

Preface by Enrique Baròn Crespo

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The first time I heard about the European Movement, was in 1962 on the occasion of its Munich Congress. The Spanish press of the day started a campaign against the "ignominious alliance" that the adherents of the "democratic and decadent" Europe were supposed to use in order to defame Spain.

The anger of the Franco regime might have been easy to understand, after all it was in Munich that for the first time following the civil war, Spanish representatives of the democratic opposition came along, and all this at a time when the Franco regime was seeking membership of the European Community.

It was just this reaction of the Franco regime which stirred up my interest and sympathy for the European Movement. I procured the Resolution of the 1948 Congress as well as the "Appeal to the Europeans", and while reading these documents they conveyed to me not only historical value, but also topical importance: I read them with the interest and the emotion that things awaken, which turn out to be particularly difficult achievements, and without doubt with the same fascination that also inspired those Europeans who assembled for the Congress of Europe at The Hague in 1948.

Only three years before this event the European peoples were still enemies and locked in war, lived without freedom or - such as the British - struggled to maintain their freedom. It was therefore the main concern of the 1948 Hague Congress to remember common values which should form the basis for the future cooperation. In view of the political, economic and military hegemony that one of the European peoples had exercised upon

the others it was recognized that the best achievement of Europe is human dignity and its greatest power results from freedom.

This has been proven by the numerous political and institutional results that have emerged in less than one century: creation of the Council of Europe and the European Convention on Human Rights, institution of the European Cultural Foundation in Amsterdam and the College of Europe in Bruges, the setting up of the European Coal and Steel Community as well as the Treaties of Rome. This reveals - then as today - the fundamental agreement between Europeans on the aim to maintain and defend the values of "democracy" and "human rights". Without doubt this is the reason that made the European Movement a "subversive force" in the Spain of the sixties when establishing centres of democracy on the local as well as on the regional level, where Spanish people of most different political groups met. Today, since we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the beginning of this development, the publication of the Resolution of the 1948 Congress has not only historical value: It makes clear what has been done and at the same time encourages us to continue.

Now the European integration process has received a new impulse whose main objective consists of establishing a "European society". The first stage is the completion of the internal market making possible the free movement of people, goods, services and capital. Now we must press on to complete the internal market. But even after 1992 European integration must go on: It is the task of the European Movement, an expression of our cultural and political diversity, to be open to all intellectual tendencies and to emphasize the democratic construction of Europe whose principal concern is the welfare of its citizens. The final goal of the European Movement remains setting up the United States of Europe.