“The question inevitably arises, 'How is it that nations composed of people who don't want war are continually fighting?' The answer is that opinion against war has been without adequate institutions to give it effect . . . . The important thing is to get the right kind of an institution started, even though it be in the most rudimentary form.”1 Idealistic attempts to construct an institutional answer to the question Elihu Root posed have a history approaching the lengthy record of war.2 But for recent peace advocates of a legalistic orientation, the continuing presence of international disorder results from the absence of enforceable international law. They contend that although few people acknowledge the sanity or legitimacy of a "might makes right" philosophy, force often becomes the eventual arbiter of international disputes because there is no supranational governmental authority capable of imposing its will upon the disputants. Thus they argue vigorously and coherently for the calm construction of an international sovereign.

The fundamental problem of peace is the problem of sovereignty. The welfare, the happiness, the very existence of a miner in Pennsylvania, Wales, Lorraine or the Don Basin, a farmer in the Ukraine, the Argentine, the American Middle West or the Chinese rice fields—the very existence of every individual or family in every country of the five continents depends upon the correct interpretation and application of sovereignty. This is not a theoretical debate but a question more vital than wages, prices, taxes, food or any other major issue of immediate interest to the common man everywhere, because in the final analysis, the solution to all the everyday problems of two thousand million human beings depends upon the solution of the central problem of war. And whether we are to have war or peace and progress depends upon whether we can create proper institutions to insure the security of the peoples.

Emery Reves, The Anatomy of Peace (New York, 1946), 126
Thrust forward by the energy displayed at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, this point of view attained unprecedented strength in the United States in the late 1940's and early 1950's; it found its most developed expression in the United World Federalists (UWF), a movement which fully intended to actualize its motto, "world peace through world law." The story of the dramatic rise and fall of this movement, now almost forgotten, is the sad account of how easily idealism regarding the rational handling of international affairs dissolved in the acidic and hysterical nationalism usually called McCarthyism.

It is my contention that the failure of the UWF to retain its vigor as a political pressure group, much less achieve its goal, is partially attributable to a characteristic weakness on the part of American liberals, a weakness which the present peace movement might keep in mind. For although Louis Hartz has argued convincingly that dominant American values are (and always have been) liberal, it is equally useful to take note of the argument of Arthur Ekirch, Jr., a historian who finds in the same history a chronicle of continual decline in liberalism. Reading both analyses, it is impossible not to notice that Hartz supports his case primarily with references to what our Jeffersons, Lincolns, Wilsons and Roosevelts believed while Ekirch refers to accounts of how they behaved when under extreme pressure. Both have given valid half-portraits. For the American liberal's dilemma, as defined in this analysis, involves an inability to put into practice what he sincerely preaches—concurrently believing in what he is doing while he actively negates principles he would not consider denying.  

Thus the American liberal accepts Locke's contentions regarding the individual's claim to what has been guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. But he also values what he chooses to call pragmatism. And this value, in the opinion of this liberal, often comes into direct conflict with all the others, a clash usually discussed in terms of idealism versus realism. Representing a significant weakness in the liberal mentality, the belief that liberal values cannot stand up under stress becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. This handicaps liberal ideology during long periods of continual crisis—a state of affairs which the United States entered after World War II.

It is significant, I think, that current criticism of American liberalism from those who call themselves radical is based on a rejection of recent liberal behavior rather than a new set of ideals or goals. Noticing a marked discrepancy between stated belief and observable action, radicals are contending that liberals are hypocrites or cynics. Self-induced paralysis, I believe, would be a more accurate description. For this diagnosis makes the illness psychosomatic, arguing that a dying mentality could yet recover if it changed its mind about itself, accepted the revolutionary implications of its own ideology and decided that stressful periods of rapid social change are times in which liberalism can be practical.

110
The history of the UWF, then, becomes a case study in the traditional way American ideals are suspended "for the duration" of periods demanding "realism." After arguing that the American experiment in self-government could now be given universal application, after having based a case for world federalism upon the demonstrable failure of the nation-state, the UWF responded to a nationalistic attack from those who would conserve rather than extend the "American Way of Life" by diluting its argument into a plea for support of the United Nations, based on the contention that it was the best tool available to a United States wishing to restrain an aggressive, atheistic, conspiratorial and communist Soviet Union.

According to UWF analysis, the basic threat to humanity was nationalism. Thus nationalists—whether Stalinists or Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution—could have been attacked ideologically, using the armaments of recent history to destroy an archaic concept of patriotism. Instead, the UWF indulged in the "More American Than Thou" battle which it waged skillfully enough to keep itself off lists of subversive organizations. But the taint of having been accused remained, and in the very waging of the battle the UWF conceded defeat in the war for the minds of men which were to be purged of the poison of nationalism. The ideal, which was originally intended to subvert an entrenched national patriotism, was sold by the organization for a conservative mess of containment during a period which, according to that organization, demanded political leaps across ideological chasms—and all in the name of pragmatism.

II

This war had been fought before and very largely on the same grounds. Assuming that the nation-state had been created to protect its citizenry from internal chaos and external attack, pressures which culminated in World War I were sufficient to convince many political theorists that nation-states could no longer fulfill their function. Americans, tending to look back into their own history for organizational solutions, saw their Constitution as a transformation of a struggling confederacy into a vigorous federation, a modification of a political institution which geared it toward survival. In 1910 Theodore Roosevelt advised the Nobel Committee that the United States Constitution was a useful model for "a species of world federation for international peace and justice." Typically, Americans during this period began to organize themselves into "action" groups intent upon bringing this ideal into existence—just as had been done in 1787.

