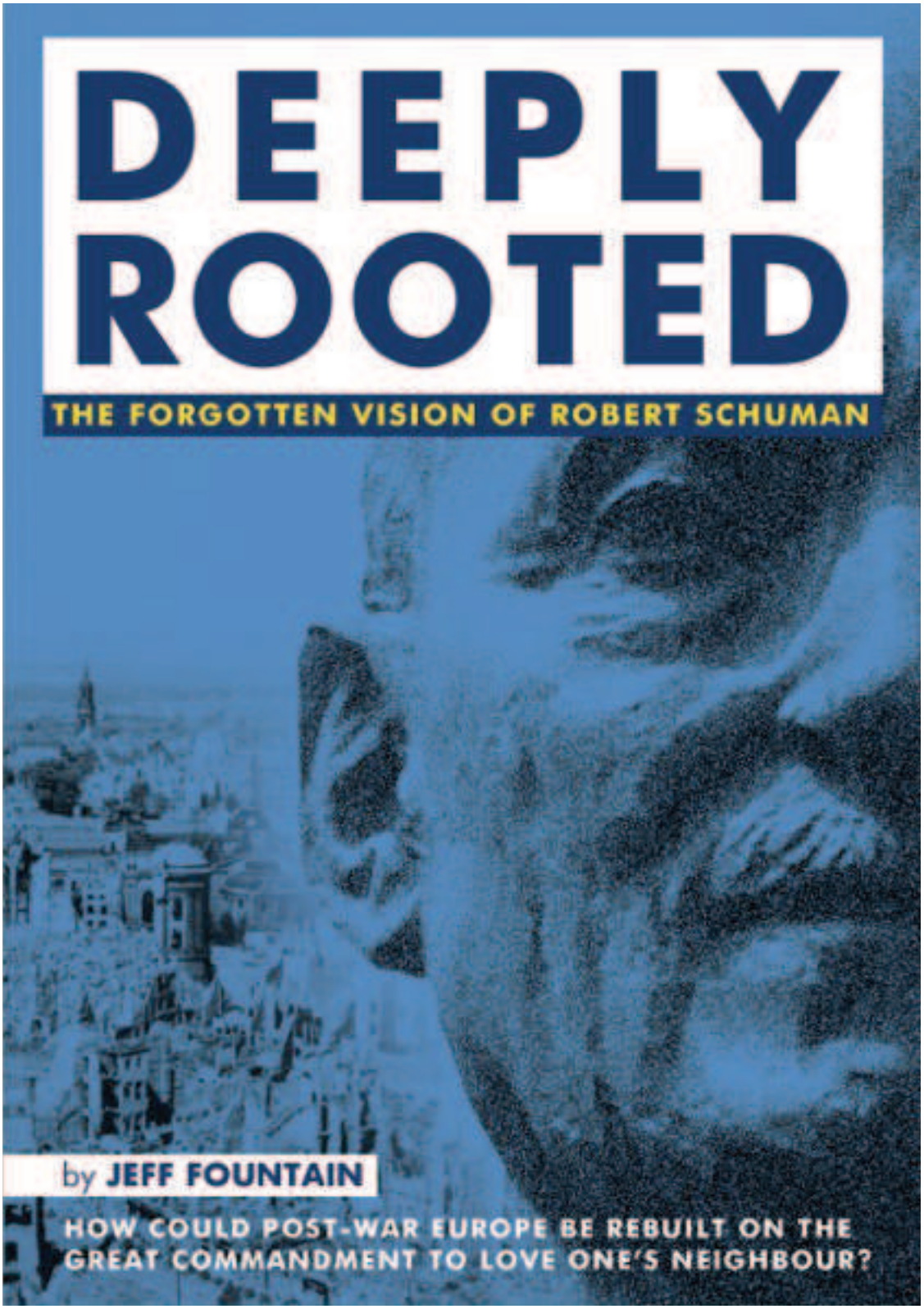
DEEPLY ROOTED

THE FORGOTTEN VISION OF ROBERT SCHUMAN



by **JEFF FOUNTAIN**

HOW COULD POST-WAR EUROPE BE REBUILT ON THE GREAT COMMANDMENT TO LOVE ONE'S NEIGHBOUR?

Other titles by Jeff Fountain:

The final frontier (ed) (1986)
Living as people of hope (2004)
The little town that blessed the world (2007)

DEEPLY ROOTED

THE NEGLECTED VISION OF ROBERT SCHUMAN

BY JEFF FOUNTAIN

THE SCHUMAN CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES

Wth special thanks to Per Eivind Stig, Mai....
for their support of this translation.

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Thanks to all who offered suggestions to improve the original version of this book. Any errors are the author's sole responsibility.

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Original title: ***Deeply Rooted***
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We are called
to bethink ourselves of
the Christian basics of Europe
by forming a democratic model
of governance
which through reconciliation
develops into
a 'community of peoples'
in freedom, equality,
solidarity and peace
and which is
deeply rooted
in Christian basic values.

Robert Schuman

IMPORTANT DATES IN THE LIFE OF ROBERT SCHUMAN

1886
June 29: Birth in Clausen, Luxembourg

1896-1903
Secondary education, Luxembourg

1904-1910
Read law at the Universities of Berlin, Munich, Bonn and Strasbourg

1911
Mother, née Eugénie Duren dies

1912
Called to the bar in Alsace Lorraine - opens own legal offices/Metz

1913
Helped organise German Catholic Congress (Katholikentag) in Metz

1914
Called up for service in an auxiliary service of the German army - Metz.

1915
Seconded to the Civil Service in Boulay.

1919
Elected MP for Moselle

1924
Re-elected as MP for Moselle

1928
Elected MP for the constituency of Thionville East.

1932
Re-elected MP for the constituency of Thionville East

1936
Elected General Councillor for the Cattenom region

1940
Under Secretary for the Presidency of the Council for Refugees under the Reynaud and Pétain governments (March to July); Sept 14, arrested by the Gestapo.

1941

April 13: confined to house arrest in Neustadt (Palatinate).

1942
August 1: escaped from Neustadt. November: went underground.

1944
September: returned to Moselle, elected MP for Moselle

1945
Elected MP for the Moselle. Member of the Finance Commission (November 1945- May 1946).

1946
Re-elected MP for the Moselle. Member of the Finance Commission.

1947
Finance Minister under the Ramadier Government (January to November).
Prime minister (November to July 1948).

1948-52
Foreign Minister.

1950
May 9: proposed the European Coal and Steel Community

1951
Re-elected MP for Moselle.

1955
President of the European Movement (1955-1961).

1955-56
Minister of Justice.

1956
Re-elected MP for Moselle.

1958-60
President of the European Parliamentary Assembly in Strasbourg.

1962
Retired from public service due to ill health.

1963
September 4: Robert Schuman died in Scy-Chazelles

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Preface

This story has been transated into danish to commemorate the sixty-fifth anniversary of the Schuman Declaration, delivered May 9, 1950.

That occasion was perhaps *the* defining event for modern Europe, more so even than the dramatic fall of the Iron Curtain. For it laid the foundations for the European house in which today half a billion Europeans from 28 nations live together in peace, a fact unprecedented in history.

Yet it remains a story largely unknown in the English-speaking world, in Scandanavia and in much of Europe.

In France and Germany, the nations where most of this story was acted out, the values and vision behind it are often neglected or forgotten.

In Central and Eastern Europe, the origin of the welfare of this 'community of peoples', of which their nations are newer members, is frequently misunderstood.

On this anniversaty, financial and economic crisis, resurging nationalism and populist political parties, short memories and short-sighted vision pose genuine threats to the future of the European project.

Europe's future will depend on our ability as Europeans to reconnect with the forgotten foundations highlighted in this story.

Jeff Fountain
The Schuman Centre for European Studies

FOREWORD

HOW COULD GERMANY AND FRANCE ever live in peace?

After writing a massive study on *'Hitler's Religion of War'*, I wondered how the French could ever possibly forgive! And how could all those prejudices on the German side ever be overcome?

My father, himself a German officer in the war, and who became a Christian after the war, pointed out to me two things.

Firstly, when Charles De Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer commemorated peace between France and Germany in 1962, it was not by chance in a service held in the Cathedral of Rheims. Christianity is the religion of reconciliation and lays a base for reconciliation in social affairs.

Secondly, after this event, hundreds of thousands of students were exchanged between the two countries, visiting schools in each other's country for a month, so that the new generation could build friendship and understanding.

Both events put ideas into reality which stemmed from Robert Schuman! And so I am thankful to Jeff Fountain for reviving Schuman's vision by writing this book. It opens the door for all into the life and thought of Schuman. His life offers *'Hope for Europe'*, to use the name of a movement Jeff Fountain helped initiate.

Jurjen A. Zeilstra[1] has proven how much the hope for unity and peace among Christian churches and the hope for unity and peace among peoples and states in Europe grew together, facing the challenges of racism, nationalism and war. Many today have forgotten that the European Union was not started for economic reasons, but to further peace, unity, values and human rights, all in a Christian spirit. Christians at least should revive this vision.

Once, the Apostle Paul saw a man from Europe in a dream calling, "Come over and help us". The gospel coming to Europe changed the continent.

This can happen again, if we follow the lead of men like Robert Schuman and his colleagues.

Prof. Dr. Thomas Schirrmacher

President, Martin Bucer European Seminary and Research Institutes
(Bonn, Zurich)
Director, International Institute for Religious Freedom
(Bonn, Cape Town, Colombo)

[1] In his dissertation 'European Unity in Ecumenical Thinking 1937-1948' (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 1995)

Introduction

Sixty-five years have now passed since the French foreign minister, Robert Schuman, proposed a bold plan to link the peoples of Europe together in peace and solidarity. This plan has grown into what we know as the European Union today.

Largely forgotten, however, is the climate of hatred and bitterness, mistrust and suspicion, crisis and conflict, intrigue and insurrection, which dominated Europe in the years following the defeat of Hitler.

Euphoric scenes of flag-waving crowds welcoming victorious troops quickly gave way to the daunting reality of rebuilding a devastated and divided Europe. But how? On what foundations? With whose values? What could be done differently this time to break the seemingly-inevitable cycles of war among Europe's tribes?

France and Germany in particular, with their central geographical location, had habitually behaved like alley cats scrapping over morsels of borderlands, repeatedly dragging their European neighbours into fully-fledged fights. Twice in the first half of the twentieth century, European brawls–with these two nations in the thick of it–had become global conflagrations.

The story of the stunningly swift yet lasting Franco-German reconciliation after the Second World War is central to the whole post-war European development. It is the story of a small committed group of statesmen who shared common values, vision and convictions concerning the essential foundations for Europe's future.

It is a story with a central figure, widely respected and known for his integrity and humility, and universally acknowledged as the 'Father of Europe'[2].

Yet the name Robert Schuman remains largely unknown or ignored in the English-speaking world today. If recognised, it is often confused with that of the nineteenth-century German composer, Robert Schumann (double 'n'). While a google-search today for the name reveals numerous French book titles, English publications are scarce.

This ignorance and indifference points to a failure of our modern education. It reveals prejudices blinding us to the sort of big-hearted supranational vision necessary in our globalised world.

It is also a measure of how successful efforts have been to distort the story of the European project into simply one of a secular, pragmatic, technocratic entity serving an efficient market.

The sixty-fifth anniversary of the origins of what has become the European Union is an appropriate occasion to revisit the story of Robert Schuman. It is an opportunity to learn about the vision, values and life experiences which motivated him in his mission to create what he once described as a 'community of peoples in freedom, equality, solidarity and peace'.

For Schuman believed these values had laid the original foundations for Europe during the first millennium of the Christian era. Decades of attempts to reshape Europe in the vision of godless rationalism, chauvinistic nationalism and neopagan fascism had confirmed his conviction that

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[2] In 1960, after chairing for two years the first European Assembly, later to become the European Parliament, Robert Schuman was officially acclaimed in a standing ovation as 'the Father of Europe'.

Europe's future depended on the recovery of Christian values to shape political and economic realities.

This anniversary also prompts us to recall how volatile and vulnerable post-war Western Europe was to the imminent threat of communist domination, through military, political and trade union action. Modern European history could have been very different. A third world war was a frightening possibility. Two and a half decades after the collapse of the communist grip on Eastern Europe, we are tempted to forget how real, threatening and apparently permanent this domination was.

The peace and prosperity Europe has enjoyed since the war, especially in the west, was not simply the natural consequence of Hitler's downfall. Rather, it was the fortunate result of several key factors, especially American economic aid through the Marshall Plan launched in 1947, and the trans-Atlantic military partnership of NATO forged two years later. Both of these, however, could have foundered on the mistrust and bitterness among the European nations which came perilously close to repeating the mistakes of the past.

Schuman and his Christian colleagues saw the need to create a moral climate of forgiveness, repentance and reconciliation in which a 'community of peoples' could be nurtured.

This sixty-fifth anniversary further highlights the great irony of French obstinence to the mention of God, Christianity or Christian values in the proposed EU constitution of recent years. Schuman, the 'Father of Europe', a Frenchman, a former French premier and French foreign minister, acclaimed French statesman and visionary, urged care to be taken 'that spiritual progress go hand in hand with the

material'. He believed the European Movement would only be successful if future generations managed to tear themselves away from the temptation of materialism which corrupted society by cutting it off from its spiritual roots.[3]

Far from sidelining and privatising his own faith, he saw his role in politics as a mission, a vocation, a calling from God.

'We are but very imperfect instruments of Providence,' said Schuman, 'which uses us to accomplish great designs that are beyond our comprehension.'

Faced with the challenge of the reconstruction of a Europe torn apart by rival ideologies, Schuman was outspoken about his conviction that such reconstruction was only possible in a Europe 'deeply rooted in Christian basic values'.[4]

This conviction was shared by his German and Italian colleagues, Konrad Adenauer and Alcide De Gasperi. Fellow Catholics, they were, in the words of Adenauer, 'filled with the desire to build the new edifice of Europe on Christian foundations'.[5] Adenauer believed the task 'not only a political and economic aim worth striving for, but as a real Christian obligation'. [6]

Despite these convictions of the founding fathers, the chairman of the convention concerning the proposed constitution, Frenchman Valery Giscard d'Estaing, rejected any reference to God and Christianity because of possible 'violation of freedom of conscience'.

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[3] Speech to the General Assembly of the International Catholic Organisations,12 March 1956

[4] See quote on page 2.

[5] Letter from Adenauer to Schuman, 23 August, 1951. De Gasperi was the Italian prime minister.

[6] Lean, *1985*, p380

The double irony is that it was Luther (*'Here I stand, I can do no other'*) who established this great European principle, freedom of conscience, on the basis of God's Word.[7]

Yet it is not only secular, pragmatic voices who have encouraged ignorance and indifference towards this story of 'rebuilding on Christian foundations'. My own evangelical constituency has long displayed indifference, suspicion and outright antagonism towards 'the European project'–with a few notable exceptions.

Once more, this anniversary gives us pause to reflect on the reasons for evangelical reactions towards 'Europe', and to ask if such attitudes are biblically-based.

Growing up in a Baptist church on the other side of the world did not shield me from such attitudes. Illustrated talks on biblical prophecy left no doubt that we should expect the revival of the Roman empire, represented in the book of Revelation by the ten-headed beast, in the form of the European Community. The six original members became nine and then–as warned–the tenth member was finally admitted to round off the picture! Unfortunately for this scenario, the ten became twelve, fifteen, and then twenty-five, twenty-seven, twenty-eight... and we're still counting.

Protestant suspicion of initiatives by Catholics also fed ignorance and indifference towards 'Europe' the further north one went. And for good historical reason, we were told. Political and religious freedoms won at high cost in Holland, Scotland, England, Switzerland, Germany and the Nordic countries should not be surrendered lightly to the

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[7] The final wording of the relevant section appeared as: *'Drawing inspiration from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law'.*

latest seductive strategy concocted by the 'whore of Rome', the argument went.

Protestants and Catholics still agree to disagree on certain issues, but the climate of acceptance and cooperation has warmed in recent years to the point that some even ask, 'Is the Reformation over?'[8] Pope Benedict XVI declared in his weekly public audience in St Peters Square that Luther had been right to talk about justification by *faith alone*.[9] This was not a new declaration, but a corollary of the agreement in Augsburg, October 31, 1999, between Lutheran and Catholic leaders on the doctrine of justification.[10] The present pope, then as Cardinal Ratzinger, personally played a decisive role in this agreement.

In an increasingly secularised Europe, many Protestants and Catholics have come to recognise that their commonalities are greater than their differences. Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, has declared that while the Word of God has divided Protestants and Catholics, the Word of God must now unite them.

German Christians of both persuasions had come to this realisation during the war through their common persecution by and resistance to the Nazi regime. This enabled the Christian Democratic movement to emerge as a key factor in post-war reconstruction.

Other Protestants still object, however, that 'Europe', represented by 'Brussels', is a regrettable exercise in centralisation of power, despite lip-service to 'subsidiarity'[11].

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[8] Noll & Nystrom, 2005

[9] Nov 19, 2008: see also Benedict XVI, *St Paul,* 2009 p.78

[10] See *'Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification' (JDDJ)*, 2000

[11] *Subsidiarity*: The principle of pushing decision-making to the lowest appropriate levels.

As Lord Acton famously warned, all power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Decentralisation is therefore the answer, we're told, as is modelled by many Protestant forms of church government where authority is mainly exercised at the local level.

However, in an age when politicians and business leaders are constantly conferring to shape Europe's future, when media and sports officials from many nations partner to deliver Champions League matches to our living rooms, and Mafiosi and terrorists cooperate effectively across national borders, evangelicals have all too often been side-lined as non-players by a 'small-shopkeeper' mentality.[12]

Decentralisation is a recipe for diversity. But there is also a legitimate need for broader solidarity and unity–with diversity.

But what about the influence of secular and godless humanism and other -isms in EU directives on equal treatment, homosexuality, same-sex marriage and other social issues, enforcing non-biblical values throughout Europe?

This treatment of the Robert Schuman story is not an endorsement of all that the European Union has become. On the contrary, by retelling this story, we are raising the questions, *Whatever happened to the founding vision and values of the European project*? *Who hijacked Europe? And, who allowed Europe to be hijacked?*

Sometimes I am asked by concerned Christians if I believed Europe would become the Beast. I reply, '*definitely:* if Christians who are commissioned to be light and salt in the world remain disengaged on the sidelines and only active in their own church circles.' If Europe becomes a greedy,

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[12] Historian Christopher Dawson observed that 'Catholics see woods; Protestants see trees'. One could add: 'Evangelicals see branches'.

godless, selfish Beast, it is not because God has destined that or willed that, but because His people have been disobedient and ineffective, sniping from the sidelines. Such predictions can become self-fulfilling prophecies.

