

Schuman Paper
n°776
21st January 2025

De Gasperi - Schuman: the origins of the European Project

Jean-Dominique GIULIANI
Luigi GIANNITI

To mark the 70th anniversary of the death of Alcide De Gasperi, the Robert Schuman Foundation and the Fondazione Alcide De Gasperi organised an [event](#) in Paris on 15th January. We are publishing two of the speeches given at this conference.

THOSE WHO CHANGED THE COURSE OF EUROPE'S HISTORY

There were three of them, Schuman, Adenauer, De Gasperi.

They were joined by their Belgian, Dutch and Luxembourg counterparts.

They transformed Europe's destiny.

As we pay tribute to Alcide De Gasperi, it is worth remembering the similarities between the French Foreign Minister and the Italian Prime Minister.

Their personal experiences were similar

Born of different nationalities, they grew up under the occupation of their regions by their neighbours. As frontiersmen, they constantly sought to overcome those borders.

Entering politics late in life, they were persecuted by a dictatorial regime and protected by the Catholic Church, whose faith they shared.

Promoted to the highest responsibilities, they had to solve problems that were far more important than those we face today. The return to the rule of law and the concert of democratic nations, peace in Europe through the construction of Europe, for which Alcide De Gasperi played a decisive role, and of which Robert Schuman was, by his side, the tireless architect.

But it also involved the signing of key treaties that brought peace after the end of the Second World War: The Council of Europe, the European Community of Steel and Coal, NATO, etc. They were the authors of those treaties, along with others of course, but they were at the forefront.

These two eminent personalities also shared a common approach to public action. They were humble to the point of austerity, not very fond of grand speeches, but their strong principles, or rather their natural goodness, did not detract from their firmness or their steadfastness over the long term.

Alcide De Gasperi had to calm the irredentist ardour of some of his compatriots to allow Italy to regain its statehood, while Robert Schuman, then President of the Council, faced insurrectional strikes already inspired from the outside.

Both were respected for their authority, which came naturally from their personalities

This is why their message is still so topical, and why these brief reminders are still relevant lessons for us today.

Looking ahead means anticipating unforeseeable developments, but it also equipping one's country in preparation for them, and therefore for prospects, this was their duty and their success.

European integration remains the common thread running through these shared visions. It represented the most improbable common good at the time of its foundation and the most indispensable today.

A pragmatic Europe, far removed from the polemics and approximations that are all too often widespread, a Europe that respects the sovereignty of the States but demands a genuine and constant commitment from them, a united Europe that is the stuff of dreams on the outside while some are disillusioned within. Today, it is an integral part of public action in our countries. It owes this to these two personalities. We owe it to their memory to make it grow and to protect it.

For Alcide De Gasperi, it was no easy task to help Italy rebuild itself after the experience of dictatorship, to rediscover all that we love about it, drawn from its history and immense culture, its immoderate taste for democracy, that dynamism and inimitable *savoir-vivre* that European nations sometimes lack. He did this right up to his last breath, leaving too soon to celebrate the Treaty of Rome, but it must be said that his commitment to Europe was decisive in enabling its adoption.

This political courage, which I believe was shared by Robert Schuman, and which can also be compared to what Konrad Adenauer had to face, is in my view the true nobility of public action: its leaders must lead change and not follow the opinion of the moment. It is by fulfilling this duty that they rise to the level of the greatest and that history remembers their name because they acted for the common good.

Our continent now faces other difficulties

In fact, Europe has some very real enemies; it is also facing turbulent and reckless allies who do not always

understand what we have built, the rule of law, a social order based on solidarity, fair rules, the rejection of discrimination and violence, even if it is verbal. These are therefore difficult times, and more than ever they call for unity, calm, strength and conviction, as demonstrated by Europe's founding Fathers.

Europe must learn to behave as an autonomous power, uniting its peoples around shared values, in alliance with our major partners, but without compromise or weakness.

Faced with the upheavals currently underway the worst thing would be to wait and do nothing.