Two years before Roosevelt's pronouncement, the American School Peace League started circulating literature aimed at teaching school children to view peace efforts as something more than antiwar reaction. Rational construction of a world legislature was to be seen as an aspect of
these children's future which they would accept as they began to see themselves as citizens of a world republic. Another educational organization, the Peace and Arbitration League, was formed the same year. With Roosevelt as honorary chairman, it attempted to work toward the same goals through state congresses.5

The UWF would later repeat both of these approaches, but in tactical terms its primary predecessor was the New York Peace Society, an organization formed in 1906 and headed by Andrew Carnegie. This group was soon completely oriented toward internationalism, forming subsidiary organizations such as the World-Federation League (1910) and the League to Enforce Peace (1914). As Warren F. Kuehl, the historian of these movements, describes the World-Federation League, he also anticipates the later position of the UWF. For it too "sought, not to change existing nations or to intrude upon their domestic concerns, but 'only to lessen the occasions of war' and to hasten 'the day of establishment of some form of central government empowered to keep the peace.' "6

Having faded in importance, the World-Federation League was replaced by the League to Enforce Peace, an organization which anticipated the problems of later federalists by being plagued with splintering differences of opinion.7 For its concept of a world government involved the potential use of military sanctions against a national offender, a prospect offending many pacifistic supporters of world law who consequently favored the more gentle and evolutionary aspirations of the World's Court League.8 By the time the war was over, internationalists began to see their dream of federation as at least temporarily utopian.9 But with the decision to accept a confederation, The League to Enforce Peace split on whether or not to accept a League of Nations "with reservations." William Howard Taft accepted the reservation on Article 10, but his position was rejected by the rest of an Executive Committee which wanted to retain him as its president.10 At this point, the World's Court League merged with the New York Peace Society to form the League of Nations Union, a group which supported Woodrow Wilson.11

Many other organizational attempts preceded the UWF commitment to internationalization of the American mentality. Efforts by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, the Foreign Policy Association, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the American Union for Concerted Peace Efforts and the Commission to Study the Organization of Peace are all cited by Robert A. Divine as contributing to "The Triumph of Internationalism in America During World War II."12 More specifically, the last group listed, chaired by James T. Shotwell, represented a preview of UWF arguments by declaring in 1941 that "the present conflict has taught us that something at once stronger and more adjustable than the League of 1919 is necessary. National sovereignty must yield more and more to the community of nations. The world must evolve from League to federation."13
However, instead of evolving into a federation, the League of Nations became merely the United Nations. Instead of shaping world opinion into a perspective which saw clearly the insanity of modern warfare, these groups only reflected tendencies toward social disorganization. Kuehl concludes that the participants in the earlier movements may have "believed so strongly in the inevitability of their success that they thought it unnecessary to combine in more than a temporary movement."\textsuperscript{14}

III

The UWF may have learned something from previous failures, because it did represent an attempted coalition of likeminded movements. But it too believed success to be inevitable and largely for the reasons argued by its predecessors. Federalists had traditionally argued that their ideas had to be possible because all other options seemed to be closed or closing. Shocked by the incapacity of the League of Nations to prevent a second world war, Denna F. Fleming articulated most of the later UWF arguments for world federation in a speech given in 1943 which concluded: "We are moving towards World Federation because untold millions of people are learning that the Nation State can no longer protect them."\textsuperscript{15}

These millions included political leaders, members of the intellectual community and the common citizenry. In 1946 fifty-three of the sixty-five candidates for the Eightieth Congress who answered a questionnaire approved of changing the United Nations into a world federation with majority rule legislation. Two more approved with qualifications, while seven disapproved and three were undecided.\textsuperscript{16} And in his annual message to Congress, President Truman chose that year to say: "The United Nations Organization now being established represents a minimal essential beginning. It must be developed rapidly and steadily . . . . Our ultimate security requires more than a process of consultation and compromise. It requires that we begin now to develop the United Nations organization as the representative of the world as one society."\textsuperscript{17}

Similarly, a poll conducted by Arthur Kornhauser of the Columbia University Bureau of Applied Social Research reported that not one person of all the editors, historians, political scientists and church leaders deemed expert on international affairs "suggested that America should turn its back on the world and keep out of global organizations, as it did after the last war."\textsuperscript{18} According to this poll, informed debate concerned only how soon international sovereignty could be achieved, with eleven percent thinking it could come within five years.

Perhaps more surprisingly, a Gallup poll taken in 1946 indicated that the man in the street was not far behind his leaders. It noted that in stark contrast to the isolationist mood which followed World War I, fifty-two percent of the American public favored United States participa-
tion in the liquidation of national armed forces, with an international police force to be given the responsibility of keeping the peace. Only twenty-four percent were opposed to this, with twenty-two percent still undecided.19

Riding this groundswell of public opinion, five of the groups dedicated to world government convened in February, 1947, in North Carolina and combined to form the United World Federalists For World Government With Limited Powers Adequate To Prevent War. Further identifying their mutual aim as "to mobilize popular opinion and action toward world government so that the local and national representatives of the people will be impelled to world federation by an irresistible political force,"20 these groups—Americans United for World Government, World Federalists, Massachusetts Committee for World Federation, Student Federalists and World Citizens of Georgia—announced the following credo:

We believe that peace is not merely the absence of war but the presence of justice, of law, of order—in short, of government and the institutions of government; that world peace can be created and maintained only under world law, universal and strong enough to prevent armed conflict between nations.21