How then did this New Zealander become so engaged with the European story? In 1975, I came to Holland where I met and married a Dutch girl, Romkje, who had started the work of the international mission organisation YOUTH WITH A MISSION in Holland. I settled in my wife's homeland, working with YWAM, and eventually was granted Dutch, and thus European, citizenship.

By 1989, I was appointed leader of YWAM across Europe. As the momentous events of that year unfolded, culminating in the dramatic demolition of the Berlin Wall, the spiritual landscape of Europe underwent a seismic shift.

I was invited to meet with other leaders of Christian youth movements to wrestle together with the huge implications of these changes. Still in our thirties and forties, we looked around for mature evangelical 'fathers and mothers' able to guide us through these uncertain times. Frankly, we found few interested in the broader European picture. Leadership seemed more concerned with local church issues. Few were concerned about 'Brussels' and the European Community project. Some even dismissed 'Europe' as doomed to become the Beast and therefore not worthy of our attention.

Only later did I discover insightful reports and addresses from mainstream church leadership, especially from Catholic bishops such as Cardinal Basil Hume.[13]

Meanwhile I decided we should go to Brussels to learn for ourselves. So in 1991, I met with our YWAM leadership team

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[13] Hume, 1994

outside the star-shaped Berlaymont building in the European district, home of the European Commission. Some of us were wondering about claims spread by endtime-watchers that somewhere in this 'Berlaymonster' was a Big-Brother computer gathering information on every European. Somewhat apprehensively, we presented our passports to the security personnel as we entered the building.

Imagine our surprise then as we were greeted by a European Commission official with a warm handshake and the friendly statement: "So, brothers, shall we begin with prayer?"

Our host, an Irishman named Eamonn O'Rouairc, expained that he led a prayer network of staff working in the building. Asked about the computer, he laughed and said, "If only people knew how incompetent we were with our computers!"

He then launched into a fascinating story about a small group of devout Christian politicians who saw the need to reconcile their constantly-warring nations, as they faced the daunting task of rebuilding post-war Europe. He also highlighted the role of a Lutheran evangelist who played a key role behind the scenes, building trust among these men.

This was such a different understanding of the origins and motives behind what has since become the European Union than anything I had heard before!

This then is the story told in the following chapters, a story of forgotten foundations, a story ignored or simply never passed on.

We suffer from short memories.

And short memories breed short-sightedness.

PART ONE

1. Making war impossible

The last passengers were boarding the Paris-Metz train at Gare de l'Est as Robert Schuman settled into his second-class compartment. He was looking forward to a quiet weekend of reflection in his beloved country house at Scy-Chazelles outside Metz, a wine-producing area in his political constituency of Moselle in Lorraine.

Five years had passed, on this last Saturday morning in April, 1950, since the end of the most murderous war in history. But cessation of hostilities had not brought national 'peace'. French governments rarely had lasted a year in the tumultuous post-war years.

Yet Schuman's reputation for honesty and integrity, as well as his legal and political shrewdness, had promoted him to top national political responsibilities. In 1946 he had been appointed Finance Minister where his popularity had enabled him to apply the drastic measures necessary to stabilise the post-war economy.

Late the following year, Schuman had been asked by the president to head a new government, just as the country seemed headed towards civil war. Communist agitators, under orders from Moscow, were succeeding in bringing France to a standstill through strikes and sabotage, ransacking arms factories and paralysing railways, mines and power stations.

Only one week after becoming prime minister, Schuman had called up 80,000 reservists to repress all sabotage. Communist fury at this measure had burst out on all fronts, but the premier had stood firm. Within the French national

assembly, communist members had kept up a torrent of verbal abuse, accusing him of being a Nazi-lover.

On one occasion in the heat of these crucial days, he had been overcome by emotion. Burying his face in his hands, he had silently prayed for wisdom and resolve, before continuing the business of the meeting.

Eventually the central strike committee had backed down and given the signal to return to work. The crisis had passed.

Yet Stalin's less-than-peaceful intentions in Europe had become clear as Soviet troops ruthlessly clamped their iron grip on Poland, followed by Hungary, then Romania, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia.

In 1949, just the year before, the Western Allies had managed to break the Soviets' attempt to gain a stranglehold over all of Berlin by cutting off road and rail access to the western sectors. The Allies had responded with a round-the-clock airlift, flying over four thousand tons of supplies daily, a total of 200,000 flights, sustained constantly for almost a year.

These five post-war years had been anything but peaceful. Weekend breaks in Scy-Chazelles had offered Schuman essential spiritual and mental refreshment since the war. This particular weekend would help him now, in his more recent role as foreign minister, prepare for a crucial meeting with his American and British counterparts less than two weeks away. The US Secretary of State had warned the Frenchman to come with a positive policy proposal towards Germany and its integration into the community of free nations. If not, the French would be given no further say in the future of the industrial Ruhr region.

Schuman needed a plan, a bold plan that would reshape the landscape, a plan that would make going to war in the

future very difficult, if not impossible. This thought had preoccupied him since their last meeting in New York, the preceding September.

The train still had not left the station when hurried footsteps in the corridor outside interrupted his thoughts. The door to his couchette slid open and the head and shoulders of his private secretary, Bernard Clappier, appeared through the curtains.

"*Monsieur,* could you read this draft from Monnet, *s'il vous plait*? *C'est important!*"

Thrusting a document towards his surprised boss, he disappeared as quickly as he had come.

Minutes later as the train pulled out of Paris, a curious Schuman scanned the opening pages of the paper to see what his secretary thought to be so urgent.

Jean Monnet was no stranger to Schuman. An internationalist, his family cognac business had exposed him extensively to Swiss and Swedes, English and Americans, and even Russians and Chinese. A story circulated that he had vainly tried to book a berth on the maiden voyage of the Titanic in 1912, a failure which may have saved his life.

After France fell to the Germans in 1940, Churchill had sent Monnet to Washington on a British passport to persuade the Americans to provide war supplies, while still a neutral country, and thus help overwhelm the Germans. His efforts, according to economist John Maynard Keynes, had shortened the war by a year.

Three years earlier, Monnet and Schuman had grown to respect each other while working together on finance planning. One hot day, they had even indulged in the unusual informality of taking their jackets off.

They were of one mind on the need to build peace on equality. Peace efforts after World War One had failed, they

concurred, because of discrimination and attitudes of superiority towards the Germans. Both were afraid the same mistakes were about to be repeated.

Like Schuman, Monnet believed a new political system had to replace the old balance of power between nations that had now failed twice, resulting in global war. As Deputy Secretary-General of the League of Nations, he had witnessed first-hand the failure of mere inter-governmental cooperation. Stronger measures were needed in the real world of international politics.

Monnet knew that Schuman would have the moral standing, the political authority and the courage to trigger off great change if necessary through the implementation of unconventional ideas.[14] Clappier, Schuman's secretary, and Paul Reuter, Schuman's legal advisor at the Foreign Ministry, had discussed their boss's ideas at length with Monnet, who could bring his depth of experience from the League of Nations, The Hague Congress and as former head of a planning commission under De Gaulle immediately after the war. Proposals he had made then, in line with De Gaulle's policy of dismantling the German coal and steel industry, had only increased French-German tensions, rather than solve them. He knew at least what had not worked.

Often mistakenly portrayed as the true architect of the Schuman Plan, Monnet was still as late as April 1950 considering the idea of a buffer state called Lotharingia between eastern France and Germany, comprising part of Belgium, Luxembourg, Alsace-Lorraine, and the Saar and Ruhr territories.[15]

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[14] Richard Mayne, *Schuman, De Gasperi, Spaak–The European Frontiersmen*, Bond, Smith & Wallace, 1996, p26

[15] Krijtenburg, p 163ff

Reuter, himself from Lorraine, had managed to convince Monnet that this plan was unworkable and unnatural for the residents concerned. Monnet, who confessed in his memoirs that he had run out of ideas at this stage, asked Reuter to help him prepare a draft of a plan.[16]

Reuter set to work on the first draft of a plan incorporating Schuman's principles and concepts, along with Monnet's practical and technical proposals on how to achieve economic integration. Clappier knew that his boss needed a bold, workable initiative to present on May 10 in London at the meeting of the Big Three. He too contributed to the brainstorming with Reuter, Monnet and other staff.

Less than two weeks before that date, Clappier was anxious that time was running out. The last weekend in April had arrived when he dropped by Monnet's office to check on progress. Monnet showed him the latest draft. Quickly Clappier scanned the text. Then, realising that the foreign minister was about to board the Saturday morning train for Metz, he had excused himself to dash madly, text in hand, to Gare de l'Est.

As the train carried him eastwards, Schuman began to peruse the document. Monnet and his team seemed to have translated his main principles and ideas into a workable plan! It was daring and unprecedented. It broke with the familiar tradition of bi-lateral and multi-lateral treaties between nation states. He would look at it more closely at home over the weekend, but at first glance, the plan

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[16] Jean Monnet, *Memoirs*, p342; Price, David Heilbron: *Schuman or Monnet?'* p 8,9, quoted in Krijtenburg, p158. Recent research has yielded increasing evidence that Schuman, supported by his staff, was the true architect of the Declaration; Archives of the *Maison de Robert Schuman* in Scy-Chazelles opened in 2007 made many of Schuman's speeches and writing available,

appeared to be what he had been looking for to take to the Big Three meeting.

At the Metz station, an official car would usually be waiting for him. Typically, to the frustration of his security personnel, he would ignore the car in favour of taking the public bus to the outskirts of the city, and his home village of Scy-Chazelles on the gentle slopes of Mont Saint Quentin.

As always, his housekeeper would be there to greet him and cook for him. A small stooped woman, 'la petit Marie' Kelle looked after his simple and modest two-storey stuccoed house set in a walled garden. This arrangement would last forty-two years, in which Schuman led a simple, priestlike lifestyle.

Also waiting for him was his library with its eight thousand volumes. A source of joy and inspiration, it included rare manuscripts and autographs of every king of France since Charles V. The library, his study, the gardens, and the fortified church of Saint Quentin just across the road, were all favourite places for quiet reflection on the maelstrom of his political life.[17]

Walking in his beloved garden, Schuman could reflect on his two years in the post of foreign minister, and recall the Congress of Europe in The Hague in May 1948. He could draw satisfaction from the formation of the Council of Europe, with its emphasis on human rights, the rule of law and democratic development. He himself had proposed it be inaugurated the following year at Strasbourg.

Yet, significant as it was, the Council of Europe was hamstrung by nationalistic constraints. It was not the political solution he was looking for to bring lasting peace based on equality and solidarity.

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[17] The Robert Schuman House is today a museum and memorial supported by the EU.

Schuman also was haunted by his disturbing first official visit as foreign minister to Germany, just a few months earlier. A hostile press had confronted him in Mainz, Bonn and Berlin. To them, he had personified the French threat to annex the Saar coal and steel region, just over the border from France. For most French, post-war Germany still loomed as a menacing threat, both politically and economically. They felt they had a moral claim to the Saar.

He wanted to believe Konrad Adenauer, the German chancellor, to be a good and devout man whom he could trust. But the Saar issue had even brought strains to their relationship. Just the previous month, in March, Adenauer had proposed the idea of a political union between France and Germany, open to Britain, Italy and the Benelux nations. This was no new idea. The chancellor had been thinking along these lines since the 1920's. But the mood in both France and Germany did not seem favourable to such a plan.

Monnet's draft, however, might just be practical enough to work...

Monday morning, May 1, as the train pulled into Gare de L'Est, Clappier stood on the platform anxiously waiting for his boss. Schuman stepped down from the carriage, greeted his *chef de cabinet,* and without further word walked towards the waiting car. On the drive to the Quay d'Orsay, Clappier was bursting with curiosity, but Schuman insisted on talking only about the weather.

Finally Clappier put the question directly: "*Monsieur le ministre*, the paper I gave you last Friday, what do you think about it?"

"I've read the proposal. I'll use it," Schuman told him with deliberate understatement.

Clappier knew immediately the following days would be a whirlwind of planning and preparations, drafting and redrafting. He also understood discretion would be crucial to success. Only the right people should know, to avoid any efforts to thwart the plan. [18]

Schuman and Monnet informed a sceptical prime minister, and two other ministers known for their belief in 'Europe'.[19] A meeting of the French cabinet was arranged for May 9, the day before the Big Three meeting in London.

The following Monday, May 8, Schuman briefed a trusted official, Robert Mischlich, to undertake a 'delicate and secret mission', to deliver letters to Adenauer in Bonn outlining the secret plan.

The next day, the French cabinet was coming to the end of its agenda. Schuman had remained silent about his proposal throughout the meeting, waiting to hear back from Bonn. Finally Clappier slipped him a note saying that Mischlich had relayed Adenauer's enthusiastic response: 'This French proposal is in every way historic: it restores my country's dignity and is the cornerstone for uniting Europe.'

With this information, the foreign minister asked to raise an urgent new agenda item. He then tabled the plan and the report of Bonn's agreement. The two ministers in the know immediately voiced their support. Others, caught off guard by the boldness of the plan, needed more convincing. Hesitatingly, and despite some private reservations, the cabinet eventually agreed for the proposal to be presented at a press conference at six o'clock that evening, at Quai d'Orsay, the seat of the Foreign Ministry.

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[18] Conflicting accounts of this incident exist. The above is based on Keyserlingk, 1972

[19] Bidault called the plan a 'soap bubble, just one more international body'.

Prepared texts were hurriedly delivered to the ambassadors of Italy, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Britain and the United States. Invitations went out to two hundred journalists.

However, by six that evening, only a handful of Paris-based journalists were free, at such short notice, to join the government officials, politicians and diplomats gathered under the high ceilings, chandeliers and gold-painted baroque decorations of the grandiose Salon d'Horloge.

Schuman stood before an enormous mantlepiece with Monnet seated at his side as he called for order. The audience hushed as he sat down and began to read through his heavy horn-rimmed glasses.

World peace, he began, required creative efforts of equal magnitude to the threats. French efforts to champion a united Europe in the past had failed, and war had resulted. Yet such a united Europe would not happen at once. It required steps that would build solidarity, and eliminate the age-old emnity of France and Germany.

Therefore, he read, his government would propose specific, concrete action on one decisive issue: that French-German production of coal and steel be pooled under a common High Authority, above the authority of the national governments, and open for other European countries to join.

This would encourage common foundations for economic development, and would change the destinies of those regions which historically had been devoted to the production of war munitions, and which had been the most constant victims. Here Schuman was referring primarily to the Saar and Ruhr industrial regions.

This solidarity in production would make war between France and Germany not just unthinkable, but materially impossible.

Schuman looked up from prepared statement on the table in front of him, taking in the rows of expectant faces hanging on his every word. The boldness and the far-reaching consequences of this proposal was lost on no-one in the room. All that could be heard, as everyone waited for the foreign minister to continue, was the sound of the stenographer seated directly in front of him, capturing every word on her large mechanical typewriter.

This unity of production, he resumed reading, would lay a true foundation for the economic unification of all countries willing to take part. It would contribute to raising living standards and promoting peaceful achievements. Europe would then be able to focus on one of its essential tasks, the development of the African continent.

A common economic system would emerge from such cooperation, leading to deeper community ties between countries often opposed to each other.

The establishment of such a High Authority whose decisions would bind France, Germany and other members nations would lead towards a European federation necessary for sustained peace, he concluded.[20]

A momentary pause signalled the enormity of what had just been proposed, before the journalists rushed out the doors to their newsrooms.

This was momentous news. In less than three minutes– the time it takes to boil an egg–the minister from Moselle had described a new potential future for Europe. It declared a new relationship of cooperation, mutual respect and partnership between France and Germany, and any other participating nation. Most remarkably, it embraced the

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[20] See Appendix I for full text.

vanquished nation as a full and equal partner, redefining the horizons of the future.

Headlines, editorials and political cartoons in the world's press over the following days hailed the genius and generosity of this plan. *'France takes the nations by surprise',* wrote the *Daily Herald.* The German *Bonner Rundschau* ran the headline, *'Eine Sensation aus Frankreich'. Le Monde* devoted most of the front page to what it called *'une proposition révolutionnaire'*.

The communist *L'Humanité,* however, saw the proposal as a threat to the Soviet Union, a first step towards rebuilding an allied war machine.

The Swiss paper, *Sie und Er*, described the man behind the proposal, as being: sober, lean, bald, without illusions, serious but not without a sense of humour, incorruptible, hard-working, deeply religious, a mite quirky, does not quite fit the image of a statesman of the French Republic. He does not even speak very good French. His mother tongue is German and, unlike most of his compatriots, he has absolutely no ear for music. A confirmed bachelor, Schuman admits quite openly that he is intimidated by women. In the Third Republic, he would have been unthinkable. That he is today playing such an important role is symptomatic of the transformation that France has undergone, of how fundamentally modest it has become.

The paper continued:

Schuman is not ... corrupt like so many ministers of the Third Republic, he is not grandiloquent and unbending like de Gaulle, nor does he share the dazzle and wit of Bidault; he is straight and honest—nothing more nor less. A politician who eschews trickery and affectation is a rarity, and an agreeable one at that—and not only in French politics.[21]

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[21] www.ena.lu

Almost a year passed before the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), as proposed by the Schuman Plan, eventually became legal reality through the Treaty of Paris on April 15, 1951.

Many details had still to be negotiated with the participating nations, including Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. This task was primarily managed by Monnet, with Schuman's oversight from a distance. It was the first example in world history of nations voluntarily subordinating their sovereignty to each other to create a supranational entity ruled by law.

Negotiations, while far from straight-forward and exploring unknown territory, were greatly eased by the common faith and vision for Europe held by Schuman and Adenauer, and their Italian colleague, prime minister Alcide de Gasperi. Their shared conviction that the new Europe had to be rebuilt on Christian foundations, and that the ECSC was a step towards that vision, was reflected in the prayer retreat the three men held at a Benedictine monastery on the Rhine, before signing the Paris treaty.

Jean Monnet became the first President of the High Authority (succeeded today by the European Commission). This was one of four pillars envisioned by Schuman for the new Europe, along with the Council of Ministers, the Common Assembly (now the European Parliament) and the Court of Justice (in Luxembourg).

