



JEEP 2018
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1. Committee on Regional Development

Topic : local interests are splitting the Union

European unity might at least change a situation in which the ally of one epoch may become the enemy of the next, a fact which illustrates the essential coldness and brutality of much politics. We often construe inter-state relations in terms of the metaphor of friends and foes, but misleadingly. A great power, as many statesmen have said, has no friends, merely interests, and interests change. Blood dries quickly, remarked Charles De Gaulle, and countries do indeed rapidly forget the enmities of yesteryear. The idea of friendship in international politics is merely sentimental overlay concealing calculations of national interest. But what is national interest?
K. Minogue, *Politics. A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 1995

The Union in itself is a way of controlling nationalism that fostered war: but can a state operate if there is no common feeling to sustain it? Can a European spirit develop to sustain a full European federation?

The constitution of the European Union (so far not adopted) in the usual way carries a preamble. In a civilisation of mixed origins there was naturally argument over what it should contain. The pope wanted Christianity acknowledged; the Germans would have accepted this, but France, the home and nurturer of Enlightenment, fiercely opposed. So it is not Christianity that is acknowledged, but more vaguely Europe's religious inheritance, which is joined to the humanism from the Renaissance and to its culture generally. Enlightenment is the dominant influence, for a Europe committed to the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person is to follow the path of progress and prosperity. And nationalism will be transcended for while remaining proud of their own national identities and history, the peoples of Europe are determined to transcend their former divisions and, united ever more closely, to forge a common destiny.

J. Hirst, *The Shortest History of Europe*, Black Inc Australia, 2009

The regions of Europe are national and transnational entities: with increasing frequency local interests clash with those designated by the central authority of the single countries and with

the directives from Brussels as well. This is why misunderstandings grow, the States argue with one another, local entities argue with national Governments, and people start to perceive Europe more and more distant. Therefore, how can we restore the old atmosphere of agreement between European countries? Have we ever really had this agreement? Would it make more sense to propose any cooperation between States in terms of friendship or interest? Can we rebuild constructive relations out of the cynicism of the sentence attributed to Charles De Gaulle?

2. Committee on Culture and Education

Topic : SOS : new politics is strongly needed

In our time, *Thomas Mann remarked*, the destiny of man presents its meaning in political terms. *This is certainly true in a lot of bores in universities who believe that one cannot enjoy a poem or conduct a love affair without at the same time making a political statement. At a common-sense level this view is no less foolish than the sub-Freudian opinion that everything we do is a sexual revelation.*

Common sense is the point. In politics things are real and propositions are (more or less) true or false. People bleed and die. Politics, with difficulty, sustains the common world in which we may talk to each other. Politics is the activity by which the framework of human life is sustained: it is not life itself. The sceptical philosopher, the moral relativist, the rancorous academic social critic, the religious visionary and the artistic seer have their place in our civilization, but their intrusion into politics has not been happy, especially during the last two centuries. Experience shows that politics, for all its capacity to order many ways of life, needs to keep its distance from these adventures.

K. Minogue, *Politics. A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 1995

In all European countries people complain about their contemporary politicians, because they think there are no more politicians who are aware of the courage needed in decision making for the future of their countries. Politics seem to be reduced to a field of endless fights, where the interests of ordinary people do not seem to be taken into account anymore. First of all, the European society must train and educate a new ruling class of politicians, along with a new political consciousness of the common good and common sense which should belong to all European citizens. But, what politics must young people be taught? Should they be taught the politics suggested by Thomas Mann, invading every field of life, or the more cynical, detached and craft politics suggested by Minogue?

3. Committee on Human Rights

Topic : The destroying strength of our fears

The leaders of French Revolution were men of the Enlightenment; they had very clear liberal and egalitarian principles. Their slogan was liberty, equality and fraternity. The Assembly issued its Manifesto under the title Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen; these were rights not just for the French, they were rights for all mankind. These are in summary form its chief articles:

- *Men are born and remain free and equal in rights.*
- *These rights are liberty, prosperity, security and resistance to oppression.*
- *Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else*
- *No one shall be disturbed on account of his opinions, including his religious views.*

- Every citizen may speak, write and print with freedom, but will be responsible for abuses of this freedom as defined by law.