The growth of the new organization was immediate and striking. By November of 1948, Cord Meyer, Jr., the President of the UWF during its early years, was able to announce the expenditure of $550,000 in an expansion program involving the development of the already existing six hundred chapters in the United States toward the goal of one chapter in every community.22 Earlier that year, in a letter to the editor of the New York Times, Meyer was eager to cite a new poll conducted by Roper which showed an increase in public support to sixty-three percent for the UWF proposal that the United States initiate action to change a weak United Nations confederation into a strong federation.23

By 1948, Robert Lee Humber, a North Carolina attorney who operated as a one man UWF lobby on the state government level, had succeeded in persuading sixteen state legislatures to pass resolutions asking the federal government to officially support world federalization.24 And that fall the voters of Connecticut approved the UWF position in a referendum attached to the Presidential election by a vote of 130,548 to 11,467—thus exceeding the nine to one margin which had endorsed the UWF in an earlier referendum in Massachusetts.25

The total membership of the constituent groups at the time of the formation of the UWF was approximately 18,000.26 But by 1949 there were forty-five thousand members paying three dollars annual dues in 720 local chapters.27 In June of that year, eight thousand people came to Madison Square Garden for a UWF rally in support of a Congressional resolution which advocated the official announcement by the State De-
partment that the goal of American foreign policy involved the development of the United Nations into a world federation. The chief speaker of the evening was Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, followed by Cord Meyer, Jr. and Senator Charles W. Tobey, the man who joined with twenty-one others to sponsor the resolution in the Senate and who was supported by over one hundred committed sponsors in the House of Representatives.

What happened? Two decades later, Americans are still living in the United States; the United Nations is neither universal nor capable of keeping its members from fighting each other; and the planet seems to be no closer to planetary government than it was three world wars ago. If the UWF failed, was this failure based on inadequate theory, tactical error or events outside its control?

These questions cannot be conclusively answered, especially with respect to events outside the control of the UWF (such as Soviet behavior), because how history might have been cannot be documented. However, with the acknowledged benefit of hindsight, both tactical and theoretical weaknesses can be identified which now seem to have precluded any possibility of success; and these weaknesses have a direct bearing on how the USSR could reasonably have been expected to react to the prospect of world federation.

World federalists could never quite believe they were right. They argued that a world federation was absolutely and immediately possible and that anything less was suicidal; but, they decided in the meantime they would support the United Nations. The liberal's inability to believe his own rhetoric is closely associated, I contend, with his suspicion that his ideals are not built to withstand stress. This ambivalence in theory leads to tactical cowardice, a combination which makes short range relief look like a pragmatic purchase of time. The effect can be seen in the general haplessness of American liberalism after World War II and in the more specific decline of the UWF as a viable political group. This virtual disappearance of the UWF from the political scene is symbolized quite graphically in capsule form by the career of Cord Meyer, Jr.—a sad parable of the All-American Boy who tried to live to the liberal hilt the American Way of Life in the 1940's and 1950's.

Meyer, who graduated from Yale (Phi Beta Kappa, goalie on the hockey team) in 1942, joined the Marines, lost an eye on Guam, returned in 1945 to wed Mary E. Pinchot (daughter of Amos, niece of Gifford) and to be Harold Stassen's aide at the founding of the United Nations. In 1947 he wrote Peace or Anarchy and founded the UWF. In 1951 the UWF publication, The Federalist, announced: "Because he has undertaken a U. S. Government post, Cord Meyer, Jr. is unable to continue as honorary president of UWF or as a member of UWF's Executive Council."

Personifying the way the UWF had begun to support rather than castigate the American variety of nationalism, Meyer had joined
the CIA. Sheltered from the heat of McCarthyism by Allen Dulles, he became the agent who slipped subsidies to the National Student Association and other left-liberal organizations.\(^{31}\)

He served for sixteen years an organization which has a world government orientation differing significantly from that of the UWF; and it is now possible to consider the Soviet evaluation of Meyer when he was launching the UWF remarkably prescient and atypically humorous. For in 1949 Meyer had said: "Moscow radio has spent some time attacking us, and it attacked me personally not so long ago as the fig leaf of American imperialism; I think that was the nice phrase used."\(^{32}\)

IV

The unhappy ending of Meyer's story was not, I think, implicit in its beginning. The ideas of post-World War II federalists, presented by Meyer in sketchy fashion in *Peace or Anarchy*, were too benevolent to be imperialistic and too obvious to benefit from fig leaves. As indicated above, these ideas had been advanced before, but they seemed to make a lot more sense to many Americans in the late Forties. The title of Meyer's books stated the alternatives, and since international anarchy was widely assumed to imply the impending extinction of the human race, the base from which world federalists built their case was the conviction that there was really no other choice. According to Meyer, the immediate future was going to entail either world government or total chaos via atomic warfare; the world was obviously not unified enough for a unitary form of government, so only federalism seemed to represent a viable system which could both assert power in its limited realm (prevention of international war) and acknowledge the cultural and economic differences of member states.\(^{33}\)

