We don’t know exactly when and where the first idea for a United States of Europe was discussed by scholars and government heads, but we do know that William Penn, a British nobleman who eventually became the governor of the American territory that was later known as the U.S. State of Pennsylvania mentioned it in his writings in 1782. Penn had been given a large grant of land by King Charles II of England to pay a debt to Penn’s father. Penn wanted to find a formula to govern the colony in a way that promoted democracy and religious freedom and to avoid ruinous wars. His plan for a United Colonies of America also recommended a similar formula for a “United States of Europe.” Penn had seen the terrible aftermath of European wars and hoped that a supranational organization could avoid wars by getting member countries to cooperate with each other.

Another early champion of a European Federation was Albert Einstein. Originally from Switzerland, Einstein was against militarism and nationalism. As a German citizen in 1916, during World War I, he became a member of the liberal and cautiously pacifist “New Fatherland League,” a club that pushed for an early peace and the formation of a federal structure in Europe to avoid future conflicts. It published a pamphlet titled “The Creation of the United States of Europe.” The group was banned by the German government before the year ended.

So the concept of a United States of Europe was attractive to some of the greatest thinkers of the world, but was never taken seriously by governments until the second half of the 20th Century. Bismarck’s wars against Austria and France in the late 19th Century killed and wounded hundreds of thousands of soldiers and civilians, World War I killed and wounded millions of soldiers and civilians, and Hitler’s wars killed and wounded millions more. When was enough enough?

Although Western Europe was in a Cold War against the Soviet Union and its satellites in the late 1940’s some of the great thinkers of that age decided to try a new approach. To bring about peaceful pursuits instead of implacable nationalism and conflict, French Prime Minister Robert Schumann proposed the “Schumann Plan” to get steel producing countries to work together in a “European Coal and Steel Community.” This initiative was badly needed, not only to get former enemies to cooperate, but also to rebuild the economies shattered by World War II. As a modest beginning in 1949, it brought about cooperation of the countries: France, Germany, Luxembourg, Holland, Belgium, and Italy. From this beginning it became the European Economic Community (EEC) of the six countries by the Treaty of Rome in 1959. Over time, more countries joined and governmental bodies were created to

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integrate the nations together. Now, with the named changed to European Union, the body has 27 European countries as members. Is it a United States of Europe? No, not yet. However, it has achieved a great victory in that its members are so busy with economic pursuits that no member countries have the least inclination to make war on other members.

How does the European Union differ from the United States of America (USA)? The USA was forged in a war for independence by thirteen colonies that had many similarities: a common language, common legal system derived from English common law, and a strong desire for developing untamed lands. An early attempt at governing the former 13 colonies after defeating the British was called the “Articles of Confederation,” but it failed because there was not enough central control. In a convention in 1787 called to revise the Articles of Confederation, the Founding Fathers decided to create a new form of government called a “federation” which would have a strong central government, but still allow much power to each of the states.

The American states issue licenses for lawyers and doctors to practice their professions and charters for businesses to operate in the state. The Federal (national) government does not control such activities in the states. The states perform many other functions unfettered by the Federal government unless the Federal government has provided part of the funding for the activity, in which the Federal government does get involved. For example, originally, the states were responsible for public education. Then under President Jimmy Carter, a U.S. Department of Education was created. Now the Federal government involves itself into all public education activities, a situation that is disliked by most citizens. Many recent presidencies have tried to increase the Federal power in the U.S. by taking away functions the states had been performing. A Federation has the greatest power in its central government, but states also have jealously guarded powers.

In that sense, it is similar to the EU in that the Treaty of Maastricht called the EU governing body a federation. Some of the members at that time didn’t like the term “federation” for the EU because they thought it meant losing some of their sovereignty. The exact impact of the treaty on the functioning of the EU left many questions open, uncertainties which have led to calls for another new treaty. The Lisbon Treaty of 2007 greatly increased the administrative powers governing the EU. When its impact is assessed, the biggest winners from Lisbon have been the European Parliament, with its increase in power, and the European Council. The first months under Lisbon have arguably seen a shift in power and leadership from the Commission, the traditional motor of integration, to the European Council with its new full-time and longer-term President. The split between the Commission and European Council Presidents involved overlap, potential rivalry and unwieldy compromises, such as both Presidents attending international summits, in theory each with their own responsibilities, but inevitably with a considerable grey area. There is some expectation that the posts may be merged, as allowed under Lisbon, in 2014 when their two mandates expire.
The European Parliament has used its greater powers over legislation, but also for example over the appointment of the Commission to gain further privileges from President Barroso and it used its budgetary powers as a veto over how the External Action Service should be set up. It also applied its new power over international agreements to rapidly block the SWIFT data sharing deal with the US and threatened to do so over a free trade agreement with South Korea.

Like the Commission, the Council of ministers has, relatively, lost power due to Lisbon. Its dynamic has also changed as member states have lost their veto in a number of areas. Consequently, they have had to come up with stronger arguments faster in order to win a vote. The Presidency of the Council, which continues to rotate among Member States every 6 months, has lost influence: the Prime minister of the country of a controversy in question no longer chairs the European Council, its foreign minister no longer represents the EU externally (that is now done by the High Representative of the Division of Foreign Affairs.

Other moves toward federation includes the creation of this High Representative of the Division of Foreign Affairs and Security which will lead to a common defense for the EU. Also, the legal expansion allows for plaintiffs who want to appeal the decision of their national court may appeal their case to the Court of Justice of the European Union.

No one can deny that the EU has brought about free trade among the member countries and no travel restrictions for EU citizens wanting to visit other EU countries. At the same time, all of the EU countries are friendly with each other. If they want to contribute to a NATO action outside of Europe, it’s an individual country’s decision.

We in the United States of America are eager to see more: the creation of the new and powerful United States of Europe. Why? Because at this moment in our history we have to deal with further dangerous enemies: the general warming of the planet, the climate changes, the pollution, the terrorism, the modern slavery and many others that may find us unprepared to defend our traditions and values.

Perhaps, we need not worry about the economical crisis. When united the chances to solve all problems are more robust. The legal system will provide for all European citizens equal opportunities in all fields, education, health care, jobs, they will be all equally protected by the common laws and responsible under the common laws.

Actually the big secret behind the emerging of this new beautiful Federation lies in the common legal system. The adopted law by the large majority of the EU citizens will be the foundation to a stable future. A single unique law system of the Federation should provide the means to control and eventually eradicate corruption. Europe has very fertile land, plentiful resources of clean fresh waters, and many other resources in all fields including the “know how,” thus the EU has all the factors needed to be prosperous and developed if well organized and managed.

Many important steps have already been taken. All citizens of the 27 states are at this moment protected by laws that cannot be ignored by the respective governments. Are there at this moment any major differences between the way USA and USE
functions? No. You travel free, you can buy property wherever you want and eventually everybody will have the right to work and live where ever he or she pleases anywhere on the surface of USE.

There are of course a lot of small differences that are only normal due to history.

But to act like ONE when faced with any major danger for the planet or for the civilization is the most important thing we can aim for. *E pluribus unum!*

**Reference:**