J. Hirst, *The Shortest History of Europe*, Black Inc Australia, 2009

The quotations from the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* are a summary by the author himself. Relying on our most significant cultural traditions, and going through dramatic historical evidence, we have built a society made of rights and duties, a society based on respect for the human beings, regardless of their race, their sex or their opinions. But the dream of a society made of constitutional States crumbles under the fears that influence us and that are caused by problems arising from terrorism, from the arrival of migrants, from the difficult economic conditions, from the uncertainty about the future of our youth. We are trading off rights for security, we are selling two hundred years of history to preserve the amenities that the welfare society earned. What happened to the rights we fought for? What can be done to restore them?

4. Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Topic : A new humanism for a new sustainability

It cannot be emphasized enough how everything is interconnected. It follows that the fragmentation of knowledge and the isolation of bits of information can actually become a form of ignorance, unless they are integrated into a broader vision of reality. When we speak of the environment, what we really mean is a relationship existing between nature and the society which lives in it. Recognizing the reasons why a given area is polluted requires a study of the workings of society, its economy, its behaviour patterns and the way it grasps reality. Given the scale of change, it is no longer possible to find a specific, discrete answer for each part of the problem. It is essential to seek comprehensive solutions which consider the interactions within natural systems themselves and with social systems. We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to defeat poverty, restore dignity to the excluded and, at a same time, protect nature.

Pope Francis I, *Laudato si – Encyclical Letter on care for our common home*, Vatican Editions, 2015

To bring our human population in line with the biocapacity of the planet and transform our society from scarcity to sustainable abundance, we will need to address the great disparity in ecological footprint between the rich and poor, while simultaneously lowering the overall human population on Earth. (J. Rifkin)

Are we still able to understand this interconnectedness between different worlds and realities? If our culture has become so specialised and fragmentary, how can we recover the taste in cohesiveness, the magnitude of the real? It is up to the new generations to rethink the world in all its complexity and to imagine a new model of society which manages to bring together different aspects peacefully. We need to think about and implement a new model of sustainability as soon as possible, before our society becomes uncontrollable.

5. Committee on Foreign Affairs

Topic : Our identity first

Americans are so used to thinking of our country as the most successful on earth, they might be

surprised to learn that, by many measures, this is no longer the case. In just a few decades, the European Union has grown to become the third-largest governing institution in the world. Though its landmass is half the size of the continental United States, its \$10.5 trillion gross domestic product now eclipses the U.S. GDP, making it the world's largest economy. The European Union is already the world's leading exporter and largest internal trading market. Sixty-one of the 140 biggest companies on the Global Fortune 500 rankings are European, while only 50 are U.S. companies.

The comparisons between the world's two great superpowers are even more revealing when it comes to the quality of life. For example, in the European Union, there are approximately 322 physicians per 100,000 people, whereas in the United States there are only 279. The United States ranks 26th among the industrial nations in infant mortality, well below the EU average. The average life span in the 15 most developed EU countries is now 78.01 years, compared to 76.9 years in the United States.

Children in 12 European nations now rank higher in mathematics literacy than their American peers, and in 8 European countries children outscore Americans in scientific literacy. When it comes to wealth distribution -- a crucial measure of a country's ability to deliver on the promise of prosperity -- the United States ranks 24th among the industrial nations. All 18 of the most developed European countries have less income inequality between rich and poor. There are now more poor people living in America than in the 16 European nations for which data are available. America is also a more dangerous place to live. The U.S. homicide rate is four times higher than the European Union's. Even more disturbing, the rates of childhood homicides, suicides, and firearm-related deaths in the United States exceed those of the other 25 wealthiest nations, including the 14 wealthiest European countries. Although the United States is only 4 percent of the world's population, it now contains one-quarter of the world's entire prison population. While the EU member states average 87 prisoners per 100,000 people, the U.S. averages an incredible 685 prisoners per 100,000 people.