It is almost impossible to exaggerate the importance of the feeling that there were no alternatives to federalism. As early as 1943, Norman Cousins had editorialized that "one of the greatest obstacles to world citizenship today is the lack of a world consciousness that the ideal is not only possible but mandatory if we are not to slide into a long period of retrogression."\(^{34}\) But the driving force behind the sentiment that world federalism was "the only visible alternative to mass suicide" was clearly the bombing of Japan, an event which suddenly made the UWF seem less utopian than earlier federalists.\(^{35}\) Witness Henry Stimson and Vernon Nash: "Now, with the release of atomic energy, man's ability to destroy himself is very nearly complete. The bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki ended a war. They also made it wholly clear that we must never have another war. This is the lesson men and leaders everywhere must learn, and I believe that when they learn it they will find a way to lasting peace. There is no other choice."\(^{36}\) "There is now no other choice possible; it is either the utopia of world government or the cataclysm of an atom-germ-poisons third world war."\(^{37}\)
Within the negative thrust of this "no other choice" stance, moreover, is the concurrent belief that world federalist recommendations are, indeed, viable options. Reflecting a faith in man's ability to change his institutions when necessary, Meyer contended that the current emphasis on "preparedness," while mandatory because of the absence of law in governing international relations, was bound to lead to the sort of totalitarian state America was supposedly insuring itself against. "Preparedness in foreign policy means the subordination of economic considerations to political and military goals. The implementation of such a policy seems to necessitate the strictest governmental regulation of foreign trade and the use of tariffs and quotas as weapons. The effect must be further centralization of power within the United States . . . ."38

Ironically, Meyer sharply criticized the sort of government which needed to hide its activities from its own citizens: "To Americans, the existence of the Russian secret police is the most damning indictment against the Soviet state."39 However, this is not to argue that Meyer was an early Cold Warrior. In an interpretation which would shortly appear seditious and which has only recently been extensively accepted, Meyer refused to make a bogey of the Soviet Union, saying that the increasing hostilities were the fault of both countries and chiefly the result of nationalism.40

The other central propagator of UWF ideas, and the man who became the spokesman for the movement when Meyer dropped out of sight, was Norman Cousins. Using his editorial page as a useful podium, Cousins wrote many defenses of federalist positions in the Saturday Review of Literature, often giving other advocates such as Clement Attlee, Joseph S. Clark and Oscar Hammerstein II a chance for guest editorials.41 Associated with federalist movements long before the creation of the UWF, Cousins wrote in 1945: "For the last five years, the editors of The Saturday Review have dedicated this page to the principles of world citizenship. We have no intention of abandoning that fight—now or at any other time."42

Indeed, Cousins did not abandon the fight. It seems fair to say that his value to the movement was not (and is not) in developing new and fresh ideas, but in the dogged effort to keep the issue before the public, trying to arouse that irresistible movement which was to sweep the world toward sanity.

But resistance was forthcoming, for Cousins and Meyer were not universally convincing when they attempted to project the concepts of The Federalist Papers onto the twentieth-century situation. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. believed that our "national unity results less from the Constitution than from Civil War."43 Harold Bradley argued that a sense of community is necessary before any sort of federalism is feasible, and that this sense was present in post-revolutionary America but almost totally absent on a world scale after World War II.44 In a more recent
analysis, John W. Spanier summed up this position with the conclusion that the world federalists never had a theoretical chance:

In short, world government is not acceptable even as a theoretical answer to the problem of our time—and cannot be until a global consensus exists. Only then can the conflicts among national interests be resolved more peacefully. Only then will a world government acquire the legitimacy necessary for the obedience of its laws—laws that are the product of political rather than judicial decisions. It is precisely the absence of such consensus today that explains the survival of sovereign states and the high expectation of violence.45

In the Forties and Fifties, people of this persuasion were very much attracted to the ideas of Clarence K. Streit, a man who argued for Union Now: A Proposal for a Federal Union of the Democracies of the North Atlantic. The Atlantic Union movement, which grew out of Streit’s work and which claimed that federation of likeminded democracies was immediately possible, had appreciable support in Congress (from Senator Kefauver and Representative Judd).46 It had support as well in the general public.47 This group, which became the chief federalist competition of the UWF, essentially responded to the contention that no other choice was possible by negating the possibility of world federalism: “To dismiss regionalism in favor of an abstract idea of a world government would be to ignore realities and engage in search of perfect solutions in an imperfect world.”48 It would be, in short, idealistic instead of realistic.

But advocacy of regional alignment had disastrous overtones for those who were hoping to avoid the sort of perpetual war between blocs which Orwell envisioned in 1984. F. L. Schuman contended that federalism of this sort would be more likely to cause conflict than to prevent or ameliorate it. And as Chester Bowles saw it: “The purpose of world government is not to bring Russia and America together; the purpose of the world government is to keep them apart . . . . In the absence of a superior force, each seeks the security that can be obtained only at the expense of what the other regards as its own security . . . .”49 Alan Cranston, speaking as President of the UWF in 1950, cautioned against those who conceive of government as feasible only “over like-minded peoples. This, I submit, is a common misconception of the whole purpose of government. In my simple definition, government (which nobody likes) is only instituted by people who have to live together and find it difficult to do so peacefully.”50

Since both regional and world federalists ultimately desired the same sort of world order, the debate over whether government must precede or follow a sense of community was reduced to a difference in tactics—immediate universalism versus gradualism. Einstein contended that “the trouble about taking little steps, one at a time, in the hope of
reaching that ultimate goal is that while they are being taken, we continue to keep the bomb secret without making our reason convincing to those who do not have the secret.”

And in the most picturesque portrayal of the inefficiency of gradualism, F. L. Schuman quoted Lloyd George to the effect that “nothing is more dangerous than to try to leap a chasm in two jumps.” Therefore, in its first General Assembly, the UWF proclaimed its opposition to the Union Now point of view: “We dissociate ourselves most explicitly from those who would exclude the Soviet Union or who would welcome her unwillingness to join [a world federation].”

