

# Editorial

## One Europe: One World

WITH OUR EARLIER ISSUE for March:April we distributed a supplement entitled *One Europe: One World* written by Christopher Layton with the assistance of a study group under the chairmanship of John Pinder sponsored by the One World Trust, the Wyndham Place Trust and the Federal Trust for Education and Research.

These trusts have a number of distinguished supporters and attract a nucleus of practical and far-sighted individuals who have had a notable influence on European and international affairs. These now bring their influence to bear on the impact which the European Community might exercise in the promotion of world order.

The Community represents the one original piece of constructive statesmanship since the formation of the United Nations. The theme of the report is that so far the influence of the Community on the rest of the world has been a relatively feeble one, which could—and should—be much greater. Its role should not be to emulate the two superpowers, but as a plural community of nations to seek to encourage regional groupings elsewhere and to cooperate with the great new powers such as India, China, Japan and Brazil. The Community now needs to devise a systematic strategy in order to make its central policy goal the creation of a more united and harmonious world.

It is not realistic to suppose that it will be practical for a long time to repeat the structure of the Community elsewhere, for Europe is a special case, where similar economies existed in the member states, their populations shared common parliamentary ideals, and there was a determined political will to put an end to the hostilities of the past. Nevertheless, the Community has since its inception lent encouragement to the formation of other groupings, and there are political beginnings in ASEAN, in Latin America, in the Pacific and in the Indian sub-continent where action can be taken on a step-by-step basis, as in the UN Economic Commission for Europe, to deal with practical issues where a regional solution is either essential or timely.

This strategy is combined with a programme of certain minimum and necessary steps which can only be effective if they are taken on a global or regional basis. These include security, finance and monetary policy, third world debts, environmental protection and the reform of the

United Nations, much of which is essential if further deterioration in the world's trading system is to be prevented.

This is an ambitious programme and it is written with "European" enthusiasm. Considerable steps would have to be taken within the Community for a start. Britain should join the European Monetary System, the powers of the European Parliament should be enlarged, the agricultural policy rationalized and protectionism substantially reduced.

While the report adopts a magnanimous policy towards the debts of developing countries, any general writing off for those unable to repay, even poor African countries, would be liable to encourage the continuation of wrong policies, penalize the virtuous and reward the wicked. And such writing off, together with such additional aid as is advocated, must be administered in such a way that it does not simply confer additional benefits on the élites in Africa, where disparities of wealth can be as great as anywhere. It must also be expected that plans for the conservation of forests will also meet with resistance from vested interests in developing countries. The report therefore proposes a bargain linking the remission of debts with steps to preserve large tropical forests through a world environmental trust, regionally administered.

One of the encouraging aspects of the report is that it picks up the theme of Maurice Bertrand, considered in our March:April issue<sup>1</sup>. Working within the context of the United Nations, Bertrand also considers that the promotion of effective international action must come through the development of regional groupings rather than from the UN. A crisis looms over the United Nations, when support for multilateralism is on the wane, not only in the United States but also elsewhere. It is therefore all the more important that there should be a clear distinction between those issues which require to be dealt with at global level, those which should be treated at regional level, and those which are properly left within the province of national governments.

*One Europe: One World* is a courageous effort to find some means of moving forward out of the present muddle. It is a sketch plan for discussion rather than a blueprint, and it must not be assumed that the conclusions are in any sense final. But the questions raised are vital for the future and now need more detailed examination. We commend it for reflection, and hope that it will provoke comment.

<sup>1</sup> See, A. F. Ewing, "Reform of the United Nations", 20 *J.W.T.L.* (1986), p.131; also Maurice Bertrand, *Refaire l'UNO! Un programme pour la paix*, Editors Zoé, Geneva.