Many of the strategies which have guided the process of European integration were embryonically present in the original Schuman Plan. By moving ahead with a core minority of nations, a 'two-speed' approach to integration has enabled the relatively rapid growth of what began on May 9, 1950, into a 28-nation union sixty-five years later.

My generation, and that of my military-age children, are the first generations in western Europe who have not known internal war for a very long time. Unlike the generations of our parents and grandparents, our families no longer mourn loved ones lost in European wars among EU member states.

For sixty-five years, this bold plan has indeed made war impossible among the member states.

And for that historic breakthrough, we ought to thank God!

2. Arrest and Escape

What life experiences and influences shaped Robert Schuman's spiritual passion and internationalist motivation for a reconciled Europe? What chief factors formed his character and outlook? What prepared him to extend his hand to former enemies and build towards a common future?

In his sixty-four years prior to the Declaration of May 9, Schuman was forced by circumstances to change citizenship five times. He experienced first hand two global wars erupting out of the heart of Europe. He witnessed the crushing impact of the Versailles Treaty on the Germans, and of economic depression leading to nationalistic protectionism. He saw the rise of international communism starting with the Russian Revolution at one end of the political spectrum, and of Fascism in Italy and National Socialism in Germany at the other. He was arrested by the Gestapo, and faced being sent to Dachau before escaping into Free France.

Turbulent times formed his life mission to find a stable, just and lasting European framework for a 'community of peoples', partnering in freedom, equality, solidarity and peace.

His father, Jean-Pierre Schuman, from French Lorraine, was himself captured by the Prussian army in its successful 1870 campaign against the French. Rather than remain under Prussian rule after the war, he left Lorraine for Luxembourg just across the border, where he met and married a local girl, Eugenie Duren.

Robert Schuman, their only child, was born in Luxembourg in 1886. From his youngest years, Robert played in the ploughed furrows on his uncle's farm straddling the border of Luxembourg and Prussian Lorraine, instilling a lifelong awareness of being a 'border person', as he later described it.

A devout Catholic, his mother raised young Robert in her pious faith, accompanying him regularly to Mass and guiding his reading programme in devotional literature. Mother-son ties deepened further after his father died at the turn of the century, when Robert was only fourteen. Together they studied books from the growing library his mother encouraged him to collect.

Robert left home to study for a year in Metz, followed by university in Berlin, where he helped found a chapter of Unitas, a socially-engaged Catholic student organisation. More study in Bonn, Munich and Strasbourg finally gained him a law doctorate in 1910.

But the rosy future beckoning the promising 25-year-old lawyer with his new legal practice in Metz was shattered one summer's day in 1911. News arrived that horses bolting at a wedding reception had knocked his mother to the ground and killed her.

This tragic loss triggered thoughts about 'leaving the world' to enter the priesthood. One of his role models as a young adult was Abbot Bentzler of the Maria Laach Abbey, a Benedictine monk whom Schuman respected as a godly man. The quiet lifestyle of devotion, contemplation and study was to appeal to him all his life long. Now, alone in the world, this option seemed particularly attractive.

Schuman confided his thoughts by letter to a friend in Strasbourg. While he could not imagine a better apostle than Schuman, replied Henri Eschbach, '*les saints de l'avenir seront*

des saints en veston'–the saints in the coming age will be saints in civvies.

Believing that God guided individuals personally, Schuman took this advice as divine encouragement to 'aid atheists to live rather than Christians to die'.

Study in Germany had exposed Schuman to the impact of Chancellor Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* against the Catholic church from 1871 to 1878, and helped him see the need for legal skills to defend religious tolerance.[22]

The watershed encyclical by Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum,* articulating Catholic social doctrine, had shaped his own belief of the need for a tolerant and just society based on an economy that served mankind, not the other way around.

Freshly motivated, Schuman threw himself into social activities. As the Metz Diocese youth leader, he helped to organise the 1913 German Catholic Congress in Metz.

The following year, war broke out once more between France and Germany, and spread quickly to embroil other nations. Failing his medical test, Schuman was exempted from German military service and was assigned to administrative work. Off-duty time was spent helping refugees and prisoners, and mobilising connections in his Catholic charity networks.

German defeat in 1918 saw Alsace-Lorraine once more return to French rule. Schuman's friends urged him to run for the French parliament to represent Moselle. While he had

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[22] Bismarck sought to establish the secular identity of the newly founded German Empire through political control over the Roman Catholic Church. Clergy resisting the *Kulturkampf* were arrested or dismissed. At one stage, half of the Prussian bishops were imprisoned or exiled, one in four parishes without a priest, half the monks and nuns had left Prussia, a third of the monasteries and convents were closed, 1800 parish priests were imprisoned or exiled, and thousands of laypeople were imprisoned for helping the priests. *(Source:Wikipedia)*

little ambition for a political career, he recognised the opportunity to work toward a just and tolerant society as envisioned in *Rerum Novarum.*

As a deputy at age thirty-three, Schuman found himself responsible for reconciling the Bismarckian laws of the 'lost provinces' of Alsace and Lorraine with French metropolitian law. Paris proposed enforced secularisation of education, for example, and alignment with national social security.

Most Alsace-Lorrainers believed that Bismarck had given them a superior social insurance which they did not want to forfeit. Schuman agreed. Despite the *Kulturkampf*, the Germans had also allowed Catholics, Protestants and Jews to run their own schools in Alsace-Lorraine. Schuman fought vigorously for their democratic right to follow their own conscience and choose their religion and education.

Schuman warned Paris that the centralising policy would be undemocratic and would become 'a grave source of trouble for which we can take no responsibility'.

To this day, the resulting law guaranteeing liberties and advantages unique in France to this region is known as *Lex Schuman*.

His network of former student friends in various German cities and broad contacts through his Catholic social work gave him an internationalist outlook, making him wary of nationalist sentiment, French or German. He recognised in others a solidarity with those of common faith and goodwill towards humanity in general. International congresses he attended, both Catholic and diplomatic, reinforced his conviction for the need to promote understanding and cooperation, partnership and respect among nations.

His competency, modesty and integrity, and his ability to listen, earned him a respect from both supporters and

opponents which ensured his repeated re-election, until war broke out once more.

The advance of German forces invading France in May 1940, and sweeping around the 'impregnable' Maginot Line, forced waves of refugees to head westward from Lorraine. Schuman was then brought into the government led at the time by Paul Reynaud. As Undersecretary for Refugees, his task was to provide food, refuge and medical attention for his fellow Lorrainers.

After June 14, when German troops entered Paris, Reynaud resigned and the French government was forced to sign an armistice agreement with the invaders. World War One hero Marshal Pétain became the new head of state, aged 84, agreeing to give Nazi Germany the north and west of the country, including Paris, but leaving the south and east unoccupied. The administrative centre of the new government moved to the resort town of Vichy, in the central region near Clermont-Ferrand, 300 kilometres south of Paris.

It was clear to Schuman that Pétain was Hitler's puppet, and refused to accept any role in the new regime. The old marshal quickly assumed near-absolute powers. He used these to dismantle republican ideals of 'liberty, equality and fraternity' in favour of a 'a social hierarchy'. Vichy France quickly subsided into an authoritarian, pater-nalistic, anti-internationalist and reactionary Catholic state, in which opponents were regularly imprisoned.

Meanwhile, Schuman joined a small group of refugees returning to Lorraine, now occupied by the Germans. He wanted to witness first-hand the conditions there to report back to the government. More urgently, he wanted to destroy any incriminating correspondence which could compromise his German contacts.

Once in Metz, he spent the summer in energetic defense of the local population against the occupiers. As autumn arrived, Schuman's planned to return to Paris.

These plans were abruptly ended when the Gestapo arrested him. He was the first French member of Parliament to suffer this indignity.

Seven long months in solitary confinement followed, 'relieved' only by sessions of harsh cross-examination. The similarity of his background and convictions to those of Adenauer had not gone unnoticed. His interrogators tried to construe that Schuman's visit to Cologne in 1932, where Adenauer was mayor, proved the two men were in conspiratorial contact. In fact, they did not meet until after the war.

Schuman's visit to Austria in 1938, when he had met with many prominent citizens ousted by Hitler, also was the subject of extended cross-examination.

Then a new *Reichskommissar*, Josef Bürknel, arrived. His reputation as a 'brutal and efficient autocrat' had been earned as *Kommissar* in Austria following the Anschluss.

Bürknel had plans for his high-profile prisoner. He transferred him to house arrest under police surveillance in Neustadt in the Rhineland, scheming to 'turn' Schuman with his large popular following in Lorraine to support the Nazi regime. That strategy had often worked in Austria.

The *Reichskommissar* probed for weaknesses and grounds for blackmail. He tried to cower his prisoner into cooperation by threatening to send him to Dachau, the feared concentration camp near Munich.

As a close associate of SS chief Heinrich Himmler, Bürknel was no doubt well-informed about the 'Final Solution' policy to exterminate Europe's Jewry. In Austria, Bürknel had

introduced anti-semitic measures to syphon Jewish wealth into Nazi coffers.

Some have speculated that during these interrogation sessions, Bürknel may have boasted of his absolute powers over Austria's Jews to intimidate Schuman, devulging details of the genocide underway at the time.

Bürknel tried coaxing Schuman with offers of high office. He asked his prisoner for an article to be published in German, on any topic. The simple appearance of an article under his name would be useful Nazi propaganda giving the appearance of complicity on behalf of this leading Lorrainer of high reputation.

Schuman for his part shrewdly played the conversations to gather as much information as possible about developments in Nazi Germany. As Bürknel tried to win Schuman's cooperation, the Gestapo leader allowed his prisoner a limited freedom of movement, under the watch of guards.

Ever the keen listener, Schuman gleaned all the information he could from local townfolk and libraries. He made clandestine contact with visiting alumni and professors of the Metz seminary and with the Lorraine and German resistance. His training in statistics at the University of Munich helped him put together a picture of German casualties on the eastern front and diminishing material resources. As early as 1942, he concluded that Allied victory was a statistical certainty. Germany had lost already 1.2 million men. At least another three or four million had been immobilised through injury or disease. Defeat was a matter of time.

Schuman knew this information, and that of the genocide being conducted against the Jews across the continent, had to reach the free world. He had to find a way to escape from his house arrest. That would be no small undertaking. Free

France was hundreds of kilometres away across occupied territory. And there would be a price on his head.

Through his underground connections, he arranged for false papers in the name of Monsieur Cordonnier (French for 'cobbler' or 'schuman'). On August 1, 1942, taking advantage of the relaxed guard, he slipped away unnoticed. Knowing the region well, and with many friends and contacts, he found shelter in convents and monasteries, travelling by foot through forest tracks towards Free France.

As he expected, a massive manhunt was launched immediately to track him down in the Rhineland, throughout Alsace and Lorraine, and in occupied France. A reward of 100,000 Reichmarks was offered for his arrest.

Thirteen days, seven hundred kilometres and several narrow escapes later, 'Cordonnier' safely crossed the demarcation line into Free France at Montmorillon, east of Poitiers.

He pressed on to Ligugé, just south of Poitiers, to call on the abbot of St Martin's, Dom Basset, to deliver his shocking message of the systematic destruction of the Jews.

Dom Basset recorded the conversation himself as follows: There are no more Jews in the Ukraine. Men, women and children have been separated and taken. Men and women have been transported to concentration camps. Often they are sent with hardly any water and without food. They are left to die of starvation and cold. They are often made to dig huge trenches and they are then shot in front of them. They are set on fire with petrol, then covered in lime and earth. The Polish Jews are often destroyed by such radical methods. They are transported, separating father, mothers and children. When the German populations are transported, the families are transferred. The same goes also for those from Alsace-Lorraine. But they had to leave

without taking practically anything with them, leaving their country, and finding themselves in very difficult conditions.[23]

Basset was probably the first person in the free world to hear news about the holocaust from a reliable source. As suggested, Schuman may have gleaned some of this information directly from high Nazi officials.

Schuman moved on to Vichy. He felt a duty to tell Pétain himself what he knew, whether or not he would listen. Pétain had wanted Schuman to serve in his government and Schuman had refused. Would Pétain be prepared to listen to him now? Even if he would not, the Allied powers had set up embassies at Vichy after the move south from Paris and they needed to hear.

It took Schuman all his persuasive powers to penetrate the inner circles protecting Pétain. At last he was able to catch him at a dinner for a few minutes and report about the destruction of Jews.

Pétain remained stoney-faced and unmoved. After all, among his first decrees the marshall himself had excluded Jews from government, and from the liberal professions such as medicine and law.

Among the public, however, news of Schuman's escape created great excitement, especially for the refugees from Alsace-Lorraine. Schuman addressed public meetings attended by up to 1500. He had news that was 'grave, full of hope, deep and spiritual'. His message that Allied victory was just a matter of time boosted morale greatly. Germany was certain to lose the war, he told attentive crowds in Lyon and other centres. His listeners heard how that his imprisonment had enabled him to investigate Germany's enormous losses on the eastern front, and gather specific

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[23] Notes by Dom Abbot, from *'Robert Schuman's Warning on Nazi Destruction of the Jews*', see bibliography.

numbers and details. The war was not sustainable. Sooner or later, Germany would have to capitulate.

He also described the Nazi enslavement of Germans as well as other peoples. Yet records of these meetings are not clear how much if anything Schuman said publically about the Jewish extermination.

He met up with many old colleagues and trusted friends, and most certainly would have shared with them what he had told Dom Basset, a virtual stranger.

Schuman had made his escape none too soon. The comparative freedom of the Vichy territory was to be short-lived, for within weeks the Germans invaded the unoccupied rump of France. Now the SS were free to search more intensively.

De Gaulle (a fellow undersecretary in the Reynaud government) invited Schuman to join him in the government-in-exile in London. Instead, he elected to stay in France, secluded in the orphange of La Providence de Beaupont in Bourg.

Yet his enforced withdrawal from public life gave him opportunity to reflect, research and plan for the reconstruction of Europe once the expected end arrived.[24]

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[24] After the war, Pétain was tried and convicted for treason, and sentenced to death before a firing squad. De Gaulle later commuted the sentence to life imprisonment in view of heroic WWI service. Pétain maintained he had saved France for ultimate survival and had assured Hitler's defeat by establishing the Vichy government, thus hampering his access to Africa. (Keyserlingk, p4)

3. God and Caesar

Unknown to Schuman, others in seclusion, exile or internment also were grasping the opportunity to study, think, dream and prepare for the post-war years.

Already in 1933, Konrad Adenauer, when deposed as Lord Mayor of Cologne by Hitler after refusing to hoist the Nazi flag, had taken refuge for a year in the Maria Laach Abbey, familiar also to Schuman. He spent much of his time in hiding re-reading and studying the same papal encyclicals that had shaped much of Schuman's social thought.

While a prisoner of war in America, Walter Hallstein, a German Protestant, studied American federalism. He would later become the first president of the European Economic Community.[25]

Others serving in London-based governments-in-exile for Belgium, Holland, France and Poland also wrestled with workable options for the future. Invariably these involved compromises between national sovereignty and international cooperation.

Schuman had much time for sorting through the many visions and plans proposed for Europe over the centuries, asking where things had gone wrong, and seeking to apply Christian teaching and principles to concrete solutions.

William Penn, for example, in the seventeenth century, had proposed a Concert of Europe, even designing an oval meeting room with no head chair, and insisting that Turkey have a seat at the table. Abbé de Saint Pierre and Immanuel

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[25] From 1958-67, when he enjoyed an influence equal to the later Jacques Delors (1985-94).

Kant in the eighteenth century, and still more visionaries in the nineteenth century, had suggested forms of political unions for the nations of Europe.

Lord Acton had taught that federalism protected minorities and defended against overbearing states, with capability for 'unlimited extension' to European and global levels. His contemporary at Cambridge, Professor Sidgwick, had seen European federalism to be 'the most probable prophecy'.

Albert Einstein, at the time of the First World War, had supported the idea of a supranational European union. A Pan-European Union had been posited in the 1920's by Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, author of *Paneuropa*. Aristide Briand, Schuman's predecessor as foreign minister at the time of the League of Nations, had also proposed 'some kind of federal bond' among the European states.

Yet none of these proposals had taken on any concrete form.

In 1930, Winston Churchill had written in the *Saturday Evening Post* about a 'United States of Europe', in which European citizens could identify themselves as French, Dutch, German and Spanish, as well as being Europeans and world citizens.

Later, even as the Germans were invading France in June 1940, Prime Minister Churchill had presided over a remarkable cabinet meeting considering a plan for an 'indissoluble' political union with France. Two nations would become one; a single war cabinet would oversee all armed forces; citizenship would be shared. A prime mover of this plan was Jean Monnet, having been appointed by the prime ministers of both Britain and France on the outbreak of war to coordinate the purchase of international arms.

In typical Churchillian style, the prime minister had rounded off his presentation of the proposal with a confident

'and thus we shall conquer!', echoed by a unanimous *'Hear! Hear!'*

Historian Arnold Toynbee was one of many prominent Britons supporting a federal union. His study of history had led him to conclude that Britain should federate in the context of Europe.[26] 'The spirit of Nationality is a sour ferment of the new wine of Democracy in the old bottles of Tribalism,' he had argued. A new age was dawning in which existing states would be seen as 'parochial and subordinate'.

Surprising as it may be to the modern reader, *The Manchester Guardian, The Times,* and *New Statesman* were just some of the newspapers supporting federal union with France, alongside public figures like scientist Julian Huxley and Archbishop William Temple. Even the arch-nationalist De Gaulle lent his support to the plan, obviously not with federalist motives.

But it was too late. While French premier Reynaud wanted to accept Churchill's offer, his cabinet chose for capitulation.

Reynaud resigned. Pétain came to power.

Ah, Pétain! How he had wanted Schuman with his reputation for trustworthiness and honesty to lend respectability to his cabinet! The marshall still had a place waiting for him. Trustworthiness and honesty, however, was what kept Schuman from working with a collaborator.

Pétain's Catholicism was reactionary and intolerant to those of other persuasions. Schuman's own devotion was to the God and Father of all humans, all races and all nationalities, whose Son had died for all.

