

A P E N G U I N S P E C I A L

W. B. CURRY

# THE CASE FOR FEDERAL UNION

A NEW  
INTERNATIONAL ORDER

Science and invention have made world order imperative. Without it, we can have neither peace nor freedom, neither happiness nor prosperity. What form shall world order take? How can liberty and diversity be combined with effective government? How shall we begin? This book argues that the solution is **FEDERAL UNION**, beginning with the democracies, and extending ultimately over the whole world.



# **THE CASE FOR FEDERAL UNION**

by  
**W. B. CURRY**



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To

ANNE BEN and JULIAN

To

ANTHONY and MICHAEL

To

ALL CHILDREN EVERYWHERE

and

TO THAT SANER AND MORE HOPEFUL  
WORLD IN WHICH THEY YET MAY  
LIVE







## NOTE

The words FEDERAL UNION have now gained wide currency as the name of a proposal for establishing a peaceful, democratic, and orderly world. Since it is the object of this book to put the case for Federal Union as one writer at least sees it, it seemed best to use these words in the title. But Federal Union is the name, not merely of a proposal, but also of a society which has been founded to advocate this proposal. This society is mentioned in the text, and in the epilogue readers are urged to join it. In order to avoid misunderstanding it must therefore be clearly stated that while the author is a member of the society known as Federal Union, and hopes that its membership will rapidly grow, the society is not committed by anything contained in this book, which is in no sense an official publication. This book is a personal statement for which the author is solely responsible.

“ . . . writing now means somehow prevailing over oneself, for what to write when everything one touches is unspeakable, unrecognizable, when nothing belongs to one, no feeling, no hope; when an enormous provision, gotten I know not where, of suffering, despair, sacrifice and misery is used up in large amounts, as though everybody were somewhere in the whole mass, and the single person nowhere; nowhere any longer is the measure of the individual heart applicable which used to be the unit of the earth and the heavens and all expanses and abysses. What used the cry of a drowning man to mean—even if it was the village idiot, who with a suddenly sharper cry reached out of the water, everybody flew to the scene and was on his side and against his sinking, and the swiftest risked his life for him. How immemorial everything has become . . . ”

—*A war-time letter (1915) from RAINER, MARIA RILKE.*

“ . . . The world has become so intolerably tense, so charged with hatred, so filled with misfortune and pain that men have lost the power of balanced judgment which is needed for emergence from the slough in which mankind is staggering. Our age is so painful that many of the best men have been seized with despair. But there is no rational ground for despair: the means of happiness for the human race exist, and it is only necessary that the human race should choose to use them.”—BERTRAND RUSSELL: *Education and the Social Order.*





## FOREWORD

### *AN OPEN LETTER TO JOHN CITIZEN*

DEAR JOHN (or Fritz, or Alphonse—it doesn't really matter),

At any moment, you and your wife and family may be blown to smithereens, or asphyxiated, or scalded or burnt to death, or otherwise brought to an unseemly and painful end. In order to produce this incredible state of affairs we have all lived for years under a crushing burden of taxation, and a steadily increasing degree of interference with the normal liberties and routines of our daily lives. Whenever we have stopped to think we have realised that it was all crazy and unnecessary, and that instead of preparing for mutual slaughter, we might begin to realise that we hold within our grasp greater possibilities of human happiness and development than mankind has ever had before.

If you are between twenty-five and forty years of age this is the second war in your own life-time, and the whole of your life, as long as you can remember, has been overshadowed and burdened by war, the threat of war, the preparations for war, and the talk of war. Have you never, as you enjoyed the peace of some lovely landscape on a warm summer day, had that peace disturbed and shattered by the thought of all the loveliness that was being destroyed in other similar countryside? Have you never felt that love and peace and quiet happiness and the enjoyment of beauty were becoming almost impossible for you while so much of all that makes for civilisation was being wiped out and trampled under foot? Have you never, as you surveyed

the waste and sheer idiocy of it all, been exasperated almost beyond endurance? I cannot believe that you have never felt these things, and never passionately longed for a world in which sanity and humanity might gain a hearing, and folly and cruelty and hate be silenced for a while. I cannot believe that you have never asked yourself, as I have asked myself over and over again, why the devil do we put up with it?

I have written this book because I believe there is a way out, and because in spite of all the evidence you have provided to the contrary, I still believe that you might not continue to put up with it if you could see your way out. But I must admit that I am becoming despondent. There is nothing I can say in this book that has not been said before by more eloquent pens than mine. H. G. Wells, for example, has been pegging away at this theme for more than a generation now, and he has said it better than I can ever say it. He is a writer to whom all who work for a more sanely organised world owe a greater debt than they can ever acknowledge. He has brought to the preaching of this message all his magnificent gifts of imagination and enthusiasm, and the brilliantly illuminating phrase, and he has commanded a larger audience than I can ever hope to reach. *The Outline of History*, which you bought in millions of copies, taught you the lesson as plainly as it can be taught, and it ended with a plain statement of the lesson of all recent developments: "There can be no peace in all the world now but a common peace, no prosperity but a common prosperity." Wells has told you this, and many others have told you this, but somehow it seems you don't wish to see.

You appear to prefer the claptrap of nationalism, your separatisms, your petty jealousies and your patriotic vanities, to that creative life of peace and happiness and plenty that is there, within our grasp, if only we would unite with our fellow-men throughout the world. We

cannot get it by standing alone. We can only get it by union.

I am not, as I have said, the first person to tell you this, nor, I suppose, will I be the last. But I had to say it, and I had to say it in this way. I have tried not to be offensive, but it may be that here and there my feelings have got the better of my judgment. When that has happened I hope you will forgive me.

I have addressed this book to you, and not to politicians or learned professors of political science, because ultimately it is you who count. And because, too, the politicians won't pay any attention until you convince them that they won't get your vote unless they do.

In the last resort a sanely organised world order will depend upon a public opinion that insists upon it and supports it because it understands why it is necessary. This book is offered as a contribution to the development of that public opinion.

Yours, in all sincerity, dear John,

W. B. CURRY.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For the last twenty years the topics discussed in this book have been, next to my work, my chief pre-occupation. It would be impossible to remember, let alone to acknowledge, all the books, pamphlets, and articles to which I owe the gradual crystallisation of my ideas, and all the unintentional plagiarisms I must therefore have committed. But I know that on these topics I could not write a paragraph without betraying the debt I owe, together with most of my generation who have come to a similar outlook, to two writers in particular. To Bertrand Russell and to H. G. Wells I wish to record my affectionate and deeply respectful gratitude. If they should chance to see this book I hope that they will not feel ashamed of yet another addition to their very numerous spiritual grandchildren.

I have quoted extensively from Mr. Clarence K. Streit's *Union Now*. I have to thank the publishers, Messrs. Jonathan Cape, for kindly giving permission to do this.

Finally, to Miss Susan Payne I owe more than merely formal thanks. She undertook the heavy labour of typing and retyping the various drafts with an enthusiastic cheerfulness which was a constant stimulus and encouragement.

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