve peace and stability in the world than the present European states suffering their lonely agonies and frustrated by the weakness of their vulnerable home markets.

What issues are involved in the present negotiations?

Meanwhile the way in which the present negotiations are being carried out and the joint institutions which are being established are not unimportant for the shape of things to come. It is somewhat disturbing that there is so little public discussion of the merits and demerits of the present proposals on which a number of European governments are deciding in these very weeks, and that the future scope of Europe is so largely the concern of a few experts only. The churches should be interested in the issues involved in these negotiations, since these are vital for the life of our peoples.

In this special field the following questions should be considered also by the churches. What will happen under Euratom to those fissionable materials which can be used for atomic weapons? What control will be established to ensure the safety of our continent against possible abuses in their use? What relations will be established between public authorities and those private industries which will have the enormous forces of nuclear power at their disposal? Will the balance sheets of private companies decide the measure and form of development of nuclear power, or should there be other

considerations? What kind of public control must be established over the different stages in the production of nuclear energy? What sacrifices can be asked of a country in the interest of the formation of a common market, and what should other countries of the community do to compensate for special hardships in such a country? What institutions will be established under Euratom and a common market to care for the interests of the European community as a whole, and what power should these institutions have?

The role of the churches

These are all vital issues and decisions on these questions are in the balance today. It cannot be said that the churches are aware of this, let alone that they have a clear insight into the human implications of the issues involved. On the contrary, although crucial international and social interests are at stake, the churches tend to be paralyzed by uncertainty and disagreement with regard to the movement towards European unity. This is all the more disturbing since the disagreements within the churches often have nothing to do with the real issues. With regard to Europe, we often see that the positions taken in this matter still reflect the battles of yesterday.

Now it is not for the churches to lead the way in such a highly technical and political field. But they and their leaders should be aware of what they are doing and where they are going when they take a definite stand on such matters. Here a specific point may be raised.

In the past few years leading European theologians have taken the irrefutable position that the Church cannot be identified with either East or West, and should be entirely free to proclaim the Gospel and to fulfil its task of prophetic criticism on both sides of all barriers and iron curtains. From this fundamental theological position conclusions have often been drawn which are by no means inevitable and which have had a paralyzing influence on the attitude of the churches towards the practical issues of European life. For spiritual independence does not mean a neutral or non-committal attitude to the issues which are at stake in the relation between Western Europe and Eastern Europe or an indifferent or negative attitude to the efforts to give those nations of Europe which desire them a new common structure and a new common voice in international affairs. We do not ask the theologians to give a priori approval to all that is done in the name of European unity, but we ask them to consider seriously what is the specific common vocation of the European nations in their mutual relations, and in their relations with the rest of the world, and to help any efforts along this line with constructive criticism.

The Church's obligation to proclaim the Gospel does not exclude, but indeed includes, the responsibility of the Church and its individual members to work for a structure of human society in which the human needs for freedom and bread, justice and peace are cared for in the highest possible measure. Is it not a fact that the historic national state structure as it still prevails in Europe no longer corresponds to the real requirements of the European people, and that this structure is one of the main factors preventing the European nations from fulfilling their obligations towards the peoples in the rest of the world, particularly in Asia and Africa? At no time has nationalism been a Christian virtue, even though at times the Christian churches, intentionally or unintentionally, have served as its ideological bulwark. Today nationalism obviously tends to be an escape from the clear commandment to love one's neighbour. The churches in Europe, notwithstanding their doctrinal differences and organizational divisions, are called to a common effort to find a better structure for society than we have at present. For it is the love of Christ which compels us, and it is faith in Him which enables us to go forward.