'Niente facendo s'impara a far male' (*Doing nothing teaches us that it is to do things badly*) is an Italian proverb.

This is the main lesson of our great post-war leaders, who never stopped working for their peoples.

In view of the state of the world, Europeans must now act with resolve.

History is about great personalities meeting in exceptional circumstances. They demonstrated this at the time. In the 21st century, we are already standing before these...

Remembering Alcide De Gasperi's contribution to the history of Italy, Europe and beyond is an obligation that must inspire new ambitions. We must convince ourselves of this and work towards it, and like him, always remain optimistic!

Jean-Dominique Giuliani

Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation

FRANCO-ITALIAN FRIENDSHIP AT THE HEART OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Leaving the Quai d'Orsay, which he had entered in 1948 as Minister of Foreign Affairs under nine different governments (a record in the eventful life of the Fourth Republic), Robert Schuman bid farewell to his colleague and friend Alcide De Gasperi, writing: *'We met late in life, but our friendship was deep and unreserved. We were undoubtedly predestined for each other at a time when a new policy for our countries was taking shape'*. That was in February 1953. A few months later, Alcide De Gasperi's government experience - first as Foreign Minister, then as Prime Minister from 1944 to July 1953 - would also come to an end.

They had met late in life, of course, but their friendship was *'unreserved'* because it was based on shared life experiences and aspirations[1].

Robert Schuman became a French citizen at the age of thirty-two. Originally from Lorraine, born in Luxembourg, he had been German until 1918 and had studied in Berlin. He was elected to the Chamber of Deputies in 1919 and entered French political life, while Alcide De Gasperi, born an Austro-Hungarian citizen, moved from the Parliament in Vienna to the one in Rome at the age of thirty-seven.

Both represented the Catholic electorate in their regions (Lorraine and Trentino). Both fought to guarantee the autonomy of their 'little homelands', their traditions, in two secular, centralising states[2]. This commitment had already marked Alcide De Gasperi's experience as a young member of parliament in Vienna starting in 1911[3].

In short, it was a parallel political and human journey, of two men who did not know each other but who had a great deal of reading and experience in common[4].

In a way, their experience was also parallel in the dramatic moments that both countries experienced in the following years.

To maintain the unity of the People's Party group, Alcide De Gasperi first considered the possibility of working with the fascists by voting in favour of Mussolini's first ministry. Almost twenty years later, in invaded and defeated France, Robert Schuman was one of the 549 members of parliament who voted in favour of Marshal Pétain's full powers. When the fascist regime showed its true colours with the assassination of Matteotti, Alcide De Gasperi was clearly in opposition; he was first arrested and then spent the following years until his release in the Vatican Apostolic Library. Robert Schuman was imprisoned by the Nazis in September 1940, then confined to Germany; miraculously, he escaped deportation to the concentration camps.

Those were years of reading, study and solitary reflection for both of them[5].

Once the war was over, the two statesmen were protagonists in the democratic renaissance of their countries, helping to found parties, Christian Democracy (DC) and the People's Republican Movement (MRP), which had their roots in the great tradition of liberal, democratic Catholicism[6].

Their first meeting took place in November 1948

Alcide De Gasperi was in Brussels at the invitation of the Committee of Major Catholic Conferences. He gave a remarkable speech on *"the moral foundations of democracies"*. On this occasion, he declared: *'The spirit of European solidarity can create, in various fields, different instruments of safeguard and defence, but the first defence of peace lies in the united effort which, by including Germany, will eliminate the danger of a war of revenge and retaliation'*.

The success of this event prompted the Italian ambassador Quaroni to organise a meeting in Paris with Robert Schuman[7]. Alcide De Gasperi was not looking forward to going to Paris though, as he

[1] On the subject of De Gasperi, Schuman wrote to a friend: *'I have a great deal of confidence in Alcide De Gasperi, who has his feet firmly on the ground and could be from "back home"*; Schuman was thus alluding to the Italian politician's German upbringing.