*J. Rifkin, *The European Dream – How Europe's Vision of the Future is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream*, J.P.Tarcher Inc., 2004*

In 2004, in the aftermath of the big EU expansion to former Communist Eastern countries and the Mediterranean islands, the great American economist predicted a future of success for our Union, a new dream that would replace the American dream for the people in the world. Then Europe showed a vision towards the future which was far more convincing than the American one, already obsolescent: the comparison was made on the data of real life, not on financial rates far from everyday reality. Therefore, what happened? Are we lost? Was Rifkin wrong when he exalted us, or did we lose our compass? We will never have a good place among the other nations in the world if we do not get back our identity first.

6. Committee on Legal Affairs

Topic : New laws for a better Europe

It is tempting to understand the progress of European integration as a process of growing centrality of human rights in the European legal order: human rights as being ever more important for the ever closer union. The story has been told many times: although human rights did not figure in the original Treaties, they steadily gained in importance from the late 1960s on.¹ This process appears to have accelerated recently. A most prominent piece of evidence is European Council's decision at its Cologne summit that a human rights charter should be drafted for the European Union because "[P]rotection of fundamental rights is a founding principle of

the Union and an indispensable prerequisite for her legitimacy.... There appears to be a need ... to establish a Charter of fundamental rights in order to make their overriding importance and relevance more visible to the Union's citizens [...]

The Union as an organization focused on progressive human rights policy would easily endanger the European constitutional set-up between the Union and the Member States without any real need for protecting human rights, at least as they are traditionally understood. Given the strong centralizing effects, a forceful human rights policy will, nevertheless, be advocated by those who wish courageous steps to be taken to strengthen the European federation.¹⁵⁰ Europe could finish its federalizing process under the flag of human rights. This prospect is certainly more appealing, at least from a legal perspective, than a similar development arising from a common defence or a common currency.

A. von Bogdandy, The European Union as a Human Rights Organization? Human Rights and the Core of the European Union, Common Market Law Review, 37, 2000.

The time has come to think over the EU laws. Historical treaties and even the Maastricht agreements or the founding texts of the Euro belong to a world that no longer exists: the fall of the Berlin wall changed the history and paved the way to the triumph of the free market capitalist, who however lost control very soon, as evidenced by the severe crisis of 2008 not yet settled. New laws should focus more on human rights and rules of solidarity between States and within each State, rather than insisting on strict economic and financial rules which are helping to disrupt the already fragile Union.

7. Committee on Security and Defence

Topic : Do we need a new Schengen Agreement ?

The Schengen system and its precursors (the [Nordic Passport Union](#) dates from 1954 and passport controls were abolished between Benelux countries [in 1970](#)) are based on the idea that if external borders are adequately secured, internal borders can effectively be removed. The second part of this is that as crime can also happen cross-border, collaboration between police forces needs to be stepped up to combat this threat. In addition, the Dublin regulation stipulates that the country where a refugee first enters the European Union is the place where she must seek asylum.

Trust is implicit within this system. The Swedes need to be reassured that the Greeks are adequately controlling people entering their territory, the French need to know that the Belgians are investigating terrorist suspects and passing the relevant information on to them, and Poland wants to know that refugees on boats across the Mediterranean are applying for asylum in Italy.

The problem is that none of these three components seem to work adequately any more, and trust has been severely tested. The reaction of many [European Union](#) countries is simply to resort to the systems of the past – to build border fences and set up border posts once again, and to temporarily suspend Schengen and call its very future into question. But this doesn't solve the challenges Europe faces.

J. Worth, Cancelling the Schengen Agreement won't make Europe Safer, Theguardian.com, 2015

The founding fathers of the Euro wanted banknotes to show drawings of bridges and windows of various ages that characterized the extraordinary history of our continent. There were bridges to symbolise all the possible links of peace which avoid the devastating wars of the last centuries , and windows to show openness and hospitality. The Schengen Agreement, made in 1985 and perfected in the following decades, is in its way a practical application of this utopian peace. But today we are building walls and barriers to block migrants, we are closing our doors and windows for fear of terrorism. Would a review of the Shengen agreement help us exorcise our nightmares and allow us to recover the path of peace and prosperity?