Here was the basis for tolerance and equality rejected by Pétain. It had profound political implications. Yes, Schuman understood the difference between the realms of the Church

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[26] Toynbee, 1934-61

and State. The role of the Church was not to engage directly in the political issues and processes of the State, a mistake often repeated in past ages. 'Christianity is not and must not integrate into a political system; it must not be identified with any form of government, however democratic it might be,' he wrote. 'We must distinguish between what belongs to Caesar and what belongs to God.'[27]

Nevertheless, Schuman's faith instructed and motivated all his political action. *Lex Schuman,* for example, had embodied a tolerance for different faiths based on this biblical principle of equality. If Christianity taught that all were equal by nature, and all were children of the same God 'regardless of race, colour, social status or profession',[28] states too should be treated as equals. The universal law of love and charity made every man our neighbour, he continued, and social relations in the Christian world had been based on this ever since. No race or nation could claim greater importance in God's eyes.[29]

Here also was the reason for Schuman's discomfort with De Gaulle's nationalism and the refusal of his invitation to go to London.

The roots of true democracy–the principle of equality, the practice of brotherly love, individual freedom, respect for the rights of the individual–all came from Christ's teachings, in Schuman's understanding. Democracy owed its existence to Christianity, he argued. Practical application of those teachings had transformed Europe through the centuries, resulting in liberal democracy.[30] Democracy could not be

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[27] Schuman, 1963, p46

[28] Schuman, p44

[29] On this same basis Schuman later expressed the importance of states beyond Europe, as in his reference to Africa in the Schuman Declaration.

[30] Schuman, p43

improvised; it had taken Europe over a thousand years of Christianity to fashion it.

Christian principles had become the features of our civilisation, to which the seventeenth century rationalists owed their human and citizens' rights, he posited, 'which are essentially Christian'.

Schuman quoted from Henri Bergson and Jacques Maritain[31], two contemporary Catholic philosophers, explaining his understanding of democracy. Like Bergson, he had concluded that democracy was 'essentially Evangelical', since love was its mainspring. 'Democracy will either be Christian or it will not be. An anti-Christian democracy will be a parody which will sink into tyranny or into anarchy.'[32]

Crude democracy of the Hellenistic age based only on majority voting would end in a 'tyranny of the majority'. True democracy required servanthood: serving the people and acting in agreement with the people. The goals had to start with peace and the means had to be works of peace.

'Loving your neighbour as yourself' was a democratic principle which, applied to nations, meant being prepared to serve and love neighbouring peoples.

For Schuman, a future, united Europe naturally had to be both Christian and democratic. The European story was deeply rooted in the Christian story. Cut off from those roots, Europe would lose the foundations for equality, human dignity, tolerance and compassion.

The democrat could not accept the state ignoring or opposing religion; for the state could not ignore the extraordinary effectiveness of religious inspiration in the

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[31] Maritain was a prominent drafter of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and a mentor for Pope Paul VI.

[32] Schuman, p51

practice of civic duty and in the protection against forces of social disintegration at work everywhere.

Over more than a thousand years before the Enlightenment revived Greco-Roman classical traditions, Christ's teachings had deeply impacted Europe's diverse tribes: Greek, Latin, Celtic, Germanic, Slavic, Magyar and Nordic, among many others. Diverse cultures had been woven into a common, albeit imperfect, Christian entity.

Obviously pride, selfishness and greed had blemished whole chapters of this story, often dismissed as 'the Dark Ages'. In truth, these were centuries when many lights went on as monastic movements like the Celts and the Benedictines fanned out across Europe to found communities which became the building blocks of the emerging civilisation. Schuman had found refuge in some of these very communities in his flight to freedom.

From these monasteries had come Europe's great universities and other centres of learning, led by scholar-monks.

Arts and music, politics and law, language and literature, hospitality and medical care, architecture and agriculture, schools and social institutions had all been shaped directly and indirectly through the centuries by the spread of Christ's teaching and the Bible.

Modern times however had brought fresh challenges for the role of the church in an industrialised Europe. Simple Christian charity was no longer enough to cope with the systemic inequalities arising from the new social and economic forces at work, pitting worker against owner, class against class.

These were challenges Pope Leo had addressed in his watershed encyclical of 1891, *Rerum Novarum,* calling for a

new solidarity in society based on God's love for all the human family.

The Church needed to help the people respond to the new tensions in society. Neither socialism stressing class struggle, nor liberalism focussing on individualism, was the answer. Reconciliation and solidarity had to prevail.

The state had a responsibility to govern for the common good, the encyclical taught, respecting the various communities within society under the principle of *subsidiarity*.

Decisions therefore had to be made as locally as possible, allowing as much autonomy for the smaller communities and associations making up society. 'As much government as necessary, as little government as possible', in other words.

Solidarity, subsidiarity and equality were therefore all values based on Christ's teaching, in Schuman's view. Applied to the community of peoples, forgiveness and reconciliation–even with those presently seen as the enemy–were Christian imperatives.

This, he believed, had to be the way forward for post-war Europe. Political and economic structures would need to be built at all levels, local, national and European, on the democratic principle of 'loving your neighbour' applied to states and peoples.

The atrocities against the Jews of which he had learned, still being perpetrated as Schuman sat out the war, would have to be rendered impossible by international guarantees for human rights. Such rights, rooted in the biblical teaching of *Imago Dei*–that each person was made in the Creator's image–included the right to those things without which humans could not adequately function: food, shelter, clothing, education and relationships. Once more, the

imperative to guarantee human rights was rooted in the command to love one's neighbour.

Schuman was aware that this quiet season of seclusion, study, reflection and preparation would soon give way to decisive times calling for urgent action in a Europe desperate for fresh direction.

News eventually filtered through of the D-Day landings in June 1944. Hope rose that liberation would soon follow.

One day in August, children from the orphanage returned from a walk babbling excitedly about having seen American soldiers. No-one believed them until they began pulling chewing gum, chocolate, and even canned milk and corned beef from their pockets!

The next day, the townsfolk of Bourg poured out into the streets jubilant at their liberation. Schuman emerged out of his seclusion in the small room at the end of the corridor to share in the joy of the moment.

Allied troops entered Paris on August 19. It was a matter of time before Berlin would fall, Schuman knew, and the Third Reich would be shattered.

He quickly made his way to Paris where he was asked to advise the liberation government on affairs in Lorraine. Soon he discovered, however, that he had enemies in high places. When the Minister of War noticed Schuman listed as a government employee, he immediately ordered 'this product of Vichy' to be dimissed.

Other government officials encouraged him however to return to the Moselle region, seconding him a jeep and an army officer for protection. As the city of Metz was still under German control, Schuman had to find residence in a neighbouring town.

Within days, he was tracked down from Paris with a summons for his arrest, and charges of collaboration with the enemy while he had been in Germany during the war.

Friends advised him to disregard the summons, warning him of purges that communists and nationalists were carrying out, motivated by personal and political revenge.

Meanwhile, Metz was now liberated. Schuman found himself immediately appointed to the Liberation Committee, and began working to restore the ruptured life of the city.

His reputation in his home district, unsullied by rumours from Paris, comfortably won him a seat in the newly reconstituted national assembly. Then, no doubt to the chagrin of his accusers, the name of Robert Schuman was announced as Finance Minister of the first post-war cabinet.

This was to be the beginning of a prominent career in a succession of French cabinets over the next decade, successively as minister of Finance, Foreign Affairs and Justice. One year and two governments later, Robert Schuman was appointed Prime Minister, a role he held during the tumultuous year of 1947-8.

For a short season, he simultaneously held the portfolio of foreign minister, before leaving the premier's office to focus on the task closest to his heart.

These positions enabled him to initiate what he saw as a new era in which European nations would be held accountable to uphold basic human rights. No longer would it be possible for 'state gangsterism' to repeat the atrocities of Dachau and Auschwitz, and the persecution of minorities. He proposed establishing a Council of Europe to which all European democracies would be invited to join, submitting themselves to supranational law guaranteeing human rights. These rights were spelt out in what is now called the

European Convention on Human Rights.[33] A New Europe would be defined by the borders of the nations forming this council.

On May 5, 1949, Schuman gathered with leaders of ten European nations in St James Palace, London, to sign the statutes of the Council of Europe.[34]

Even as he signed on behalf of France, Schuman knew that, as necessary as the Council was to protect human rights, further measures were necessary. At the press conference in London, he talked of the need of a supranational association or union of democracies to 'make war impossible'. The past bloody centuries, with their deadly harvest of nationalisms and rivalries, had brought the planet to the brink of suicide. They had to cede to a new era of supranational unions of democracies focussed on peace.

This, he believed, would promote both spiritual and political growth. It would involve a great 'European experiment' rooted in the democratic principle of 'loving your neighbour as yourself' applied to peoples and nations.

Eleven days later in Strasbourg, Schuman returned to the theme of a 'supranational union', talking of a great experiment, a dream that for ten centuries had revisited the peoples of Europe, to create an organisation to end war and guarantee peace.

The Roman church of the Middle Ages had failed, he said, along with attempts by German emperors, and 'the unacceptable pretentions of a *Führertum* whose "charms" we have all experienced.'

Schuman continued: "The European spirit signifies being conscious of belonging to a cultural family and to have a

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[33] See Appendix III

[34] Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom were the founding signatories.

willingness to serve that community in the spirit of total mutuality, without any hidden motives of hegemony or the selfish exploitation of others. The 19th century saw feudal ideas being opposed and, with the rise of a national spirit, nationalities asserting themselves.

"Our century, that has witnessed the catastrophes resulting in the unending clash of nationalities and nationalisms, must attempt and succeed in reconciling nations in a supranational association. This would safeguard the diversities and aspirations of each nation while coordinating them in the same manner as the regions are coordinated within the unity of the nation."

Yet the more Schuman promoted this theme, the more he felt a growing inner frustration, despite all the progress made in the few short years since the end of the war towards the goals he had identified during his seclusion.

The Council of Europe was in itself a major step towards the protection of human rights. He had represented France in Washington the month before to sign the North Atlantic Treaty and witness the birth of the military alliance that would bring stability to the West well into the following century. The Marshall Plan had already been under way a year, helping European countries to modernise business and industry, lower trade barriers and promote hope and self-reliance.

Yes, these were all essential factors in the rebuilding of a devastated and exhausted Europe.

But, Schuman felt, two things were still missing.

One, was the political will-power and framework for a 'supranational union'. While to Schuman it was clear what steps had to be undertaken to build a new Europe, others were not so convinced; least of all his own successor as

prime minister, Georges Bidault. He felt little support from his own government for the task ahead.

The second was the personal will-power for deep, inner change, from the inside-out. All the help from America, economically and militarily, he knew, could never compel French and Germans, or Europeans in general, to 'love their neighbours as themselves'.

4. Apostles of Reconciliation

While still prime minister, Schuman had heard reports of such inner change from a conversation on a train in the spring of 1948. Louis Boucquey, an industrialist from Lille in the north of France, had told him of a remarkable reversal in attitude in the secretary of an employers' federation after attending a conference the year before in a mountain village in Switzerland called Caux.

As tensions between government, labour union officials, miners and factory workers had threatened to boil over into civil war, several hundred leaders from mines and textile factories had met on the coast near Calais. The spirit of Caux had prevailed at this meeting, Boucquey had told Schuman, resulting in a new climate of trust, reconciliation and cooperation.

Schuman asked the industrialist if he could learn more about these conferences held in Caux. He wanted know more about the global movement behind them called Moral Re-Armament (MRA), initiated by an American Lutheran evangelist named Frank Buchman.[35]

Nearly a year passed when, in March 1949, Boucquey invited Schuman to his home on the outskirts of Paris to a private dinner with two close colleagues of Buchman. Schuman was now the foreign minister, and was preparing to leave for Washington to sign the North Atlantic Treaty the following month.

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[35] This chapter is largely based on Lean, 1985, p375-84, and Mottu, 1970

One of the dinner guests, a Swiss diplomat named Philippe Mottu, was one of the prime movers of the Caux story. He could tell first-hand of the conversion of a famous hotel into a Centre for the Reconciliation of the Nations immediately after the war.

High above Montreux, Caux Palace commanded a magnificent view over the eastern end of Lake Geneva towards the French Alps. Switzerland's largest and most prestigious hotel when built in 1902, it had been purchased by ninety-five Swiss Christian families associated with MRA. They had sacrificially given family jewels, life insurance policies, holiday money and even houses, to buy the now run-down asylum for war refugees. Re-named *Mountain House*, the palace had quickly become a haven for healing the past and forging the future.

For decades before the war, Frank Buchman had preached a message of submission to God's will for individuals and families, for kings, presidents and even nations. Now, after the turbulent war years, Buchman and members of MRA focussed on the task of remaking the post-war world through forgiveness and reconciliation.

When Buchman visited Mountain House in the summer of 1946, an excited delegation of young volunteers from across Europe had assembled in the cavernous reception hall to greet him. Some were dressed in national costume. Buchman looked around at all the faces and costumes, and then in a loud voice asked: "Where are the Germans?"

Everybody fell suddenly silent. A full year had passed since hostilities had ceased, but Buchman's question still shocked many of those present.

"Some of you think that Germany has got to change, and that is true. But you will never be able to rebuild Europe without the Germans!" said Buchman emphatically.

Like Schuman, Buchman believed that if Germany was not embraced by Christian forgiveness and reconciliation, godless forces of anarchy or communism would fill the post-war vacuum.

No doubt Mottu told Schuman over dinner how, in 1947, the first of what would become thousands of leading German citizens had been given special permission by the Allied authorities to travel to Caux to meet their opposite numbers from Europe and other continents. The message of forgiveness and reconciliation taught by Buchman and his colleagues had affected them deeply.

At the last summer's event, in 1948, four hundred and fifty Germans had visited Caux, among them Konrad Adenauer.[36] Immediately the future chancellor had recognised the power and timeliness of this message for his own people. He had invited MRA teams to share the message of forgiveness through travelling musical shows and arranged a series of official receptions for Buchman.

Schuman would have resonated strongly with these reports. Here obviously was a message that produced the inner change he so longed to see!

But his fellow guests were equally interested to hear the minister's views on the forthcoming Atlantic Pact. How effective would the treaty really be?

Schuman spoke candidly. If the treaty could only touch the political and military realms, it would prove defective.

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[36] A total of 3113 Germans took part in the Caux meetings 1946-50, including 83 government members, 400 trade unionists, 210 industrialists, 14 clergy (including bishops & theologians), 160 media representatives, 35 educationalists (including university rectors and professors) and 11 members of the Adenauer family.

Bombs and weapons alone were not enough. Inner change in the West's way of life was needed.

"We need to give fresh ideological content to the life of the millions of Europe," he told his fellow dinner-guests. Then he added, "We all need to reach a deep inner change in order to find the solutions to our major problems."

Boucquey recognised how much Schuman's language resonated with that of Dr Buchman in his many speeches that had been collated in a book called, *Remaking the World*. On the spur of the moment, Boucquey asked his guest if he would write the foreword to a French edition of Buchman's book.

Schuman accepted, although it would be early the next year before he would have opportunity to write it.

Later, after hearing about the dinner conversation, Buchman wrote to Schuman inviting him to visit Caux that summer, if possible at the same time as Konrad Adenauer. Both men were eager to do so.

As it turned out, political duties hindered them both from meeting each other at Caux that summer of 1949.

In fact, the summer proved to be discouraging and frustrating for Schuman, with fruitless meetings in Paris about German reunification. All his efforts to move his French colleagues towards the idea of a united Europe were being thwarted by nationalistic or traditional perspectives.

When that fall another dinner invitation arrived from Louis Boucquey, this time to meet with Frank Buchman, a rather discouraged Schuman was grateful to accept the opportunity.

As the dinner guests began their meal, Boucquey commented on the honour it was to have these two men together at his table, to which Schuman replied:

"If I have contributed anything to mankind, I must also admit that much of my work has been destroyed and frustrated. But Dr Buchman, because he has concentrated his efforts on one section of human life–the most important one–has the joy of seeing them succeed and spread all over the world.

"Statesmen can propose far-reaching plans, but they cannot put them into effect without far-reaching changes in the hearts of people."

Turning to Buchman, he continued: "That is your work, and it is the kind of work I would like to do for the rest of my life."

As the conversation progressed around the table, Schuman felt a growing bond of trust with the evangelist. He turned to Buchman, asking his advice on a matter.

For years, he explained, he had wanted to get out of politics and write about the lessons of his life. He knew a quiet monastery with a library where he would be welcome.

"I could do my best work there. What should I do?"

Looking the Frenchman in the eye, Buchman paused and said, "Monsieur Schuman, what do you think in your heart you should do?"

In one movement, Schuman thrust his hands in the air, leaned back in his chair and laughed.

"Of course! I know I must stay where I am!"

Then he grew serious. Deep in his heart, he knew what he had to do, he confessed. But he was afraid.

He told about his upbringing on the borders of Luxembourg, Germany and Lorraine. He knew the mentality of both the French and the Germans and their problems. He knew he had a major role to play in ending the hatred between the two nations.

"But I shrink from it," he admitted.

Quietly, Buchman told him he had to stay where he was. "Under God, that is your place."

Schuman continued. "I don't know who to trust in the new Germany," adding that he had only just met Adenauer, who the month before had become chancellor of the newly founded Federal Republic of Germany.

Buchman promised to give him a list of a dozen names: "We have some excellent men in Caux!"

Schuman was due to visit Germany officially within a few weeks. "I will look them up," he assured Buchman.

Bonn *Hauptbahnhof* was wintry and almost deserted as the train pulled in on January 13, 1950. The welcoming committee of one solitary figure dressed against the cold turned out to be Chancellor Adenauer himself. Without ceremony he hustled Schuman and his colleague, Jean Monnet, towards the waiting car.

As the car pulled out of the station, Adenauer apologised for his bruskness, but explained that he feared an attack on the French foreign minister. Feelings were running high against the French, he explained, who appeared on the brink of absorbing the Saar.

Schuman's response that he had faith that Germany and France would cooperate in the future eased the atmosphere in the car considerably.

Yet this was not quite the context Schuman had imagined when talking to Buchman about meeting his 'excellent men from Caux'. Schuman had inherited the Saar problem as minister of foreign affairs, and it continued to fester like an open sore. If not delicately handled, it could infect all French-German relationships and thwart all other efforts to bring reconciliation and cooperation.

The Saar, the region along the Saar River valley bordering French Lorraine, was mineral rich and heavily industrialised. With the Ruhr, it had been a major centre of the industrial revolution, and a source of munitions for German armies since the early 1800's. After the war, the Saar had been made a protectorate administered by France. As in other parts of Germany, the victors had systematically dismantled potentially threatening industry, often causing deep resentment on behalf of the Germans.

As victims of three German invasions in 70 years, largely fuelled by Saar industry, the French felt a moral claim to the territory. The large coal deposits made the Saar particularly attractive to France to feed their steel industries over the border in Lorraine.