[2] Schuman's first parliamentary addresses were designed to defend the specific features of Alsace-Moselle law. During one speech he declared: *'these institutions are clearly superior to the corresponding norms of our law. We could not think of suddenly depriving the recovered departments of these institutions; we had to keep them, adapt them to the Civil Code as a whole, to see if French legislation would be inspired by them in the near future'*.

[3] Even then, De Gasperi had an original approach to the conjunction of the 'national' question and the 'European' question; his polemics with Battisti's irredentism were heavily exploited first by the Fascists and then after the war. On the eve of the Second World War, in 1938, reflecting on the multi-ethnic character of Central and Eastern Europe, he was already calling for the need to rely on a supranational body to guarantee the 'rights of minorities' in the islands and mixed zones of the new states created by the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The fight for autonomy and decentralisation would become part of the programme of the People's Party, of which De Gasperi was one of the founders. The problem of autonomy in Trentino was thus placed by De Gasperi in the wider context of the organisation of the State, which had to focus on the development of individuals and the community. See Daniela Preda, *Alcide De Gasperi, fédéraliste européen*, Bologna, 2004.

[4] We even find in De Gasperi's writings a complete knowledge of the situation in Alsace-Moselle: how these regions had succeeded in obtaining a large degree of autonomy. Recalling this experience, De Gasperi challenged the initial attitude of the Italian administration, writing in an article published in 1919 that *'our political redemption does not mean the passage from one domination to another, but the liberation from a dominion to be taken into a family of brothers and equals'*. See: *Against censorship*, *Il nuovo Trentino*, 10 April 1919.

remembered the frosty reception he had received at the peace treaty conference. The meeting with Robert Schuman was decisive for both of them. De Gasperi recalls in his notes: *'Clear, concrete, comforting was the conversation with Schuman who appeared to me to be a man of considerable importance and of wide-ranging and controlled information. He declared that France, when we wished, was ready to support our accession to the Brussels Pact or, with America's consent, to encourage any other form of collaboration that we wished. He promised to keep us informed, in loyal friendship, of the desirability or advisability of any initiative we might wish to take. He acknowledged that England was always the first to suspect continentalism: France's interest in the defence of the East was too obvious for us not to feel the importance of the Italian contribution. He felt that our countries had the same view of Germany: on the one hand, the need to wrest it from nationalist or communist temptations and, on the other, the need to be cautious'*. Thus began a collaboration between the two men, and therefore between the two governments, that would prove decisive for the construction of Europe[8].

In December 1948, Robert Schuman invited Carlo Sforza, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Cannes. This meeting resolved all the problems between the two countries and defined a customs union project between Italy and France, the first step towards the construction of a common area[9].

It was Robert Schuman who, in the months that followed, kept the Italian authorities fully informed regarding the preparation of the Atlantic Pact. Throughout the negotiations, right up to the conclusion, France's support was essential for Italy's participation, since it was one of the first countries to create the Atlantic Alliance.

In this climate of confidence, Italy was the first country to sign up to Robert Schuman's proposal of 9 May 1950. It was clear that this was the first serious attempt to create a supranational authority in modern Europe.

The impetus provided by the United States was crucial[10]

Also in Paris, a few months later, in October, another initiative was launched: that of a European army. This was the Pleven Plan. It was discussed by René Pleven himself, De Gasperi, Schuman and Sforza at a Franco-Italian summit in Santa Margherita in Liguria on 12 and 13 February 1951. At that time *'the meeting between De Gasperi and Schuman went beyond occasional and political reasons. The spirituality that inspired them both gave their intelligence and their desire for peace a depth and a commitment that enabled them to easily overcome contingencies in order to tackle broader problems'*[11]. The foundations were thus laid for a qualitative leap forward in the integration process[12].

