

# Which Future for which Europe?

Talk at Durham University 24 of February, 7.15 pm

**Jan Seifert** (President of JEF-Germany)  
**Alex Dunn** (Conservative Future)

There has not been much debate in Durham about Europe and the ongoing constitutional process. Therefore the organisers felt that it would be important to initiate a debate for the (student) public about these European issues. The Politics Society, the Social Forum organised together with Maria Weimer a debate about the future of Europe on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February at Durham University in Elvet Riverside.



It was agreed to invite Jan Seifert, President of JEF-Germany to speak in favor of a federalistic Europe. As a second speaker Alex Dunn from Conservative Future was invited to give his view about Europe, thus to have the possibility of a debate about the future of Europe between the two speakers.

In front of a dozen of students, the president of the politics society, Alex Still opened the debate by welcoming everybody and presenting the topic. Jan Seifert was first on the floor explaining what the Federalist Movement meant by Federalism, and the history of this concept. In a very interesting manner, he made a panorama

from the Philadelphia Convention to the European Convention. Seifert then went on explaining why the federal concept was the most appropriate one for today's European Union. His message was hopeful and enthusiastic. Then Alex Dunn, from Conservative Future, explained why in his view federalism would be wrong for Europe, and especially for Britain. He criticised the trend to build a 'super state' in Brussels and expressed concern that governance would then more supra-national, in stead of being more local. Dunn also claimed that the UK was very different from other EU states and therefore should not be part of the EU in case of further European integration.



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The debate was then opened to the audience. A number of interesting questions were asked. Overall, the audience was rather pro-European and interested in the federalist concept. Many questions were asked about the Euro. The international students attending the talk were clearly positive towards the UK joining the Euro. Many British students were interested in the consequences of joining the Euro and the impact of the Euro on the everyday life of a student. One point was made about the European identity and that, to make such a common identity possible, the debate has to be brought out to the civil society of the Union. The debate went on for about an hour, before we refreshments were available in an informal atmosphere. To sum up it can be said that this debate was largely successful in the respect that high quality arguments were exchanged, and everyone had a chance to express their feelings and ideas about a topic. The organisers as well as the audience were all very satisfied with the debate.



Contact the organisers at:  
Maria Weiner  
College of Hild & Bede, Durham University  
Durham DH 11 SZ  
Email: [ronjja@hotmail.com](mailto:ronjja@hotmail.com)

Maria Weimer



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JEF European Secretariat  
Chaussée de Wavre 214d/Waversesteenweg 214d  
B-1050 Bruxelles/Brussel  
Tel.: +32 (0)2 512 00 53; Fax.: +32 (0)2 626 95 01  
email: [info@jef-europe.net](mailto:info@jef-europe.net); website: [www.jef-europe.net](http://www.jef-europe.net)