Now the Saar issue seemed to threaten the one personal relationship on which Schuman had started to build his hopes, based on a common link with a mutual confident, Buchman.

Monnet noted the *atmosphère glacée* at the Bonn meeting in his memoirs, and warned Schuman they could be on the brink of making the same mistake with Germany as after the First World War.

This particular visit did not settle anything concerning the Saar, although the impression lingered with Adenauer that Schuman was open for the region to be returned to Germany one day. Adenauer later described the meeting as ending in an atmosphere of mutual trust.

However, when within two months the French government moved to integrate the Saar into France, Adenauer was greatly upset. When some friends of Buchman visited the chancellor a few weeks later, he could not refrain from calling Schuman a 'lying Alsatian peasant'!

Diplomatically the visitors asked how the chancellor could perhaps change Schuman. Adenauer caught himself, and repeating what he had learnt at Caux said, "I also need to change more myself."

Schuman, too, had cause to reflect on the message of Caux. A mild bout of flu gave him the respite he needed from normal work to write the promised foreword for Buchman's book.

All too aware of the frustrations of politics, Schuman began by admitting that statesmen had only been moderately successful in 'remaking the world'. What Moral Re-Armament brought, however, was a philosophy of life applied in action. In his own words, he then described Buchman's programme:

> To begin by creating a moral climate in which true brotherly unity can flourish, overarching all that today tears the world apart–that is the immediate goal.
>
> The acquisition of wisdom about men and affairs by bringing people together in public assemblies and public encounters–that is the means employed.
>
> To provide teams of trained people, ready for the service of the state, apostles of reconciliation and builders of a new world–that is the beginning of a far-reaching transformation of society in which, during fifteen war-ravaged years, the first steps have already been made.

True brotherly love and far-reaching transformation of society seemed further away than ever, however, as Schuman boarded the train in Paris for a weekend break in his home village of Scy-Chazelles late that April of 1950.

Spring had brought no thaw in the icy relations with the Germans. Schuman felt in an impasse in whatever direction he turned. Both Adenauer and Schuman had the will themselves to act as apostles of reconciliation. But they could

not find the political instrument to overcome what Schuman would later describe as 'the terrible mortgage of fate: fear'. They needed some psychological leap forward, a breach-opener.

The crucial upcoming meeting with his American and British counterparts also weighed on his mind. What positive policy proposal towards Germany could he bring to the table?

Hurried footsteps in the corridor of the carriage interrupted his thoughts. The door to his couchette slid open and he heard the familiar voice of his private secretary: "*Monsieur,* could you read this paper of Monnet's, *s'il vous plait*? *C'est important!*"

MONNET'S PROPOSAL led directly to the Schuman Declaration of May 9, 1950, the high point of Schuman's political career. He remained foreign minister until January 1953, later serving briefly as minister of justice, and then Lord Chancellor.

Schuman finally realised his desire to visit Caux in 1953, and described it as one of the greatest experiences of his life. In recognition of Frank Buchman's contribution towards a 'climate in which the new relationship between France and Germany had been rendered possible', Schuman decorated him as a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. He supported Buchman's work until the evangelist's death in 1961.

Adenauer likewise acknowledged the role of Buchman and the MRA movement by awarding him the German Order of Merit. In an article in the New York Herald-Tribune[37], Adenauer described MRA's role in recent difficult and important international agreements as 'an invisible but effective part in bridging differences of opinion between negotiating parties... Moral Re-Armament has rendered great and lasting service.'

In 1958, Robert Schuman was appointed president of the newly formed European Assembly, later to become the European Parliament. When in 1960 he retired due to his health, he was acclaimed 'Father of Europe' by a standing ovation in the European Parliament. Schuman was awarded many other honours, including the Charlemagne Prize.

Cerebral arteriosclerosis confined him to his house in Scy-Chazelles until his death in 1963, aged 76.

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[37] June 4, 1951

Part Two

5. Whatever happened?

Today's European Union continues to attract member states, has replaced violence by dialogue and upheld peace for sixty-five years. Yet few would claim that it lives up to Schuman's original dream of a 'community of peoples deeply rooted in Christian basic values'. Whatever happened to that dream?

The overwhelming trend in Europe over the past six decades or more has clearly been one of secularisation, and that has been reflected in the general tenor of EU policy-making. Biblical values have been considered by many to be outdated, quaint, passé and irrelevant. Secularists assumed that religion was doomed to die slowly on the sidelines as Europeans grew more enlightened.

That assumption, however, has proved to be ill-founded. Now the term 'post-secular' is being used increasingly to describe our times. God and religion are making a comeback onto the European scene, a subject of much recent debate in the media. Islam's renewed presence in Europe has been but one factor causing the debate on religion and politics to resurface.

A brief survey of the development of the European Union since 1950 will help us understand what happened to the dream.

I. The European Union story, 1950-2010

Schuman's declaration on May 9, 1950, was the dramatic breakthrough that created virtually overnight the conceptual architecture of the European House within which half a billion Europeans live in peace with each other today. It was a modest but concrete step, embryonically containing the elements that would be expanded eventually into today's EU. After much negotiation and consultation, the European Coal and Steel Community was signed into existence through the Paris Treaty on April 18, 1951. France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, Luxemburg and The Netherlands were the founding members.

The institutions established by the Paris Treaty are still the four pillars of the EU today: The High Authority (now the European Commission), the Council of Ministers, the Common Assembly (now the European Parliament) and the Court of Justice.

The initial success of this venture led to the expansion of cooperation among the member states into the European Economic Community (EEC), at the Treaty of Rome in 1957; or more correctly, the Treaties of Rome. For at the same time, treaties were signed for cooperation in developing nuclear energy, the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) and for a customs union.

Behind these developments, French initiative continued to play a key role. This is all the more remarkable given the volatile nature of the contemporary French political scene, with communist and Gaullists agitating on both extremes, while Christian Democrats and socialists cooperated in the mid-field. Fragile pro-European majorities could be sufficiently swayed by the extremes, which led to the rejection of the proposed European Defense Community, denounced by Gaullists as 'the only known example of the

conqueror demanding and obtaining parity with the conquered'.

No sooner had the nationalist De Gaulle become president in 1958, having vigorously opposed all the European treaties, than he surprised all by promptly endorsing them. The logic of his *volte-face* was that the best way to contain France's 'hereditary enemy' was to embrace him.

The complex De Gaulle continued to baffle his European colleagues, simultaneously acting as the most pro- and anti-European of his time. In the 1960s, his commitment to deepen the European project fuelled his fierce opposition to widening it with British entry. The general, who never shared Schuman's conscious Christian values, was consistently hostile to any form of supranational integration and loss of French sovereignty. While declaring support for a strong Europe, a 'European Europe' not controlled by America, his fear of strong European institutions caused him to weaken the decision-making process. Some blame De Gaulle for delaying the European project some twenty years, and greatly increasing europaralysis.

In 1967, the communities of the Treaties of Rome were merged into a collective identity called the European Communities, more commonly the European Community (EC), through the Merger Treaty.

Following De Gaulle in 1973, President Pompidou welcomed the first new intake of members: Denmark, Ireland and the UK. Never bosom-buddies with his leftist West German counterpart Willy Brandt, the Frenchman fell back on a balance-of-power mentality, seeing Britain as a counterweight to German influence, and sandbagging any supranational development in the community.

However, his successor, Giscard d'Estaing, renewed Franco-German relationships the following year working

with Helmut Schmidt to move the community forward economically and politically. The European Monetary System was set up, linking the currencies of participating members, a first step towards the later introduction of the Euro. In 1979, voters in member states had their first opportunity to vote directly on a European level in elections to the European Parliament.

In 1981, Greece became the tenth member of the EC. That same year, the rising politician who had succeeded Schuman as Minister of Justice in 1956, Francois Mitterand, was voted into the French presidency in 1981. Mitterand, then over sixty years old, was to become the longest serving French president, until 1995.

Unlike Schuman, Mitterand was happy to serve in the Vichy regime. Yet after the war he joined a French delegation to Caux, even before Schuman's visit. One commentator described his life as 'played out under an immense question mark', and as a man who 'did not accept the principle of contradiction'.[38]

Mitterand initiated grandiose architectural monuments in Paris, such as the Grand Arc de la Defense, large enough to totally encompass Notre Dame Cathedral. In his book *The Cube and the Cathedral,* George Weigel interprets this 'monument' as a deliberate humanistic statement of the superiority of reason over faith, and reflecting a secular culture 'downright hostile' to Christianity. 'European man has convinced himself that in order to be modern and free, he must be radically secular,' Weigel writes. 'That conviction and its public consequences are at the root of Europe's contemporary crisis of civilizational morale.'

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[38] Jean-Louis Bourlanges, in Bond, Smith & Wallace, 1996, p. 130-132

Eurosclerosis peaked in the mid-80's. Enlargement was on hold. A democratic deficit, economic problems and British vetoes on EU projects produced widespread apathy and pessimism.

A welcome sea-change came however in 1985 with the arrival of Jacques Delors in Brussels as the president of the European Commission. The International Herald Tribune credited Delors with rescuing the EC from the doldrums:

> 'He arrived when Europessimism was at its worst. Although he was a little-known former French finance minister, he breathed life and hope into the EC and into the dispirited Brussels Commission. In his first term, from 1985 to 1988, he rallied Europe to the call of the single market, and when appointed to a second term he began urging Europeans toward the far more ambitious goals of economic, monetary and political union.'[39]

Soon after his arrival, the Schengen Agreement opened borders without passport controls between several member and non-member states. The following year Spain and Portugal became members, doubling the original size and adding further momentum to the European project.

Delors presided over the European Commission for three terms, 1985-1994, the longest of any president. His commissions are seen by many as the most successful in EU history. He introduced qualified majority voting to break the strangehold of the veto through which one member state could impede progress. His first commission injected new momentum into the process of European integration, and laid further foundations for the Euro.

He came to personify the European project, and instilled widespread faith and trust into its future direction.

Mitterand was still French president and Delors, his former minister of economics, president of the European

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[39] Giles Merritt, writing in the IHT, Jan 21, 1992.

Commission, when the Iron Curtain fell in November 1989, totally reshaping the political landscape both of Europe and the world.

Despite the resistance of some anxious French politicians (who said they loved Germany so much they preferred two of them), the two Germanies reunited, opening the way for further expansion of the EU.

With a number of former communist satellite nations seeking the safety, welfare and values of the European Community, the Copenhagen Criteria were agreed on for membership, and negotiations began. Each applicant had to have achieved 'stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union'.

Delors and his commissioners prepared the way for the Maastricht Treaty, after which the community formally became known as the European Union, on November 1, 1993.

Two years later, Austria, Sweden and Finland joined the Brussels club, pushing the membership up to fifteen.

Although a socialist, Jacques Delors challenged long-standing secular tradition by practising his Catholic faith openly, as had Schuman. He tried to rally European citizens, and Europe's religious leaders in particular, to the quest for 'the soul of Europe', arguing that if Brussels could not develop a spiritual dimension into the EU, it would fail. Echoing Schuman's earlier warning, he stressed that the EU would not succeed solely on the basis of legal systems and economics.

His very last official words as president of the European Commission were: 'if in the next ten years we haven't

managed to give a soul to Europe, to give it spirituality and meaning, the game will be up'.

The success of the Delors commissions was contrasted with the Santer Commission which followed in 1995, but was forced to resign over allegations of corruption.

The next commission, led by Romano Prodi, also failed to measure up to the Delors standard, despite overseeing another historic milestone in 2002, when Euro bills and coins were introduced in twelve of the member states. The Eurozone, expanding to sixteen by 2009, was the most important European initiative since the Treaty of Rome.

The Prodi Commission also presided over the Union's biggest ever enlargement in 2004, when Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia became members. Romania and Bulgaria were admitted in 2007, almost doubling the membership in three short years. These additions were widely criticised for risking serious dilution of the European ideals, and moving too fast. Fears were expressed that the project would fail under the weight of its own success.

It was clear that the old rules, created for the original six, needed drastic revision. Summits in Maastricht (1992), Amsterdam (1997) and Nice (2000) had all failed to streamline procedures and structures sufficiently to cope with the much enlarged membership. To address this need, the *Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe* was signed in Rome in 2004, subject to ratification by all member states.

The gap between Brussels and national governments on the one hand, and the general public on the other, became very evident when firstly the French and then the Dutch rejected the controversial proposals in a referendum.

The constitution, in which mention of God or the Judeo-Christian heritage of Europe was conspicuously absent, was

shelved. Finally on December 1, 2009, just months before the 60th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration, the Lisbon Treaty was signed, salvaging the remains of the reform proposals and creating a permanent President of the European Council.

How would Schuman feel about the EU if he could see it today? There would be much for which he would be very grateful, perhaps most of all the sixty-five years without the wars he had himself twice experienced first-hand. The level of economic and political cooperation, with consultations on all manner of subjects constantly taking place in many languages in the specially-built facilities in Brussels and Strasbourg, would surely be almost overwhelming for him.

But his chief concern no doubt would be for the missing spiritual dimension which Jacques Delors had fought in vain to recover, the search for Europe's soul.

Talk of Europe's 'soul' was a direct echo of Schuman's own plea in the year of his death. The emerging identity of a new Europe, he wrote, 'cannot and must not remain an economic and technical enterprise; it needs a soul, the conscience of its historical affinities and of its responsibilities in the present and in the future, and a political will at the service of the same human ideal'.[40]

Although 'basic Christian values' have indeed shaped many of the European institutions, the predominance of materialistic values in Europe today and the quest for immediate gratification, sensuous pleasure and trivial pursuits would cause him deep concern for Europe's future. The false ethic of greed in the financial sector, and the 'culture of death' expressed in youth suicides, pre-natal infanticides (abortions), assisted suicides (euthanasia), low

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[40] Schuman, p58

birth rates, rising murder rates, would be signals of deep spiritual poverty.

Having stated that 'the European Movement would only be successful if future generations managed to tear themselves away from the temptation of materialism which corrupted society by cutting it off from its spiritual roots', it is likely he would not be totally surprised by the crises facing that movement today.[41]

II. Meanwhile, where were the Christian 'players'?

As we have seen, devout Christians have been engaged in the unfolding process at various stages, particularly Catholics. The Christian democracy movement has strongly influenced EU thinking and language, 'subsidiarity' and 'solidarity' being two terms permanently adopted with specifically Christian origins. The moral principle behind subsidiarity, for example, was once described as 'that it was wrong to steal others' responsibilities'.

Mainstream church leaders have enjoyed a long-standing offical relationship with the commission president, with formal consultations taking place regularly. Catholic bishops and ecumenical church leadership councils have maintained permanent lobby offices in Brussels and have actively engaged in presenting submissions to shape EU policy and decision-making. Article 51 of the Lisbon Treaty addresses the status of churches and non-confessional organisations and guarantees an 'open, transparent and regular dialogue with these churches and organisations'.

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[41] see footnote 2

Christians have carried and continue to carry key roles in the EU, bringing their influence to bear where possible. Both the former president of the European Council, the Belgian Herman van Rompuy, and the previous president of the European Parliament, Jerzy Buzek from Poland, are confessing, devout Christians.

Van Rompuy regularly retreats for prayer and meditation in a monastery. On the question of Turkey's membership of the EU, he stated: 'It's a matter of fact that the universal values which are in force in Europe, and which are also the fundamental values of Christianity, will lose vigour with the entry of a large Islamic country such as Turkey.'

Buzek, in the midst of the deep financial crisis of late 2011 reminded his audience at the European Parliament Prayer Breakfast of the special responsibility Christians had to be salt and light. While some saw the Christian heritage today as simply a respectable but useless historical culture, in his opinion it was this heritage that had produced tolerance and openness for understanding.

"If we give it up, it will be replaced by a spiritual emptiness corroded by nationalism and particularism (self-interest)," he warned.

Over the years, numerous Christians from many countries have served as members of the European Parliament, as well in Commission departments. The story of my visit to the European Commission building in 1991 revealed a network of Christian workers meeting regularly for prayer.

Evangelicals have had a much lower profile in Brussels than 'mainstream' Christians, often attributed to being a smaller proportion of Europe's population, perhaps 15 million in total. However that is about equal to Holland's population, and yet the Dutch seem to be able to make a visible impression in Brussels.

Paul van Buitenen's tale, who later served in the European Parliament as a one-man party, *Europa Transparant*, also illustrates what one person can do–even if at great personal cost. Shortly before I first met him in Brussels over fifteen years ago, his exposure of corruption and cronyism involving former French premier, Edith Cresson, had caused the resignation of the whole of Jacques Santer's European Commission. At that stage he was just one of thousands of office workers in the European Commission. But before his allegations were proven to be true, van Buitenen had been suspended, his salary halved and he faced disciplinary action.

Public indignation over his treatment eventually contributed to the fall of the Commission in March 1999. Later he was named '*European of the Year*' by Reader's Digest magazine and the Australian Broadcasting Commission.

Three or four years before his exposure, van Buitenen had become a believer. His personal commitment to a God of truth and justice remained the driving force behind his investigations over the years, despite the constant cold-shouldering and stone-walling he continued to experience in the European Commission.

Van Buitenen battled on. During his parliamentary term from 2004 to 2009, he brought to light many instances of corruption in EU-institutions. None of these revelations however led to any further investigation by the EU antifraud department OLAF. Instead, complained van Buitenen, the European Commission, the Parliament and OLAF simply looked the other way. After proposals for increased supervision of OLAF by an adequate independent body went unheeded, van Buitenen decided not to stand again for the European Parliament.

Yet the European Union requires democratic structures, checks and balances, at the European level. As long as prophetic voices like van Buitenen's remain crying in the wilderness, the European project is headed in the wrong direction.

Sir Fred Catherwood's is another story. A rather unique figure in the generally eurosceptic British evangelical world, he was president of the Evangelical Alliance in the UK, and also served as vice-president of the European Parliament, 1989-1992. He made the case for Christian engagement in shaping the European Union in his book, *Pro-Europe?*.

In his address to *Europa 92*, a gathering of evangelical leaders from across Europe convened in Brussels in 1992, referred to in the following chapter, Sir Fred shared a panoramic oversight of European history–without notes–making it quite clear why Christians had a responsibility to shape Europe's future.

Europe's unity had been made possible only by the common Christian view of life developed and applied progressively over 2000 years, he began. It had curbed the war-like paganism of the northern tribes, the greed and ambition of principalities and powers. Christian influence had been the overwhelming influence in our Europe, as evidenced in the wholly Christian inspiration of the European Convention of Human Rights. 'Go through each item and you'll find a Christian doctrine backing it up,' he challenged all present.[42] Whatever the many faults of the church and of individual Christians, the leaven of the Christian faith had worked through the lump of our society for 2000 years, he stressed.