Two days later, the Intergovernmental Conference charged with studying the structure of the European army opened in Paris. Major problems arose, starting with the financial question. Alcide De Gasperi, in a famous speech to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on 10 December 1951, spoke of the need to *'create a stable bridge between the nations'*, based on two pillars: *'the main pillar must be represented by a common deliberative and elected body, also endowed with powers of decision and control over what is administered in common (...). The second pillar would be a common budget deriving a significant part of its revenue from a system of taxation'*. On the same occasion, Robert Schuman posed the question of the need for political integration in similar terms: *'We see that a genuine transfer of sovereignty applying to the executive alone would not suffice in the case of the European army. At the same time, a common parliament and common resources would have to be created'*.

Alcide De Gasperi was already clear-sighted at the time about the difficulties of a supranational body financed essentially by national contributions. *'History teaches us that the form of national contributions, as an exclusive system for meeting*

[5] Among the rare reading material allowed in prison were a few volumes of the history of the popes by the German historian Ludwig Pastor, a work that De Gasperi translated into Italian.

[6] From 1919, Schuman was in contact with the leaders of the 'Seminaires Sociales', whose sessions he attended. In a speech he gave in 1922 to the Social Days of the Catholic Youth of Lorraine, he concluded with an exposé of the doctrine of the Social Catholics who called for the State to *'intervene in a subsidiary way, with the aim of helping and complementing private initiative'*. He concluded by praising Catholicism, *'which survives all human systems and knows how to adapt to all needs'*. Schuman's Christian-Social orientation was in line with the encyclicals *Rerum novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*. We know that Schuman had a meeting in Paris on 30th March 1925 with Don Sturzo, founder of the People's Party, who was forced into exile by the fascist regime. Along with Catholic MPs, Robert Schuman attended Joan of Arc celebrations in Rouen and then went to Rome on 15 and 16 May 1920 to attend the ceremonies for her canonisation. We know that he had already travelled to Rome in 1909 with his mother for the beatification and that he was truly devoted to his 'Yellow Lorraine native'. He came to Rome for the Jubilee of 1925 and returned to the Italian capital several times: *'I earn my Jubilee indulgence in the midst of the countless emotions that any stay in Rome brings. Rome remains eternally unique'*. It is interesting to look at the relationships he had forged in Rome among the French and members of the Curia. As a young man, he met Eugène Tisserant, a future cardinal from Lorraine, who in the 1930s, as prefect of the Vatican library, was close to De Gasperi, as Alberto Melloni recalls: Alcide De Gasperi alla Biblioteca Vaticana (1929-1943), in

Alcide De Gasperi: un percorso europeo, Bologna, 2005.

[7] V. D. Preda, op. cit. p, and P. Quaroni, in *Il mondo di un ambasciatore*, Ferro edizioni, Milan, 1965, who wrote: *'It was not easy to persuade De Gasperi to stay in Paris. The treatment he had received in Paris during the famous peace treaty negotiations had greatly offended his heart. He was left with an almost morbid distrust, and he wouldn't believe me when I assured him that the atmosphere was already beginning to look quite different. The train from Brussels had arrived quite late:*

common expenses, can lead to dangerous divergences and contain the seeds of dissolution'. The following day, De Gasperi, who had in the meantime taken up the post of Foreign Minister, took part, along with Schuman, in the conference of six Foreign Ministers responsible for drafting the text of the treaty. His involvement in this session and in the meetings of the following months focused on the political aspects of integration: he called for the EDC Parliamentary Assembly to be given a constituent mandate.

The resistance of the Benelux countries was only overcome thanks to Schuman's support and negotiating skills. It was Schuman himself who proposed the wording of the text, which would later become article 38 of the ECSC Treaty, instructing the ECSC Parliamentary Assembly to deal with an *'organisation of a definitive nature (...) conceived in such a way as to be able to constitute one of the elements of a subsequent federal or confederal structure, based on the principle of the separation of powers and including, in particular, a bicameral representative system'*. Article 38 sets out the stages and deadlines for this constituent phase: the Assembly formulates its proposals within six months, and these are forwarded to the governments of the Member States, which must convene an Intergovernmental Conference within three months to examine them.