However, when confronted with an organization which presented itself as a body which might eventually develop into real world government, the UWF was in a quandry regarding whether or not to believe what it had been saying about gradualism. On the one hand, its statement of beliefs included an endorsement of “the efforts of the United Nations to bring about a world community favorable to peace.” And Chester Bowles maintained that the work of the UWF was to give “blood and bones” to UN efforts. Yet, in Peace or Anarchy, Meyer indicated agreement with Emery Reves’ powerful polemic against the nation-state, The Anatomy of Peace, in which a case was made that the UN, if a half step at all, was in the wrong direction. According to Reves, the sovereignty of member nations was only emphasized in the way the General Assembly was constructed, with organizational ineffectiveness guaranteed by giving members of the security council the power to veto decisions. Along the same lines, E. B. White, who had long argued the federalist cause within the New Yorker, “ridiculed the proposed world organization as the ‘Fifty Sovereign Nations of the World Solemnly Sworn to Prevent Each Other from Committing Aggression.’”

This theoretical dispute among federalists was not resolved by federalists; it was overwhelmed by nationalistic opposition to the whole concept of yielding national sovereignty to any supranational organization. Unfortunately for the public relations campaign directed by Meyer and Cousins, the mood in America changed drastically during the Fifties; and theoretical considerations once again took second place during a period when good tactics seemed to involve back-pedalling for one’s organizational life. In 1951 the UWF had an income of over $180,000—obtained from about forty thousand members; but within five years these figures had shrunk to about $65,000 and 17,000 respectively. A closer examination of the UWF reaction to the attack launched by nationalists leads to the conclusion that instead of opting for the politics of “pragmatism” the group would have been well advised to remain idealistic. As Norman Cousins has more recently concluded, the UWF “was strongest when its message was purest.” In evaluating reasons for its present condition, then, it becomes important to note that UWF salesmen were responsible for the adulteration of the product.
In 1950 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee heard testimony branding the UWF as subversive from witnesses representing societies such as: Women's Patriotic Council on National Defense, National Society of New England Women, National Society of Women Descendants of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, Dames of the Loyal Legion of the United States of America, The American Coalition, The Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Society of the War of 1812.60

Also in 1950, the prolific Joseph P. Kamp published a book with the caustic title: *We Must Abolish These United States.*61 Asserting that this was the essential message of the UWF, he provided lists of those in Congress who had traitorously supported UWF proposals in the past. One by one, the state legislatures began to pass memorials remanding their earlier endorsements. In the reconsidered opinion of the Senate of the Virginia General Assembly, "it appeared world government 'would entail the surrender of national sovereignty.' "62 By 1952 the Senate Appropriations Committee, under the leadership of Pat McCarran, approved a bill banning funds from any organizations which "directly or indirectly promoted one world government or world citizenship."63 This particular attack was directed against UNESCO, but the UWF received its full share of special attention. Thus, when a Methodist minister, guilty of forming a UWF chapter, was accused of aiding the communist cause, the charge was vigorously refuted by *The Federalist.*64 Cranston, as President, found it necessary to deny that the UWF "stinks of Communist Government" and went so far as to maintain that they were barred from membership.65

The Fifth General Assembly (June, 1951) found students splitting off from the UWF to form their own organization. However, rather than rejecting their elders' consuming concern with communist infiltration, these dissidents were interested in a larger share of the funds. So the credo which the younger universalists issued reflected rather than corrected the conflict between theory and behavior being acted out by older idealists. Those who were forced to live in a world full of communists proposed to expel them from an organization devoted to world unity—in the name of American liberalism:

As Americans, as student federalists and as citizens of the world, we believe... that we must displace from any leadership in this movement for freedom the communists whose methods would destroy freedom; that we must preserve and expand freedom at home, combatting tendencies to limit traditional liberties in times of crisis.66

The close connection between panicky tactics and dilution of theory is demonstrated by the fact that although the 1950 General Assembly had reaffirmed the UWF belief in universalism, the convention in 1951
adopted an endorsement of partial federation in case the USSR could not or would not participate in a world federation.67

It is possible to criticize the UWF for its feeble defensiveness. Doubtless, better tactics would have involved reacting as vigorously as did Truman when he was criticized by the VFW for appointing federalist T. K. Finletter as Secretary of the Air Force. Truman’s response was a healthy defense of his own personal choice, but it also indicated something of the shrinking status of the UWF: “All this howl about organizations a fellow belongs to gives me a pain in the neck. I’d be willing to bet my right eye that you yourself and I have joined some organizations that we wish we hadn’t. It hasn’t hurt me any and I don’t think it has hurt you any . . . .”68

Norman Cousins, outraged at the effectiveness of the red-baiting, was perceptive enough to be self-critical under pressure: “There is a tendency to deny every charge just because a charge is made, rather than affirming our own beliefs and carrying the fight to the open arena where public opinion can be rallied behind us.”69 But Cousins, who became President of the UWF in 1952, responded to an attack upon his own position from the right by conceding that the principal charge within that attack had validity; he too saw the ultimate threat to American liberalism coming from the fanatics on the left: “There could be no more ghastly irony than is presented today by those who in the name of Americanism are actually helping to prepare this country for the eventual triumph of Communism.”70

Hagerstown, Maryland, provided the setting for a dramatic presentation of the way the UWF under Cousins responded to charges of subversive activity. Although the Junior Chamber of Commerce had agreed to co-sponsor a play entitled “The Myth,” it was responsive to pressures from the American Legion and the UWF was forced to present the play without the support of other local organizations. At the close of the performance, Daniel Burkhardt, the American Legion Adjutant for the State of Maryland, asked for and received permission to present his views. According to The Federalist:

Norman Cousins came to the stage and in answering Burkhardt’s statements said, ‘My real flag is the U.S. flag, but there must come a day when there is a banner to represent the human race.’ Mr. Burkhardt then referred to the charge from the Un-American Activities Committee report that Cousins had spoken at a meeting of the Scientific and Cultural Conference for World Peace, a Communist-front meeting, in New York in 1949. Cousins replied that he had done so at the request of the State Department in order to present the United States’ anti-Communist views, had been roundly booed and hissed and had needed police escort to leave the hall.71

This can be read in a way not intended by the UWF publication. For it reveals that in 1949, before McCarthy, a leading founder of the
UWF was busy giving anti-communist speeches for the State Department of the nation into which he happened to have been born. Although he was the spokesman for a movement based on the theoretical ability of hostile people to live in peace, he flaunted as patriotic credentials the fact that he could not communicate with communists—a quality which might have produced mortification. One is forced to conclude that if Cousins' "real flag" was the United States flag, he was not buying what the UWF was selling.