We owed even our rational science to the Christian faith, he claimed. Four hundred years ago, Christians came humbly

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[42] See Appendix III

to the Book of God's Works, creation, as they came to the Book of God's Word, the Bible. They came with certain presuppositions without which you could not have had our present natural science: that there was one God, not a pantheon of gods. So there would be one natural law in the universe and not conflicting laws. The unity in the natural laws is one pillar of the scientific method.

Above all, we believed in a good, benign God, not a hostile God, who has given the universe to us for our benefit. We were therefore to work out these laws for 'the relief of man's estate', as the founding father of science, Francis Bacon, had said. So natural science had arisen from Europe, not from Africa or Asia. Pagans did not believe in one God, but many. Pagans did not believe in an orderly, rational, stable universe. If paganism came, science went, he argued: 'Let's be very clear about that.'

Similarly, Christian belief in the dignity of each individual had led directly to the development of democracy, the rule of law, education and to social care. The Christian belief that we should love our neighbour as ourselves was the antidote to tribalism, nationalism and racism.

The rise of pagan nationalism in the twentieth century had cost Europe 50 million dead in two world wars: *the greatest slaughter in the entire history of the human race!* The rise of militant atheism in Eastern Europe had frozen it into a long sleep for over three generations.

We had swept our European house clean of fascism and of communism, he stated at the 1992 consultation. We now had democracy and freedom of speech from the Atlantic to the Urals. But we also now had a Europe emptier than before of the Christian faith. In the words of Christ's parable, Europe was a house swept clean, ready for seven devils worse than the first to come in, he warned.

Only if we recovered our common Christian faith would we have the cement of a common belief needed to hold our European Union together. Common cement among people came not by treaties signed by governments, however good they were. Neither from a common currency, a common social policy, or a society empty of belief. A common belief was what held us together. We did not have a common belief anymore. Secular up to a point, the state could really only work if society itself had a well-rooted belief system. Without that the entire whole would fall apart. But today's intellectual leaders lacked that common faith.

Yet the power of the Gospel was God's Holy Spirit. We didn't need the monopoly of Christendom. The message had a power of its own. Pagan Rome was not overcome by giving Christians a monopoly. Pagan Rome was overcome by the Christians' lives, the consciences they pricked and the Spirit revealing truth.

The power was just the same as it had been in the early Church, he declared, and in all the great works of conversion which had swept Europe.

Then he added confidently, 'and will certainly sweep it again!'

6. Living the Legacy

Robert Schuman's story raises many questions for us today, two generations later.

•How can we live this legacy today?

•Dare we still dream about Europe becoming a 'community of peoples deeply rooted in Christian values'? Can Schuman's Christian values have any relevance for us in a post-Christian, post-modern, twenty-first century Europe?

•What is our Christian responsibility towards politics and government, whether or not we are called personally to be actively politically engaged? How should we view a political institution like the EU when it appears to be enforcing 'godless, humanistic policies' across Europe?

•Can sacred writings from an agragrian, pre-industrial Middle East really have anything to say about politics in urban, post-industrial Europe?

•How can we recover Schuman's forgotten legacy?

This chapter is an attempt to address these questions.

I. What lessons can we draw from Schuman's life? What can this legacy mean for us today?

The story of Robert Schuman has much to help us today as together we engage in the task of shaping Europe's future.

It tells us that there are no easy answers, much hard work, and seasons of frustration, setback and discouragement to endure. Sometimes, as during the darkest days of World War II, it may seem as though all is lost.

Yet at the same time, we hold on to the knowledge that it is always God's will for His will to be done on earth, in Europe, in Brussels or wherever we are called to work.

In a world where it is often assumed only the power politics of Machiavelli[43] can succeed, Schuman's story reminds us that faith and hope, character and integrity are fundamental for doing God's work in God's way. That is true for political decisions and policies, as well as for the personal lives of the political players.

Schuman's encounters with Frank Buchman also remind us of the limits of politics, and the necessary interaction of movements bringing personal transformation and conversion with those called specifically to politics.

II. Dare we still dream about Europe becoming a 'community of peoples deeply rooted in Christian values'?

Talk about a future Europe being 'deeply rooted in Christian values' raises eyebrows in many political and academic circles today.

But let's ask ourselves, honestly, what other roots are there? Roots, in the natural sense, are what a tree, a plant, a flower has grown from, a seed that has taken root. From which seeds and roots has Europe grown?

Roots nourish and stabilise. What happens when a tree, plant or flower is cut off from its roots? Are we living in a 'cut-flower civilisation'? If so, what is the inevitable?

In a relativistic, post-modern age, it is politically incorrect to claim priority for any one worldview over another. All are equally valid, we are often told. Nothing is absolutely true.

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[43] A cynical, scheming and unscrupulous approach to politics is named after Niccolò Machiavelli, an Italian Renaissance political philosopher, considered a founder of political science.

No belief can claim it is true. Yet that statement is logically absurd. Most beliefs hold that they are uniquely true. Islam, Christianity, and the belief of those who hold absolutely that no belief is true.

The claim that Europe's roots are primarily Christian is ignored today in the light of the presence of many later competitors. Hence the rejection of the mention of God and the Judeo-Christian tradition in the proposed European Constitution.

Yet, what was the real source of Europe's basic values? Is that a matter of conjecture? or of historical fact?

We have already read Sir Fred Catherwood's answer to that question in the previous chapter.

Pope John Paul II, on the other hand, was prepared to admit freely that Europe had multiple cultural roots:

"If a new European order is to be adequate for the promotion of the authentic common good, it must recognise and safeguard the values that constitute the most precious heritage of European humanism. Multiple are the cultural roots that have contributed to reinforce these values: from the spirit of Greece to that of Roman law and virtue, from the contributions of the Latin, Celtic, Germanic, Slav and Finno-Ugric peoples, to those of the Jewish culture and the Islamic world. These different factors found in the Judeo-Christian tradition the power that harmonised, consolidated and promoted them." [44]

Yet, like Sir Fred, the pope stressed that the diversity of cultures making up Europe's heritage found their unity in the biblical tradition.

Of course, we expect a pope to say such things. But even arch-atheist Richard Dawkins candidly admits we cannot

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[44] From his message to the Congress *Towards a European Constitution* organised by the European Federation of Catholic Universities, 20 June 2003.

understand European history without understanding Christianity and the Bible.

On that point at least, Dawkins is right! Where did Europe gain its cohesive and distinct identity from, as 'The Continent'? It's the one continent that is not a continent! It is merely the western peninsula of the Eurasian landmass.

The European peoples came largely from the east with the great people movements arriving in waves before the end of the first millennium after Christ. They spoke *Indo*-European languages. They worshipped many gods, hundreds if not thousands of them across Europe–Celtic, Germanic, Nordic, Roman, Greek, Slavic and more.

A quick google search of the Nordic gods and goddesses alone will reveal: *AESIR, principal race of gods in Norse mythology; ANDHRIMNIR, the cook of the Aesir; ANGRBODA, goddess and wife of Loki, ASTRILD, goddess of love; ATLA, water goddess; AUDHUMLA, the primeval cow, formed from the melting ice; BALDER, fairest of the gods; BEYLA, the servant of Freyr; BORGHILD, goddess of the evening mist or moon, she slays the sun each evening; BRAGI, god of poets and the patron of all skaldi (poets) in Norse culture; BRONO, son of Balder, god of daylight; BYLGIA, water goddess;*

and so on, alphabetically to: ... *THOR, thunder-god and the protector of men and gods; TYR, the original god of war in the Germanic culture; ULL, god of justice, duelling and archery; VALI, son of Odin, and the god born to avenge the death of Balder; VALKYRIES, the battle-maidens, who choose the best warriors; VANIR, a group of fertility and nature gods; VAR, goddess of contracts and marriage agreements; VIDAR, son of Odin and the god of silence and vengeance.*

The Europeans' identity was rooted in the east. So at what stage did they develop a distinct western identity? Whatever happened to all these gods and goddesses?

Answer: Story-tellers came with a Book telling the people groups living in the west Eurasian peninsular about Jesus, God's Son. They came to the Greeks, Romans, Celts, Scots, Picts, Angles, Saxons, Franks, Frisians, Germans, Slavs, Goths, Rus, Balts, Vikings... and more. Converted to Christian monotheism, these peoples of diverse cultures, languages and thought, from Ireland to Armenia, now shared a common basic worldview with values drawn from the teachings of one man: Jesus of Nazareth.

This phase laid the foundations for what was to emerge as a self-conscious geographical identity calling itself Europe, distinct from its Asian background. The interaction between the ex-Roman and the ex-barbarian worlds, writes Norman Davies, gave birth to the entity called 'Christendom', the foundation of European civilisation.[45]

It was the four centuries following Constantine that brought Europe into being, when the majority of the peninsula's diverse peoples settled in permanent homelands and the rump of the Roman Empire became just one of the many sovereign states in a community of 'Christendom', argues Davies. 'No one yet used the name of *Europe* to describe this community; but there can be little doubt that it was already in existence.'[46]

German sociologist Jürgen Habermas is widely regarded as one of the world's most influential secular philosophers, Marxist in many of his central ideas. In an interview in 1999, Habermas conceded that there was no alternative to Judeo-Christian ethics for grounding freedom, solidarity, emancipation, morality, human rights and democracy:

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[45] Davies, 1996, p216

[46] Davies, p284

'For the normative self-understanding of modernity, Christianity has functioned as more than just a precursor or catalyst.

'Universalistic egalitarianism, from which sprang the ideals of freedom and a collective life in solidarity, the autonomous conduct of life and emancipation, the individual morality of conscience, human rights and democracy, is the direct legacy of the Judeo ethic of justice and the Christian ethic of love.

'This legacy, substantially unchanged, has been the object of a continual critical reappropriation and reinterpretation. Up to this very day there is no alternative to it.

'And in light of the current challenges of a post-national constellation, we must draw sustenance now, as in the past, from this substance. Everything else is idle postmodern chatter.'[47]

In answer to our question 'what other roots are there to draw on for Europe's future?', Habermas surprising implies, none!

English political scientist John Gray takes us a step even further. His book *Straw Dogs* is a blistering attack on humanism, which he calls 'Christianity in disguise'[48]. Once you take God out of the picture, he posits, there is no basis for talking about the dignity of man or human exceptionalism. The book's title comes from a traditional Chinese festival in which straw dogs are created and worshipped for a day, then burnt. Since there is no Creator God, humans have no special significance in the big order of things, he argues, yet we esteem ourselves irrationally before, like the straw dogs, we meet a final, meaningless

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[47] Habermas, 2006, p150-151

[48] Gray, 2002.

extinction. Therefore, humanism, claiming to be a rational response to irrational religion, is itself irrational!

In other words, talk about freedom, equality, solidarity and peace makes no sense outside a Judeo-Christian framework.

Dutch philosopher Evert-Jan Ouweneel, in an article entitled *Back to the Roots*[49], takes a look at the four specific values Schuman identifies as European–*freedom, equality, solidarity* and *peace*–and asks what happens to each of these values when cut off from their Judeo-Christian roots. His conclusion is that Europe's core problems stem from the loss of roots, and that the Christian faith could prove again its vital contribution to European society through the recovery of these values.

'No-one wants to return to the old days of cultural Christianity in Europe,' he concludes, 'but there is no reason for us to be timid about the Christian roots of Europe's most respected values.'

III. What is our Christian responsibility towards politics and government, whether or not we are called to be actively politically engaged? How should we view a political institution like the EU when it appears to be enforcing 'godless, humanistic policies' across Europe?

These were my questions when in 1991 I visited Brussels with my colleagues, as described in the first chapter. I wanted to understand the history and philosophy of the European Community, as it was then called, and to know how Christians should relate to the institution.

The following year, the Maastricht Treaty year, we held a consultation in Brussels for fifty evangelical leaders called (for lack of imagination) *Europa '92*. Several leading figures

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[49] Appendix II

in the European Commission addressed the assembly, as well as Sir Fred Catherwood, mentioned earlier.

Sir Fred in particular helped us think through some of the biblical guidelines on political engagement, as we studied the stories of Joseph, Daniel, Esther and Nehemiah, all of whom served as people of faith, character and integrity in pagan administrations.

We summarised our conclusions in a statement called the *Brussels Affirmation* (Appendix IV).

The institution of government, we affirmed, whether of the single nation-state or multi-national (as with Rome or the EU), is a God-ordained sphere of authority (Romans 13:1-7); and that civil servants and politicians are called 'ministers of God' (*diakonos* - Roms 13:4), and are to be obeyed when operating within their God-given authority. Paul gave these instructions with a clearly pagan administration in mind.

This meant that Christians had a primary duty to pray for such government officials, both of nation-states and of the EU, for wise and just government, so that conditions of social 'quiet and peace' might facilitate the preaching of the gospel (1 Tim 2:1-4).

Therefore we needed to re-evaluate our attitudes towards the process of European union in general and the European Union in particular, and to repent of any apathy towards involvement in this process.

Sir Fred reminded us, as does the Schuman story, that the original vision of the EU was not primarily economic, but aimed to reconcile the warring European nations into a true community of nations, laying aside their 'tribal squabbles'.

We also recognised the need for Christians to monitor developments in several areas, given that in the real world, results did not always follow intentions.[50]

These included:

- the tendency for economic and material values to dominate the decision-making processes of the EU;
- a potentially alarming democratic deficit in these processes, which could lead to misuse of power;
- the speed of developments in recent years which increases the danger of autocratic decision-making;
- the possibility for non-biblical worldviews to dominate the spiritual values guiding the new Europe.

Knowing that the power of the gospel had both preserving *(salt)* and saving *(light)* dimensions, we affirmed the need to apply God's word to every sphere of life affected by sin, including politics, economics and social issues.

We also acknowledged how the process of European unity was creating many opportunities waiting to be grasped for evangelism and mission in lands with previous limited freedom of worship. At the same time we had a responsibility to act collectively towards helping to rebuild the (then) newly liberated central and eastern European lands; and for evangelical Christians to help shape the spiritual character and values of the emerging new Europe.

Lastly, we affirmed that many issues challenging European union and true community today could only be sufficiently responded to from a biblical perspective, which transcended race, nation and culture, such as rascism, nationalism, the rise of Islam, the influx of refugees, and the environment, offered a secure hope allowing for tolerance to rival worldviews, called for God's people to hospitality and

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[50]Following this consultation, a socio-political office of the European Evangelical Alliance was established in Brussels towards this goal.

compassion, and required wise stewardship of earth's resources.

Even after nearly two decades, these affirmations continue to provide relevant guidelines for a responsible Christian engagement with the EU, or any other government, national or local.

IV. Schuman believed he had a calling to politics, as others may be called to education, healthcare, business, the arts, or even 'the ministry'. How should Christians with such a calling approach the political task? Is there any one true Christian political approach?

Many books have been written on politics, and on Christian political options. One I recommend is *Political Visions and Illusions*, by David Koyzis.[51]

The author analyses a range of '-isms' or political ideologies which have emerged in western thought since the enlightenment. These include *liberalism, nationalism, conservatism, socialism* and *marxism.* We could add the single issue parties which have emerged in more recent years focussing on *environmentalism* or *animal rights*, for example.

Some Christians engage in politics as *Christian socialists*, arguing that scripture commands us to care for the poor and the oppressed, and therefore requires a socialist agenda. Others retort that as the Bible supports private property, the *liberal capitalist* option is the most Christian system. Yet others style themselves *politically conservative*, as they identify faithfulness to the historic faith with loyalty to tradition in general.

The net result is a 'scattered voice', an unnecessarily fragmented Body of Christ in the political arena, according

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[51] Koyzis, 2003; David Koyzis is a Canadian professor of political science.

to Koyzis. Taking sides is based on a flawed understanding of what the ideologies actually are. Rather than seeing them as intrinsically religious, many Christians see them as simply neutral systems, and ignore the spiritual roots of capitalism and socialism.

Yet ideologies flow out of the religious commitment of a person or community, Koyzis explains. Humans are worshipping creatures, though not all humans will admit this of themselves. An atheist denies belief in God but may effectively worship rationality, artistic prowess or military might as god. Some aspect of God's creation assumes an idolatrous role above all other aspects.

That's true for *liberalism* and its god of maximum individual freedoms, *nationalism* (liberation from rule by the 'other'), *conservatism* (return to the 'golden age'), *socialism* (the communal ownership of all wealth), and even *democracy* (which without proper spiritual foundations bows to the god of popular sovereignty, as Schuman himself argued).

However, even though ideologies flow out of an idolatrous worldview, the author believes they may still have something to teach us. They may have uncovered fragments of the truth which Christians have not clearly seen.

What, for example, caused otherwise good and decent German citizens to succomb to the attractions of national socialism? Or why did many western intellectuals turn to communism, scandalised by the suffering of the Great Depression?

Koyzis nevertheless sees the faithfulness of God to his creation despite the distortions of the ideologies. Even the most deceptive of ideologies is incapable of altogether misshaping human society in its own image. A liberal political order promoting individualism cannot totally erode the basic institutions of marriage and family. Neither has

totalitarianism been successful in fully erasing family and other loyalities other than to the state.

'For this we may rightly thank God, who faithfully upholds his creation order in the midst of our disobedience,' writes Koyzis.

If all our existing ideologies have idolatrous presumptions, where can the Christian stand?

Biblical Christianity affirms firstly that all of creation is under God's sovereignty; but that man's sin, the fall, has affected *all* our activities. Just as creation and fall are cosmic in scope, so also is redemption, which is *'creation regained'*.

And this regained creation includes politics. We cannot simply consign politics to a neutral, 'secular' realm, nor to the sovereignty of the prince of this world, says Koyzis. We must claim it for Jesus Christ.

So what does a non-idolatrous approach to society and politics look like? Koyzis argues that it will acknowledge the sovereignty of God over all of life. It will uphold individual rights, like *liberalism*, yet remind us that the individual is not sovereign. It will give due place to tradition, as does *conservatism*, yet recognises that all human works are tainted by sin. Like *nationalism* and the *democratic creed*, it recognises the place of the human community, but not as a sovereign focus of loyalty.

The one non-idolatrous alternative, Koyzis argues, is a kind of *pluralism*. He explores two Christian models attempting to rise above the idolatries of ideologies, one Reformed, the other Catholic. Both these approaches hold promise for the complex political realities of the twenty-first century, suggests Koyzis. They avoid the injustice resulting from the state over-reaching its proper, God-given task.

