



Report of the Chairperson of Council

November 2008

Den Haag

WFM Councilor and Executive Committee member, Prof. Lucio Levi, was right; not that this is unusual. At the Congress meetings in Geneva in August of 2007, Lucio insisted, as he has for years, that our movement has not been adequately concerned with the vexing question of global economic governance.

Given the extraordinary, though hardly unexpected global financial meltdown of the past several weeks, triggered for the most part by greed and mismanagement on the part of mortgage lenders in the United States of America, could there be a more timely topic for the Council Chair's Roundtable in *Den Haag* than "Global Economic Governance.?"

Surely there is no one with two neurons to rub together who could fail to see that the planetary community is inextricably linked economically, ecologically and, increasingly, even culturally – though I note this last with trepidation.

In 1947, in Montreux, the great questions of war and peace brought our founders together to seek a more just, a more sane way of governing human affairs. Those issues are still with us, but we are realizing that our challenge is far more the constructive task of building global community than the essentially reactive project of limiting conflict.

If we succeed in even a modest measure in the former, we shall be making strides in the latter.

I have been part of the World Federalist Movement, in Canada and internationally, for nearly thirty years, but my conviction that federalism is the best and surest strategy for the future of the human community was born forty years ago last May.

My history teacher in my final year of secondary school was a Mr. Arthur Beel. His area of specialization was world history, and, as a sort of parting gift, he typed out and reproduced, on that most ancient and unpleasant of technologies, a "gestetner", (a term so old my spell check does not recognize it) the postlude to H.G. Wells' monumental *Outline of History*. Published in 1946, the year Wells died, this postlude was an explicit call for a world federal government.

It convinced me then; it convinces me now.

And so it is with great pleasure that I welcome you, fellow Councilors, to *Den Haag* and the 2008 meeting of the Council of the World Federalist Movement.

I trust that the year or so since last we met has been good for you in every way. It has certainly been a demanding one for me, yet satisfying overall.

Following our Congress in Geneva, I had the great pleasure of participating in the Federalist Seminars in Ventotene, the resulting paper being published recently in *The Federalist Debate*.

As always, it continues to be a great pleasure and a privilege to sit as a member of the Executive Committee and to work closely with Bill and the staff of the International Secretariat.

During this past year, I have worked with Elisabeth Garrett in the developing and distributing of a “welcome package” for new members of Council; collaborated with Tony Fleming, Elisabeth and the IS on developing both a “covenant” for Council members and a “skills inventory” to assist us not only in drawing the greatest advantage from the considerable talent of our Council and Executive, but in the arduous and necessary task of “succession planning” for the leadership of our Movement as we move into the third generation since our founding.

It has also been an exciting and gratifying challenge to be a part of seeking Co-Presidents to succeed President Wilson and the late and beloved Sir Peter Ustinov.

I have had the opportunity to speak and write on global and federalist issues on a number of occasions during the year, and have just submitted another article to *The Federalist Debate* on the 80th Anniversary of the publication of H.G. Wells', *The Open Conspiracy: Blue Prints for a World Revolution*. This little book, modest at first glance, was the first “handbook for world federalists.”

Nationally, with Canadian Executive Director, Fergus Watt, I am hosting the biennial meeting of the World Federalist Movement-Canada at the University of Winnipeg, and have sponsored two meetings on the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine.

In my principal vocation, and with the Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton, General Secretary of the Canadian Council of Churches and a leader in the Canadian organization, I have participated in the Religious Leaders' of the G8 Nations Summits in *Koln* in 2007 and in Osaka, Kyoto and Sapporo in 2008.

In consequence of which, and in conjunction with the Ridd Institute for Religion and Global Policy of the University of Winnipeg which I had the privilege of instituting through our Global College in September of this year, that Summit will be hosted at the University of Winnipeg in 2010 at the invitation of WFM's Honorary President, Dr. Lloyd Axworthy.

And, of course, with the IS, and especially Elisabeth Garrett, I have enjoyed over the past several months planning and preparing the agenda for this Council.

I trust it will be both refreshing and rewarding.

As Council Chair, I offer my special thanks to the staff of the IS, especially Elisabeth, and to my colleagues on the Executive Committee.

Who could wish for more than a job worth doing and good friends and colleagues with whom to do it!

Respectfully submitted,



(The Rev. Dr.) James Taylor Christie
Chairperson of the Council
World Federalist Movement-Institute for Global Policy