Perhaps more important, because of the dramatic curtain call, little attention was paid to the message of the play itself. The incident received national publicity, but interest in the event was limited to the alleged subversiveness of the UWF. Thus "The Myth," the idea of world government, got lost in a dialogue which was essentially beside the point in much the same way as the original ideals of the UWF disappeared into the righteous rhetoric of the early Fifties.

Defensive, rather than aggressively subversive, *The Federalist* cheered when a California high school teacher who had been called a communist over the radio because of her UWF affiliations received over $50,000 damages in 1953. That same year Rev. Donald Harrington used the same publication to consider the possibility of a change in the USSR with the death of Stalin. He concluded: "Are the Soviets ready for peace? Only to the degree that it may serve the long range objective of world conquest which they have set forth." In 1956 Harrington became President of the UWF. That year the General Assembly passed a platform which supported both "Self-Determination of Peoples" and "Halting Communist Expansion." Like the State Department they supported so consistently, the federalists of the Fifties could not imagine that these two principles might contradict each other, even though their own paper had reported that a vote in Vietnam would be "overwhelmingly" for communism.

*The Federalist* during the early Sixties reads much the same way. In 1961 a $50,000 gift from Cousins made possible the hiring of a professional public relations firm "to aid in the visibility program." The following year the organization attracted 3000 new members but lost 2000 through non-renewal. That was the year in which the UWF President, Paul W. Walter (a former campaign manager for Robert A. Taft), sent three telegrams to President Kennedy congratulating him on his handling of the Cuban missile crisis. The most interesting unification project discussed from September, 1963, through June, 1965, was a proposed merger with SANE. Although this represented an appreciable scaling down of earlier goals, most members felt it would be invigorating. But a committee set up to work out the details regarding each group's loss of individual identity was unable to do so. A letter from a member of both groups explains part of the problem involved: "I have noticed that UWF always, or almost always, stops short of criticism of a national
administration (whether Republican or Democratic). SANE does not restrain itself in this manner." In 1964 the UWF gave a "Federalist Founders Award" to Everett Dirksen; in 1966 another went to Robert McNamara.81

But by this time the membership was restive. McNamara's award was most bitterly disputed.82 Although the UWF was still red-baited occasionally, the war in Vietnam was making open opposition to the United States government by American citizens much more popular. Thus in 1966 President C. M. Stanley began asking for a change in American foreign policy. He argued that merely containing communism was not enough; it was time for the United States (and the UWF) to begin moving positively again.83 The General Assembly of 1967 identified the American government as the primary problem in Southeast Asia, and the UWF became part of Negotiation Now!84 Its student branch, not to be outdone, displayed a President and Vice President who had turned in draft cards and held conventions featuring speakers such as Benjamin Spock, Joan Baez, David Harris and Herbert Marcuse.85 But having arrived with too little after most of the people were already there, the world federalists have been little noticed in the current peace movement.

During recent years the UWF newsletter, The Federalist, has tended to consist largely of photographs of UWF dignitaries shaking hands with government dignitaries, photographs of UWF delegates congratulating each other at banquets, and reproductions of telegrams sent by the UWF to encourage support of the United Nations. In 1970 it was decided to cease the publication of this newsletter as a separate entity. What had been called the United World Federalists (UWF) is now labeled the World Federalists of the United States of America (WFUSA). But these do not represent particularly meaningful motions within the recently stagnant peace movement.86

VI

The nice phrase Cord Meyer, Jr. had used to describe the early UWF involved seeing the organization as the vanguard of an "irresistible political force." This force having been easily resisted by a diversionary offensive on the part of nationalists, federalist liberals have retreated from the realm of activist movements to the security of academic impact and influence. In 1958 the first edition of Grenville Clark's and Louis B. Sohn's World Peace Through World Law was published, with later revisions appearing in 1960 and 1966. This book, called the "bible" for world federalists, amounts to a detailed restructuring of the United Nations from a useless confederation into a viable federation.87 Among later federalist efforts, most notable is a series of volumes entitled The Strategy of World Order, edited by Richard A. Falk and Saul H. Mendlovitz. But although many positive things could be said about these publications, there is no doubt that they represent a lowering of the aspira-
tions and a tempering of the optimism of the earlier UWF efforts. Instead of hastily organizing the avoidance of cataclysm, the UWF currently limits its activism to a lobbyist in Washington, with its primary emphasis now involving the more leisurely process of educating the children of those who missed a chance for world peace through world law after World War II. If this is wiser, it is also sadder. According to a UWF chapter head, D. M. H. Cowden, "Many believed—in the euphoria of the post-war period—that world government was imminent. Age has altered our ideology over the years." 