The Reformed tradition affirming societal pluriformity was developed by Dutch Calvinists in response to the ideologies

spawned by the French Revolution. Abraham Kuyper spoke of sphere-sovereignty, recognising that ultimate authority belongs to God. All earthly sovereignties are subsidiary. The family, the school, business, labour, the arts and so on are all sovereign in their own spheres, within their God-given limits.

We have already encountered the Catholic model, based on the social encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. As we have seen, this was a seminal influence on Schuman's political thought, and laid the foundation for a Christian democracy seeking reconciliation, not war, between classes, guided by church teachings. It rejected liberalism and socialism alike, insisting that the state must govern for the common good, and respect subsidiary communities. This doctrine of *subsidiarity,* as we have seen, has become a foundational principle of the European Union. Society is made up of, not just of the state and individuals, but a variety of smaller communities, groups, associations, each of which should be allowed the greatest possible autonomy. This pluralist principle protects civil society.

Closely related in Catholic circles was the philosophical worldview called *Personalism.* Developed in the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century by thinkers in France, the US, the UK and Germany, it stresses the central significance of the person in human affairs, where the person's identity is discovered and defined through their relationships.

Personalism found political expression in the Christian Democratic parties, which held power in a number of European countries after the war, and is still very influential in Germany, France, the Netherlands and Poland, as well as in the European Peoples Party in the European Parliament. Its influence on public policy can be seen in issues like urban

planning (small cities in Germany), the strength of trade associations and resistance to embryo research.

However, there are those such as Dr Michael Schluter who, as we shall now see, believe Personalism lacks vital dimensions. But it could be translated into a coherent political and economic system through a symbiotic relationship with something he calls *Relational Thinking*.

V. Can sacred writings from a bygone agragrian age in the pre-industrial Middle East really have anything to say about the political future of urban, post-industrial Europe?

The economics editor of *The Sydney Morning Herald* surprised his readers one day by writing about a group of Christian thinkers in Cambridge, England, who believed the solution to society's economic and political problems lay in getting back to the model laid out in the Bible.

'Don't laugh,' Ross Gittins wrote, 'it's a group with more PhDs than you've had haircuts. They're from a Christian research group, the Jubilee Centre, founded by Michael Schluter. Dr Schluter is better known as the director of the Relationships Foundation. You didn't know there was an economic model in the Bible? According to this group, when you consider Old Testament law as a whole, an integrated economic model emerges which satisfies the prerequisites for both efficiency and fairness without the wasteful and damaging side effects entailed in the current Western economic model.' [52]

Dr Schluter was an economist with the world bank in East Africa in the 1970's. Observing the social disruption caused by socialism in Tanzania, Marxism in Ethiopia and capitalism in Kenya, he was searching for a biblical alternative. Looking at the Old Testament as an ethical foundation for public life, he noted a remarkable consistency in an apparently random collection of laws. The Jubilee laws for land, the ban on interest, the role of the Levites, political structures, welfare arrangements and military organisation all cohered in a central theme, the key to which he discovered in Jesus' brilliant synopsis of this Mosaic Law in

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[52] The Sydney Morning Herald, 17 April 2006

the New Testament: *Love God and neighbour!* The glue of society was love, Jesus implied, or right relationships.

In today's real world, of course, such an answer is considered naïve, impractical and unrealistic. That is not the language of money, economics, politics and military power. It's not a language widely spoken in Moscow or London, Berlin or Paris, Rome or Brussels.

Yet, according to Schluter, it is this imperative to love God and neighbour that provides a biblical alternative to the dominant western ideologies of global capitalism and market socialism. The Big Idea, believes Schluter, is to see the world from the perspective of relationships, which offers the way forward beyond today's pragmatism.

While capitalism was concerned primarily with the deployment and growth of capital, and socialism focused on the role and organisation of the collective, Jesus emphasised the quality of relationships. The Big Idea of Old Testament law was relationships. All these seemingly unrelated Mosaic laws protected and promoted relationships in the long run. In other words, a society should not be evaluated by its GDP, or the efficiency of its markets, but in how that society fosters healthy relationships.

So relationships were the key, concluded Schluter, both to interpreting and applying biblical law today, and to evaluating society today.

Schluter often challenges his audiences to think of an undeveloped (or 'developing') country. After a few moments, he asks which continent or region they were thinking of. Most think of Africa, Asia or the Caribbean. Then he asks, in what sense did you think of 'undeveloped'? In terms of economics? or of relationships? Which countries are least developed *relationally* these days? Which countries

have the highest divorce rates, for example? America and Britain, perhaps?

Schluter calls this language of relationships *Relational Thinking*. He has developed this idea to embrace a wide range of social initiatives and has spelt this out in his writings and speaking.[53]

So is Relational Thinking just another '-ism'? Is it yet another Christian ideology? Schluter admits that ideologies 'smack of idolatry, solutions apart from salvation, and frameworks of political thought and action which do not acknowledge the Lordship of Christ. While Relational Thinking could perhaps be regarded as an ideology in the sense of flowing from a worldview which is not shared by everybody, it should certainly not be regarded as an autonomous body of human thought.'

Yet he warns that the potential for Relational Thinking's long-term impact on western society will depend on whether or not it stays in touch with its biblical roots. Divorced from biblical teaching, it will lack the essential motivation for building strong social bonds and restoring broken relationships: love for God.

Relational Thinking shares much common ground with Personalism. Both reject the view of people and nature as just commodities (e.g. people as 'labour', 'human resources' or 'human capital'; or a tree as just 'timber'); that human beings exist primarily for the building up of efficient

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[53] Co-author of *The R Factor* and *The R Option*, Dr Schluter has founded the *Relationship Foundation*, the *Jubilee Centre* in Cambridge and the think tank that produces *The Cambridge Papers*. He has initiated a range of projects underway in England and other countries including employment schemes, relationships audits in multinationals, and the *Keep Sunday Special* campaign in England. He has worked with the Scottish Prison Service to promote better warder/prisoner relationships, and advocates 'relational healthcare' and 'relational justice'. The latter views crime as a breakdown of relationship between offender and victim/community.

societies, or that the 'development' of a society should be measured in terms of its economic growth.

Both perspectives reject the idea that individuals can and should be self-sufficient in themselves, economically and psychologically ('the atomic self'); that a person can or should have a different self across different areas of life, or the view that the self has no ultimate significance because it is only a small part of a universal self. Because of the focus on the individual, the common ground between Relational Thinking and Personalism is strongest around lifestyle issues. Both stress that identity, meaning, security and value are found principally in a person's relationships.

However Dr Schluter identifies key differences between Personalism and Relational Thinking, and believes Relational Thinking can point the way forward for Europe in areas where Personalism, he believes, falls short. Personalism, he argues, has not had an answer for the Christian Democratic Parties on key issues in economic policy, for example. 'As Mrs Thatcher puts it in her usual acerbic fashion, "Anything from full-bloodied enterprise on the one-hand to corporatism on the other could be dressed up in the language of Christian Democracy"'.[54]

Neither does Personalism take into account the biblical warning on national and personal debt, as does Relational Thinking–an emphasis which has come into its own most recently. The two views have different starting points, which lead them to different emphases. Personalism is primarily a response to individualism and collectivism. Relational Thinking is primarily a response to Marxism and Capitalism. Personalism is more of a philosophical endeavour to describe what it means to be an authentically human person;

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[54] Quoted in Cole, Graham & Schluter, Michael, 2004, on which this section is based.

Relational Thinking is more concerned with how social life should be ordered to give maximum benefit to persons in relationship.

This means that Personalism has little to say about group or organisational relationships, and has difficulty addressing the concerns of public policy.

One consequence of the term 'Personalism' has been to focus attention primarily on the individual, especially in an individualistic culture. This is unhelpful if the significance of the person lies in their relationships with others.

Relational Thinking has a more explicit dependence than Personalism on the ethical values of the Judeo-Christian tradition in defining normative values of relevance to persons-in-relation. Relational Thinking draws its inspiration from the shared scriptures of Christians and Jews, especially the Mosaic law. It builds on the values which underpin the political, economic and social life described there, taking proper account of the historical and geographical context. Yet it does not draw exclusively on the Old Testament, as the church also provides a counter-cultural model of relational community.

One question Relational Thinking poses is: How do alternative constitutional arrangements, such as federalism or, negatively, a centralisation of government decision-making, change the pattern of human relating and thus impact on personal well-being?

Schluter believes such questions will help develop the Personalism-Relational Thinking approach into a fully-fledged social paradigm, to challenge materialist-capitalism as the dominant ideology of our day. This challenge is not just at the level of social philosophy, but also at the level of the laws, institutional structures and working practices to which it gives rise.

He seeks a meaningful symbiotic relationship between Personalist thought and Relational Thinking. He believes Relational Thinking provides the needed dynamic for translating Personalism into a coherent political and economic system.

I, for one, have a growing conviction that Relational Thinking is a Big Idea offering hope for Europe.

VI. What models are influencing the dialogue on Europe's future?

Dr Léonce Bekemans[55] identified three models shaping thought about Europe's future identity in an address to the European Forum of National Laity Committees, meeting in Bratislava, in July 2008:

1. Europe of culture or "family of nations":

Communitarians stress common history and culture. European identity, they argue, has emerged from common movements in religion and philosophy, politics, science and the arts. This view tends to exclude Turkey and to argue a stronger awareness of the Christian (or Judeo-Christian) tradition. 'United in diversity' is taken to refer to Europe as a 'family of nations'. Stressing that EU borders need to be quickly defined, this could lead to a form of 'Euro-nationalism' and exclusionary policies within European societies.

2. Europe of citizens or "constitutional patriotism":

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[55] Léonce Bekemans is the Jean Monnet Chair "Globalisation, Intercultural dialogue & inclusiveness in the EU" at the University of Padua.

Liberals and republicans argue for a civic identity, a common political culture based on universal principles of democracy, human rights, the rule of law etc.. Jürgen Habermas believes citizens should not be identified with a common cultural identity, but with some constitutional principles that fully guarantee their rights and freedoms. Cultural identities, religious beliefs etc. should be confined to the private sphere (which helps explain the French stance on God and religion in the EU constitution). European identity will emerge from common political and civic practices, civil society organisations and strong EU institutions, they reason. 'United in diversity' here means sharing political and civic values while adhering to different cultural practices. The limits of the community should be a question of politics, not culture.

3. Europe as space of encounters:

'European identity' will emerge as a consequence of intensified civic, political and cultural exchanges and cooperation, argue *constructivists,* who view knowledge and meaning as emerging from experience, not ideology or relevation. 'European identity' would be constantly redefined through relationships with others. 'United in diversity' involves participation in collective political and cultural practices. It would be wrong and impossible to fix EU borders.

What then were the building blocks of a Christian vision for a pluralistic Europe, according to Bekemans?

He identified three basic components:

- *Diversity in unity:* implying commitment and acceptance of the principle of subsidiarity; and respect for the other, for diversity, human dignity etc.
- *Distinction between the temporal and the spiritual:* yet understanding that faith undergirded social engagement.

- *Modesty:* there were no ready made answers in a changing process. However, he stressed, the churches and Christianity had vital roles to play for Europe's future.

VII. What can we do to recover Schuman's forgotten legacy?

Special days of remembrance are important for key events in our history. In Europe, many nations hold public holidays and ceremonies early in May to remember the nation's fallen during the wars and to celebrate their liberation or victory.

Since 1985, May 9 has been celebrated as Europe Day, in recognition that the Schuman Declaration was the first concrete step in the long journey towards 'ever closer union' of the European peoples. In some countries, and especially in EU institutions, it is often referred to as Schuman Day. The day is observed formally in most EU member states, and even in Turkey and other surrounding countries. A major exception is the United Kingdom, with its history of euroscepticism.

Yet this date does not yet resonate in the heart of the average European, as does remembering the casualties of war and celebrating liberation. Winning the peace has not yet caught the public imagination.

One practical reason is that early May is crowded with other commemorations and celebrations, as mentioned. Other holidays and festivals like Easter, Ascension Day, Pentecost and May Day cause many interruptions to normal daily schedules in that season.

Another reason is that people simply do not know this story. It is hardly taught at school. None of my children or their spouses, all with European university education, heard

this story in their three levels of education, other than a throwaway footnote.

Yet if it is true as we stated earlier, that the Schuman Declaration was *the* defining moment for modern Europe–the dramatic breakthrough that overnight created the conceptual architecture of the European House within which half a billion Europeans live in peace with each other today–then surely it deserves more attention.

That should be especially true of Christians, when we know the story behind the story.

Restoring this story in our school history curriculum is one obvious corrective.

Another is to develop creative and appropriate ways to commemorate Europe Day annually, whether or not it is set apart as a holiday.

This does not necessarily endorse all that the EU represents today. For example, the SCHUMAN CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES initiates each year on Europe Day a *State of Europe Forum* in the capital of the nation holding the EU presidency at that time[56]. The purpose is to thank God for the over six decades of peace that the union of European peoples has brought to the participating nations, to remember the founder's vision and values, to evaluate the current realities of the EU in the light of those values, and to ask how the vision and values can be promoted.[57]

This is an opportunity to raise critical questions and issues of concern, while at the same time asking ourselves how can we better live out Christ's command to 'love our neighbours as ourselves' within the community of European peoples.

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[56] Held thus far in Budapest in 2011, Copenhagen 2012, Dublin 2013, Athens 2014,Riga 2015, Amsterdam 2016, in cooperation with the Christian Political Foundation of Europe.

[57] See www.stateofeuropeforum.eu

May God give us the courage and grace to live out this legacy and the values it teaches us.

Europe's future depends on it.

7. Appendices

I. The Schuman Declaration of 9 May 1950

World peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of creative efforts proportionate to the dangers which threaten it.

The contribution which an organized and living Europe can bring to civilization is indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations. In taking upon herself for more than 20 years the role of champion of a united Europe, France has always had as her essential aim the service of peace. A united Europe was not achieved and we had war.

Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan. It will be built through concrete achievements which first create a *de facto* solidarity. The coming together of the nations of Europe requires the elimination of the age-old opposition of France and Germany. Any action taken must in the first place concern these two countries.

With this aim in view, the French Government proposes that action be taken immediately on one limited but decisive point :

"*It proposes that Franco-German production of coal and steel as a whole be placed under a common High Authority, within the framework of an organization open to the participation of the other countries of Europe*".

The pooling of coal and steel production should immediately provide for the setting up of common foundations for economic development as a first step in the federation of Europe, and will change the destinies of those regions which have long been devoted to the manufacture of munitions of war, of which they have been the most constant victims.

The solidarity in production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely

unthinkable, but materially impossible. The setting up of this powerful productive unit, open to all countries willing to take part and bound ultimately to provide all the member countries with the basic elements of industrial production on the same terms, will lay a true foundation for their economic unification.

This production will be offered to the world as a whole without distinction or exception, with the aim of contributing to raising living standards and to promoting peaceful achievements. With increased resources Europe will be able to pursue the achievement of one of its essential tasks, viz. the development of the African continent.

In this way, there will be realized simply and speedily that fusion of interests which is indispensable to the establishment of a common economic system; it may be the leaven from which may grow a wider and deeper community between countries long opposed to one another by sanguinary divisions.

By pooling basic production and by instituting a new High Authority, whose decisions will bind France, Germany and other member countries, this proposal will lead to the realization of the first concrete foundation of a European federation indispensable to the preservation of peace.

II. Back to the Roots, for the Sake of the Future

by Evert-Jan Ouweneel

Sixty years ago, on 9 May 1950, the French Foreign Minister, Robert Schuman, proposed to his German colleague, Konrad Adenauer, that their two nations should together form a European Coal and Steel Community, inviting other European nations to join them in placing their coal and steel industries under a supranational authority. The aim was "to make war not only unthinkable but materially impossible".

Schuman's proposal was a first bold step towards today's European Union. He became known as 'Father of Europe'. Few will know, however, that Schuman did not only envision Europe as a post-war continent, but also as a community of peoples deeply rooted in Christian values. In his correspondence with Adenauer, these two devout believers spoke of the providential opportunity they had been given to rebuild Europe on Christian foundations.

Over the last decades, Europe has clearly drifted away from this vision. A few years ago, it even turned out to be possible to exorcise any mention of Christian roots in the proposed EU constitution.

How to respond to this as Christians? Should we give up on Schuman's vision? Can Europe's most respected values– equality, solidarity, freedom and peace–be dechristianized without any loss of strength and significance?

In this essay, I will explain that Europe has most certainly paid a price for disconnecting its basic values from their Christian roots. Dignity and solidarity became hollow notions, freedom and peace suffer from 'imperial overstretch'. But more than considering it a tragedy, I would like to take it as an opportunity. Considering the value of equality, solidarity, freedom and peace, I see as many possibilities for the Christian faith to prove again its vital contribution to European society. I certainly do not expect or even wish for a return to the old days of cultural Christianity in Europe. The downsize of European Christianity is an opportunity in itself. But there is no reason to be timid about the Christian roots of Europe's most respected values.

Equality as divine grace

It was profoundly original of the Hebrews to believe that only one God is worthy of our adoration and that no creature, in heaven or earth, should be worshipped instead. In Biblical times, most rulers in the Middle-East were treated and adored like gods, but the Hebrews remembered their kings in all their weakness and imperfection. It was precisely because of the shortcomings of kings like David and Solomon that the Hebrews kept their hope in the one true God.

Centuries later, Jesus spoke of God making His sun rise on the evil and the good, and sending His rain on the just and the unjust (Matthew 5:45). All are equally dependent on God's grace! The early Christians confirmed this awareness and refused to worship the Roman emperor as a god. Like Daniel, they were thrown into a lion's den for believing in human equality. Unlike Daniel, they paid with their lives for their belief.

Centuries later, the idea of human equality advanced the rise of democratic thinking in modern Europe. However, instead of sticking to the human dignity of being loved and cared for by God, the philosophers started emphasizing the human dignity of being able to know and act upon what is true and right. Human dignity became disconnected from its relational context and instead connected to human capacity.

And now, again centuries later, we are in trouble. Looking back on our violent history, full of oppression and ideological bankrupcy, we have great difficulty with praising the human race for its ability to make right choices. As a consequence, our notion of dignity became hollow. Many try to save it by emphasizing the human ability to make whatever choices. But if our dignity solely depends on our ability to choose for ourselves, no matter the quality of our choices and no matter what others choose, we are lonely creatures and little different from a choosing monkey.