This would appear to be accurate, if understated. From an organization which once had 60,000 members (according to Cowden) to one with only 15,000 during the depths of the Fifties, the UWF has managed to recoup its losses only minimally, counting now about 20,000 paying adherents. So the history of the aspirations and accomplishments of the UWF, in a world far from federalized, has to be considered an account of failure. Official UWF publications do not concede this. Rev. G. G. Grant, S.J., has contended recently that whereas the early concerns of the group involved only the prevention of war via world government, by 1965, "over and above the need for the elimination of war, there was recognized a parallel need for the development of those agencies that could alleviate hunger, disease and ignorance—the seeds of war."

Here is no more talk about leaps and chasms; having capitulated to the gradualists, the emphasis of the movement is upon "development" and "alleviation." If it is conceded that this falls far short of original goals, it is possible to conclude that federalist liberals degenerated as a vigorous political force because they failed to sterilize one of the seeds of their own destruction, an inability to believe what they heard themselves saying.

Already in 1946 Sumner Welles had red-baited Einstein's argument for world government by contending that the United States and England should never agree to join a "World Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," and thus "abolish all those cherished principles of individual liberty which are sacred to the Anglo-Saxon peoples." However, the Soviet Union had never endorsed the movement for world federation, and two years later a liberal journal in the United States could still give a liberal explanation of that sad fact by noting that Russia's suspicions of yet another capitalist plot were not merely reflections of paranoia. After all, argued the editor of the Christian Century, the USSR had been excluded, then admitted and then expelled from the League of Nations; and with the current structure of the United Nations, it was possible to see any attempt to deprive the Soviet Union of its veto as a step by the United States toward the possible legitimization of the use of atomic weapons against Russia by means of a vote within a General Assembly in which America controlled many more votes than the communist bloc could muster.
From the very beginnings of the movement, however, publications which wished to give favorable accounts of the federalists did so by merely denying communist participation rather than by inquiring (with frustration and disappointment) why this was so. *Newsweek*, which noted contentedly that Norman Thomas represented the left edge of world government advocates, stated:

The Communist fellow-traveling fringe, with one or two lonely exceptions, has kept aloof, obviously, because the official Communist party line frowns on the idea of world government as a ‘reactionary utopia.’ It insists, in accordance with current Soviet policy, on the inviolability of national sovereignty. This means that for the time being, at least, the world-government movement is one of the few political currents of our time in which liberals can participate without getting tangled up in Communist party intrigues and ‘front’ maneuvers.\(^93\)

The logic of this is amazing. Communists, including the feeble American variety, are given the capability of destroying a “political current” merely by joining it, and yet the driving force of that current consists in its contention that we are all in the world together, until death does us part.

According to the liberal mentality, if liberalism (being good) is not likely to do well during periods of extreme stress, communism (being evil) then approaches omnipotence. This seed of hysteria, cultivated by those concurrently claiming that there was no longer any choice but for disparate groups to trust each other, grew to the extent that when Mrs. Anita McCormick Blaine established the Foundation for World Government the fact that someone as far to the left as Henry Wallace was expected to be one of the trustees was enough to impel other organizations dedicated to unity to dissociate themselves. Ely Culbertson spoke for the Citizens Committee for United Nations Reform: “As far as our organization is concerned, anything Wallace is associated with is a red herring—doubled and redoubled.”\(^94\)

Thus guilt by association was not the invention of the less than mediocre public servant who needed an issue on which to justify his own re-election. In fact, McCarthy could have discovered from the leadership of the UWF that “Soviet aggressive expansionism is the major problem in the world today.”\(^95\) This spokesman made distinctions between the Soviet army and communism as a religion, but such subtleties were soon to be dropped as McCarthy became a fire-breathing symbol of much that liberals had conceded. By 1950 the same Truman administration which had nodded in the direction of world government in 1946 was issuing official proclamations which could just as well have been written by McCarthy himself:

For if there is one thing that is clear, it is that the Soviet Union does not have, and has never had, the slightest in-
tention of joining in any plan of world federation in any
sense that would be acceptable to any believer in democracy.
In fact, it is precisely because the Soviet Union has its own
unbending ideas of how the entire world should be organ­
ized that the tensions exist today . . . . It is difficult to see
how there can be a ‘general agreement’ with anyone whose
single-minded objective is to extinguish you . . . . The
objective of the free world is to erect a stone wall against
aggression.96

When the professional articulators of diplomacy begin to depend on
the imagery of stone walls, it is easily seen that the federalists had failed
to sterilize all the seeds of war. For this particular seed, a paralyzing
preoccupation with communism, germinated in the liberal’s lack of faith
in his own ideology. It was then nourished by the tears shed in the
pathetic liberal’s lament that he was unfairly charged with communist
sympathies; it grew into the rhetorical jungle of the Cold War. As
liberal rejection of revolutionary change slid over into a defense of the
status quo, all efforts toward change were given the label of revolutionary
fungus and liberals broke out the defoliants. Tragically paralleling the
larger movement in which American liberals became conservatives dur­
ing a period demanding rapid social change, a well financed, intelligent,
internationalist peace movement succumbed to an obsolete and ignorant
nationalism by sacrificing its ideals “for the duration” upon the altar of
expediency, committing organizational suicide in the name of American
pragmatism.

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footnotes

1. Quoted by Raymond B. Fosdick in Pioneers in World Order, ed. (New York, 1944),
Harriet E. Davis, v.

2. In The City of Man (Baltimore, 1967), Warren Wagar traces ideas about world govern­
ment and the universal brotherhood of mankind back through Dante to the Greek Stoics. See,
especially, 27, 58-39.

3. See Louis Harts, The Liberal Tradition in America (New York, 1955) and Arthur


5. Ibid., 109, 111.

6. Ibid., 108, 125. For this reason the UWF was called a “minimalist” organization. It
desired universal participation in a very limited world government.