Here lies a tremendous opportunity for the Christian faith to prove its vital contribution to European society. Postmodern disappointment in human capacity is an excellent starting point to again embrace the Christian idea that human dignity is not build on human strength but on human weakness. The Good News is precisely this: that all are equally dependent and can equally benefit from God's loving grace!

SOLIDARITY AS FAMILY DUTY

In the empires of Constantine, Charlemagne and late mediaeval Germany, the Christian faith was considered a crucial source of unity. All of these empires were united by one aristocratic institute, led by the emperor, and one religious institute, led by the pope. The one 'catholic' (universal) church was considered to be an expression of the one Family of God. Faith was not taken as an individual affair but as something turning people into brothers and sisters and uniting them for a life time.

Being a Christian was interpreted as complying with a 'holy order' which commonly coincided with the political order of a nation. Church membership was not so much a matter of individual free choice but primarily a matter of loyalty and solidarity to the people of one's birth. We may not like this, but for centuries it had a strong advantage: since church membership was a national affair, also solidarity was a national affair.

Already in the eighth century, Charlemagne obliged his subjects to pay tithes to the church so that, as a national institute, the church could take care of the neediest in society. From the 16th century, also Protestant churches–like the Lutheran Landeskirchen, the Church of England and the Dutch Reformed Church–became national churches. Since then, charity remained primarily a concern of national churches.

This national and institutional solidarity did not disappear after Europe was hit by secularization. Only the kind of institution changed: after World War II the state considered itself primarily responsible for the welfare of its citizens. This situation continued for several decades until the welfare state turned out to be too expensive and in some respects too easy for people in need. Europe started shifting toward a more prominent role for civil society.

And now we are in trouble. Already at the time of the French Revolution, people tried to liberate the notion of brotherhood from its religious context and turn it into a political notion referring to the participants of a social contract. Instead of being united under one heavenly Father and one King, people became united in a free pact. Solidarity became disconnected from the old family duty and instead connected to free will.

But what to do in a society where many have lost the willingness to express solidarity beyond the point of not bothering each other? Like the notion of dignity, our notion of solidarity has become

hollow: we 'liberated' the notion of brotherhood from the family duties that come along with it. Instead of a solidarity compliant with the 'holy order' of family life, we started celebrating the 'brotherhood' of giving way to boundless individualism.

Here lies an other opportunity for the Christian faith to prove its vital contribution to European society. Obviously, we cannot return to the old days of national churches. Instead, we may have to repeat the words of Paul in Acts 17. Standing in front of the Areopagus he said: "God himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things… In him we live and move and have our being; as even some of your own poets have said, For we too are his offspring".

The notion of solidarity can be firmly based upon the Christian belief that all humans share the same origin and are thus united as brothers and sisters in the holy order of a God-given family. And within that worldwide family, some have come to know the One in whom they live as "Abba! Father!" (Galatians 4:6). And this is the Good News, that one day (if not today) the whole of creation will benefit from the solidarity expressed by these "children of God" (Romans 8:19)!

FREEDOM AS COMMUNITY AFFAIR

Christianity set the tone in Europe's appreciation for, not only equality and solidarity, but also liberty. Luther was one of the first to defend that faith is primarily a matter of the heart and that every one should first of all follow his or her own conscience. What he defended as *Glaubensfreiheit* would slowly–very slowly–turn into one of the most basic values of European society. But Luther never disconnected freedom of faith from a community of faith. He knew very well that, as much as the embrace of a particular belief is an individual affair, believing itself is not! We need a community of faith to know what faith to embrace and to persevere in our faith. Without the company of fellow believers, we will one day ask ourselves: why have faith if I am the only one?

In the 18th and 19th century, the emphasis on personal conviction advanced the discovery of individual authenticity, of 'not neglecting your own (moral) sentiment' and 'expressing yourself in your own way'. Evangelical movements arose along with Romanticism, adopting a more sentimental interpretation of following your own conscience. At the end of the 19th century,

authenticity became associated with one's unique identity. 'Being yourself' became coupled to 'being original'.

It all had an enriching effect on social life as well as Christian life, but after a while it also created suspicion toward tradition, including church institutes, doctrine and liturgy. More and more people started seeing traditional Christianity as an obstruction to authenticity. Particularly the old national churches, with the oldest heritage and strongest hierarchy, became associated with impersonal, intrusive and restrictive conservatism. After World War II, Europeans quit church in large numbers and started following their own spiritual path through life.

And now, we are again in trouble. At first, it seemed so liberating to quit the power structures of Christianity and follow one's own heart. But it turned out that, without spiritual traditions and fellow believers, acting upon one's freedom of faith can easily become a lonely and disorienting journey. Many educated Europeans sought refuge in Eastern spiritual traditions. But many more remained displaced and new generations were raised without any compass or community. This resulted in two major problems in European society: social isolation among older people and spiritual disorientation among younger people.

We cannot invent our own beliefs. However much our heart yearns for spiritual answers, it is history that provides them and society that preserves them. Whether we like it or not, historicity, communality and 'seniority' are still key features of a persuasive and persistent belief.

Here lies a third opportunity for the Christian faith to prove its vital contribution to European society. In order to seize this opportunity, though, Christianity will have to deprive itself from its own individualistic tendencies and join the rest of Europe in rediscovering its own 'Christian roots'. When we are called to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19) and to "proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins to all nations" (Luke 24:47), the emphasis is not put on individuals but on communities. We are called to encourage the rise of faith communities, for the sake of every individual!

In a time where individual choice is suffering from 'imperial overstretch', the Good News is precisely this: that freedom is not a lonely venture but a blessing that dwells in the community. In the

end, faith will only flourish in a Body where the arms, legs, knees and hands support and complement each other.

PEACE AS FULLNESS OF LIFE

In the Bible, the word 'shalom' represents peace in its perfection, including wholeness, health, welfare, safety, soundness, tranquility, prosperity, rest, harmony and the absence of agitation or discord. In Christian belief, it is clear that human beings are not capable of reaching such fullness of life on their own. Shalom is, therefore, always related to God's grace, as it is written in Numbers 6:24-26: *'The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you shalom.'*

In the tough life of the Middle Ages, the church served as a holy place of refuge, of experiencing God's shalom in the midst of death, illnesses, hunger and poverty. Divine majesty was like a counterpoint to daily misery.

In the following centuries, this changed profoundly. Daily life improved, especially in northwest Europe, and people felt more in control of their own lives. Science became focused on creating health; economic life became focused on creating wealth. Striving for earthly progress even became a moral imperative in Europe. People connected the notion of 'shalom' to human capacity. God's endeavour, 'the restoration of all things' (Acts 3:21), was translated into an earthly call for mankind.

Within a few centuries, however, the European quest for progress became detached from the idea that true shalom is first and finally an expression of God's grace. And as Europe was making a lot of progress in the area of health and wealth, it simultaneously became the most violent continent on earth. The arrival of gunpowder literally blew up the feudal system and created an anarchy in Europe. From the 15th to the 20th century, no pope or king could gain control over the continent and realize a new Pax Romana. Europe was stuck in bloodshed, not only on the continent but in every corner of the earth.

As Europe conquered the world, it thought God was on its side. But God was weeping for the oppressed and did not intervene when Europe destroyed itself in the first half of the 20th century. Only after it brought itself to a total–moral, political, economical and spiritual–bankruptcy, Europe switched to plan B: one

community of peoples living in equality, solidarity, freedom and peace.

First, the aim was economic cooperation, then political cooperation. After the fall of the Wall in 1989, many other states joined the European Union. Suffering from its bureaucratic weight, the European Union started looking awkward and incomprehensible. In the eyes of many people, the idea of a united Europe had lost its charm. But there remains this amazing fact that the bloodiest continent over the last 500 years became one of the most peaceful continents over the last 60 years. For the first time in many centuries, Europe is busy with maintaining peace instead of being busy with preparing for war.

Looking back, the overall result is phenomenal. But Europe is facing new challenges as a province of the world. Its set of values is heavily tested by global issues like poverty, migrations, pandemics, climate change, global terrorism, international criminality, nuclear weapons, an energy crisis, economic crisis and food crisis. In the face of these world wide issues, Europe is again confronted with the difficulty of living up to its own values. Like our freedom, our value of shalom is suffering from 'imperial overstretch'.

Once more we encounter an opportunity for the Christian faith to prove its vital contribution to European society. We still need a holy place of refuge where we can experience God's shalom in the midst of failure and global suffering. We still need God's majesty as a counterpoint to the misery of our inner and surrounding world. And we still need a Messiah who is capable of overcoming all the difficulties we cannot overcome.

This is why some Christians cannot stop repeating the last words of the Bible: "Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all." For whenever they long for a just and flourishing world and are disappointed in the human ability to make it so, they cling to the Good News that one day, under the leadership of Christ, the whole world will experience the true meaning of equality, solidarity, freedom and peace.

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Schuman Declaration, May 9, 2010, in the Chapel of the Resurrection, Brussels.

III. The European Convention on Human rights

Formally the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) is an international treaty to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms in Europe, emphasising legal standards, human rights, democratic development, the rule of law and cultural co-operation.

The ECHR began with 10 member states in 1950 and now has 47 member states with some 800 million citizens. Drafted in 1950 by the then nascent Council of Europe, the convention was signed into force on 3 September 1953.

The Convention established the European Court of Human Rights, a truly innovative feature. Individuals were given an active role on the international arena, where previously only states were considered actors in international law. The European Convention is still the only international human rights agreement providing such a high degree of individual protection.

The following are the articles relating to human rights:

Article 1 – Obligation to respect human rights

The High Contracting Parties shall secure to everyone within their jurisdiction the rights and freedoms defined in Section I of this Convention.

Article 2 – Right to life

1. Everyone's right to life shall be protected by law. No one shall be deprived of his life intentionally save in the execution of a sentence of a court following his conviction of a crime for which this penalty is provided by law.
2. Deprivation of life shall not be regarded as inflicted in contravention of this article when it results from the use of force which is no more than absolutely necessary:
    1. in defence of any person from unlawful violence;
    2. in order to effect a lawful arrest or to prevent the escape of a person lawfully detained;
    3. in action lawfully taken for the purpose of quelling a riot or insurrection.

Article 3 – Prohibition of torture

No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 4 – Prohibition of slavery and forced labour

1. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude.
2. No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour.
3. For the purpose of this article the term "forced or compulsory labour" shall not include:
    1. any work required to be done in the ordinary course of detention imposed according to the provisions of Article 5 of this Convention or during conditional release from such detention;
    2. any service of a military character or, in case of conscientious objectors in countries where they are recognised, service exacted instead of compulsory military service;
    3. any service exacted in case of an emergency or calamity threatening the life or well-being of the community;
    4. any work or service which forms part of normal civic obligations.

Article 5 – Right to liberty and security

1. Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be deprived of his liberty save in the following cases and in accordance with a procedure prescribed by law:
    1. the lawful detention of a person after conviction by a competent court;
    2. the lawful arrest or detention of a person for non-compliance with the lawful order of a court or in order to secure the fulfilment of any obligation prescribed by law;
    3. the lawful arrest or detention of a person effected for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority on reasonable suspicion of having committed an offence or when it is reasonably considered necessary to prevent his committing an offence or fleeing after having done so;
    4. the detention of a minor by lawful order for the purpose of educational supervision or his lawful detention for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority;
    5. the lawful detention of persons for the prevention of the spreading of infectious diseases, of persons of unsound mind, alcoholics or drug addicts or vagrants;
    6. the lawful arrest or detention of a person to prevent his effecting an unauthorised entry into the country or of a person against whom action is being taken with a view to deportation or extradition.

2. Everyone who is arrested shall be informed promptly, in a language which he understands, of the reasons for his arrest and of any charge against him.
3. Everyone arrested or detained in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1.c of this article shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorised by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release pending trial. Release may be conditioned by guarantees to appear for trial.
4. Everyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings by which the lawfulness of his detention shall be decided speedily by a court and his release ordered if the detention is not lawful.
5. Everyone who has been the victim of arrest or detention in contravention of the provisions of this article shall have an enforceable right to compensation.

Article 6 – Right to a fair trial

1. In the determination of his civil rights and obligations or of any criminal charge against him, everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law. Judgment shall be pronounced publicly but the press and public may be excluded from all or part of the trial in the interests of morals, public order or national security in a democratic society, where the interests of juveniles or the protection of the private life of the parties so require, or to the extent strictly necessary in the opinion of the court in special circumstances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice.
2. Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law.
3. Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the following minimum rights:
    1. to be informed promptly, in a language which he understands and in detail, of the nature and cause of the accusation against him;
    2. to have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defence;
    3. to defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing or, if he has not sufficient means to pay for legal assistance, to be given it free when the interests of justice so require;

4. to examine or have examined witnesses against him and to obtain the attendance and examination of witnesses on his behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against him;
5. to have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court.

Article 7 – No punishment without law

1. No one shall be held guilty of any criminal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a criminal offence under national or international law at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the criminal offence was committed.
2. This article shall not prejudice the trial and punishment of any person for any act or omission which, at the time when it was committed, was criminal according to the general principles of law recognised by civilised nations.

Article 8 – Right to respect for private and family life

1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.
2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Article 9 – Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
2. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Article 10 – Freedom of expression

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This article shall not prevent States from

requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.

2. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

Article 11 – Freedom of assembly and association

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.
2. No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on the exercise of these rights by members of the armed forces, of the police or of the administration of the State.

Article 12 – Right to marry

Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to found a family, according to the national laws governing the exercise of this right.

Article 13 – Right to an effective remedy

Everyone whose rights and freedoms as set forth in this Convention are violated shall have an effective remedy before a national authority notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity.

Article 14 – Prohibition of discrimination

The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

Article 15 – Derogation in time of emergency

1. In time of war or other public emergency threatening the life of the nation any High Contracting Party may take measures derogating

from its obligations under this Convention to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation, provided that such measures are not inconsistent with its other obligations under international law.

2. No derogation from Article 2, except in respect of deaths resulting from lawful acts of war, or from Articles 3, 4 (paragraph 1) and 7 shall be made under this provision.
3. Any High Contracting Party availing itself of this right of derogation shall keep the Secretary General of the Council of Europe fully informed of the measures which it has taken and the reasons therefor. It shall also inform the Secretary General of the Council of Europe when such measures have ceased to operate and the provisions of the Convention are again being fully executed.

Article 16 – Restrictions on political activity of aliens

Nothing in Articles 10, 11 and 14 shall be regarded as preventing the High Contracting Parties from imposing restrictions on the political activity of aliens.

Article 17 – Prohibition of abuse of rights

Nothing in this Convention may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein or at their limitation to a greater extent than is provided for in the Convention.

Article 18 – Limitation on use of restrictions on rights

The restrictions permitted under this Convention to the said rights and freedoms shall not be applied for any purpose other than those for which they have been prescribed.

IV. The 1992 Brussels Affirmation

We, a group of evangelical leaders from various organisations and churches in Europe, participating in the EUROPA 92 consultation, affirm:

1. our need to re-evaluate our attitudes towards the process of European union in general and the European Community (now Union) in particular, and to repent from our apathy towards involvement in this process.

2. that the institution of government, whether of the single nation-state or multi-national (as with Rome or the EC/EU), is a God-ordained sphere of authority (Romans 13:1-7); and that civil servants and politicians are called 'ministers of God' (*diakonos* - Roms 13:4), and are to be obeyed when operating within their God-given authority.

3. that we as Christians have a primary duty to pray for such government officials, both of nation-states and of the EC/EU, for wise and just government, so that conditions of social 'quiet and peace' might facilitate the preaching of the gospel (1 Tim 2:1-4);

4. that the original vision of the EC/EU was not primarily economic, but rather, consistent with biblical values, aimed to reconcile the warring European nations into a true community of nations, laying aside their 'tribal squabbles';

5. that in the real world, results do not always follow intentions, and that several ares of concern need ongoing monitoring:

- the tendency for economic and material values to dominate the decision-making processes of the EC/EU;
- a potentially alarming democratic deficit in these processes, which could lead to misuse of power;
- the speed of developments in recent years which increases the danger of autocratic decision-making;
- the possibility for non-biblical worldviews to dominate the spiritual values which will guide the new Europe;

6. that we must explore and grasp the numerous opportunities, created by the process of European unity,

- for evangelism and mission in those lands with limited freedom of worship;
- for collective action towards aiding the rebuilding of the newly liberated central and eastern European lands;

- for evangelical Christians to help shape the spiritual character and values of the emerging new Europe.

7. that issues challenging European union and true community today, such as rascism, nationalism, the rise of Islam, the influx of refugees, and the environment, can only be sufficiently responded to from a biblical perspective, which transcends race, nation and culture, offers a secure hope allowing for tolerance to rival worldviews, calls for God's people to hospitality and compassion, and requires wise stewardship of earth's resources;

8. and that the power of the gospel has both preserving *(salt)* and saving *(light)* dimensions, and therefore we must apply God's word to every sphere of life affected by sin, including politics, economics and social issues.

The SCHUMAN CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES should not be confused with the following institutions:

- **FONDATION ROBERT SCHUMAN**/THE ROBERT SCHUMAN FOUNDATION**,** founded in 1991 after the fall of the Berlin Wall, is established in Paris and Brussels, to promote European values and ideals both within the Union's frontiers as well as beyond. The Foundation, which is a reference research centre, develops studies on the European Union and its policies promoting the content of these in France, Europe and elsewhere in the world. See *www.robert-schuman.eu*

- **THE ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES (RSCAS)** is devoted to inter-disciplinary, comparative, and policy research on the major issues on the European integration process. The RSCAS was set up in 1992 as a centre of the **European University Institute** in San Domenico di Fiesole (FI), Italy, to develop inter-disciplinary and comparative research and to promote work on the major issues facing the process of integration and European society.
  See *www.eui.eu/DepartmentsAndCentres/RobertSchumanCentre/Index.aspx*

- **THE ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES AND RESEARCH**/CENTRE D'ETUDES ET DE RECHERCHES EUROPÉENNES ROBERT SCHUMAN **(CERE),** based in Luxembourg, was founded in 1990 to promote knowledge of the history of European unification. See *www.cere.etat.lu*

- **CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES** is a Brussels-based think tank committed to promoting intellectual liberty, raising awareness and facilitating the growth of EU politics from the perspective of the ideologies and the central values of the European Peoples Party (EPP) and its centre-right partners.
  See *www.thinkingeurope.eu*

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