7. See Ruhl J. Bartlett, The League to Enforce Peace (Chapel Hill, 1944), 208-209.

8. Kuehl, Seeking World Order, 208. For a full display of the hawkish characteristics of the
League to Enforce Peace, see Win the War For Permanent Peace (New York: League to Enforce
Peace, n.d.), especially the keynote address by its president, William Howard Taft. This book,
made up primarily of speeches made at the 1918 convention, “breathes the crusaders’ spirit that
animates a great people engaged in a Holy War and determined to let no sacrifices stand in
the way of victory” (p. 7).


12. This is the subtitle of Divine’s book, Second Chance.

13. Commission to Study the Organization of Peace: Preliminary Report and Monographs
(New York: Commission to Study the Organization of Peace, [1942]), 6. Members of the com­
misson signing this statement included John Foster Dulles, Denna F. Fleming, Owen Lattimore,
Max Lerner, Daniel A. Poling, Clarence Streit, William Allen White and Quincy Wright.
19. *Newsweek*, XXVIII (October 14, 1946), 44.
21. *New York Times*, February 23, 1947, p. 25, col. 4. This account also lists World Republic as one of the organizations which merged into the UWF, a version of its formation erroneously repeated by Frederick L. Schuman in *The Commonwealth of Man* (New York, 1952), 436. According to the *New York Times*, the students making up World Republic (formerly Students for Federal World Government) were persuaded to join the UWF by the conciliatory efforts of Norman Cousins. Actually, although both UWF and World Republic were American affiliates of the World Movement for World Federal Government, World Republic—the very organization responsible for setting up the meeting of “likeminded” groups in order to facilitate a merger—retained a separate identity. See Harrison Brown, “The World Government Movement in the United States,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, III (June, 1947), 156; George A. Bernstein, “World Government—A Progress Report,” *Nation*, CLXI (December 22, 1945), 712-715; Lawrence S. Wittner, *Rebels Against War* (New York, 1969), 171. For a discussion of World Republic, made up mostly of young people from the Chicago area who dropped out of school to work for world government, see Dorothea Kahn, “Design for Peace,” *Christian Science Monitor Magazine*, March 1, 1947, 6. Unlike those groups which became the UWF, World Republic was oriented toward a “people’s convention” rather than trying to transform the United Nations into a federation.
33. *Peace or Anarchy* was published in Boston by Little, Brown & Co. See also his debate with Thomas J. Hamilton published in the *New York Times*, February 16, 1950, Sec. VI, 11, 16, 18.
39. Ibid., 73.
40. Ibid., especially pp. 106-107. See also his article, “We Must Have World Government NOW,” Scholastic, LIll (October 20, 1948), 10-11.
43. The Vital Center (Boston, 1949), 240.
45. World Politics in an Age of Revolution (New York, 1965), 133. Much has been written about whether a government can create a sense of shared values and interests. Numerically, at least, those who argue (against the UWF) that a viable community has to exist before federalism can be effective have the advantage. Ware, for example, pays little attention to the UWF movement in The City of Man, considering it unrealistically legalistic in its effort to impose government upon a situation just because it seems necessary (See 228, 293). Another theoretician who denies the equation of need with possibility is Reinhold Niebuhr. See “The Myth of World Government,” Nation, CLXII (March 16, 1946), 312-314; “The Illusion of World Government,” Foreign Affairs, XXVII (April, 1949), 379-388; and “The Reach for One World,” New Republic, CXXIX (November 23, 1953), 16-17.
47. By 1958, when Elton Atwater et al published World Affairs (New York), Union Now had sold over 360,000 copies in 17 editions (see 564).
56. For Meyer's endorsement, see Peace or Anarchy, 235.
57. Divine, Second Chance, 229.
58. New York Times, June 16, 1956, p. 39, col. 3. As recorded in the Summer 1952 issue of The Federalist (p. 6), that year's General Assembly of the UWF unanimously approved an offer made by Atlantic Union to work together toward shared objectives. But this newly accepting attitude was based on present weakness rather than resulting from a theoretical basis self-confident enough to welcome support from any direction.
59. World Federalist, July/August, 1950, 2.
61. A list of a few of his other books, all published in New York by Hallmark, gives an idea of the tenor of this book: Strikes . . . And the Communists Behind Them; Communist Carpetbaggers in Operation Dixie; Fifth Column vs. The Dies Committee; Vote CIO . . . and Get A Soviet America; Behind The Lace Curtains of the YWCA.
64. See The Federalist, November, 1951, 8.
66. The Federalist, Summer, 1951, 7.
67. Ibid., 19 and February, 1952, 7.
It is interesting to note that Robert Divine identifies the Christian Century as "idealistic," comparing it with the "realistic" New Republic and Nation. He makes this distinction clear in his discussion of men such as Charles Beard (who "viewed Wilsonian internationalism sardonically"), Carl Becker (who "warned against trying to escape the harsh realities of the world through wishful thinking") and Reinhold Niebuhr (who reinforced their "realistic view of the future"). Thus the liberal's self-perceived choice between idealism and realism remains, dominating over the sort of belief that makes ideologies vigorous—the conviction that the two are the same. See Divine's Second Chance, 320, 174-175.

93. October 14, 1946, 45.
96. Francis H. Russell, "Toward a Stronger World Organization," U.S. Department of State Bulletin, XXIII (August 7, 1950), 220, 222. This is the printed version of a speech Russell gave as Director of the Office of Public Affairs to a UWF meeting in Washington, D.C.