The foundations were laid for a genuine constituent phase

Addressing the Assembly of the Council of Europe again in September 1952, Alcide De Gasperi recalled that *'as soon as the treaty establishing the EDC (signed on 27 May 1952) was signed, Robert Schuman and I immediately began work on a joint proposal to be submitted to our colleagues (...) with a view to creating a European political authority open to all countries'*.

But these two great protagonists of European life were about to leave the stage: Robert Schuman ended his term at the head of the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs at the beginning of 1953 and De Gasperi left the Italian government in the summer of the same year.

In Italy, the new government was slow to present Parliament with the bill to ratify the treaty, even though it had already been ratified by Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. In France, on 30 August 1954, faced with an increasingly broad front of opponents - the Communists, the Gaullists and part of the Socialist group - Prime Minister Pierre Mendès-France let the EDC drift, and it was abruptly defeated by a procedural vote (319 to 264).

The date was 30 August 1954. Alcide De Gasperi had died eleven days earlier and right up to the end, although seriously ill, he spared no effort to find solutions.

One of his last letters was addressed to Robert Schuman, begging him to accept the post of President of the European Federalist Movement.

Robert Schuman, who was committed to the battle for ratification of the treaty right up to the end, wrote years later, on the eve of his death: in the process of European integration *'it is advisable to proceed by stages, in sectors that are psychologically mature and where particular technical facilities suggest that a spectacular result can be expected'*. In the case of the EDC, he admitted that *'we are not always in control of the choices to be made or the order of urgency of the problems (...); the EDC, designed to avoid the reconstitution of a German national army and its general staff, was prematurely imposed on public opinion by the Berlin blockade and the Korean War. We must prepare people's minds to accept European solutions by combating everywhere not only claims to hegemony and the belief in superiority, but also the narrowness of political nationalism, autarchic protectionism and cultural isolationism'*[13].

The rejection of the EDC in France marked the demise of the Christian Democrat centre and, more

De Gasperi changed quickly, but you don't go from travelling suit to tails in five minutes: the guests had already arrived. You know, I'm very happy to meet De Gasperi', Schuman said to me in his quiet accent, and there really was a curious light in his eyes that I had never seen before, and then they began to talk, at length, in a corner of the embassy's blue drawing room. A curious contrast: De Gasperi's hooked, almost aggressive profile matched Schuman's concave profile: the prominent, slightly protruding forehead, the nose tucked in like a slipper, we might say, the wide, thin mouth and then, suddenly, the aggressive chin, thrust forward. Both looked at each other, staring at each other: De Gasperi, his gaze above his glasses, as if taking someone's measurements; Schuman, as if withdrawn into himself, a little from the bottom to the top. That evening, De Gasperi's hands seemed to be unleashed, cutting the air sharply in all directions; Schuman's hands rested motionless, large, gnarled, hooked, on his knees. Schuman's imperturbable calm: 'I never saw him lose his composure or raise his voice, always cool, patient, courteous, in private conversations, in front of journalists, in front of Parliament, a Parliament that was not always easy or kind to him'.

[8] *'We lived for a long time on the border of our national mindset; we thought in the same way and we understand today's problems in the same way', see Jacques Dumaine, Quai d'Orsay 1947-1951, Paris, Julliard, 1955.*

[9] C. Sforza, *Cinque anni a Palazzo Chigi*, Roma, 1952.

[10] Eisenhower, then NATO commander, declared in a long speech in London on 4 July 1951: *"Europe cannot attain the towering material stature possible to its peoples' skills and spirits so long as it is divided by patchwork territorial fences. They foster localized instead of common interest!". And he added: "But with unity achieved, Europe could build adequate security and, at the same time, continue the march of human betterment that has characterized Western civilization"*.

[11] Maria Romana De Gasperi, in *La nostra patria Europa*, Milan, 1969, recalls the depth of understanding between the two statesmen. She also recalls that during a subsequent conversation between Plevén, the French Prime Minister, and De Gasperi

generally, of a political class that had seen in a genuine sharing of sovereignty, the key to their country's new international role[14]. Germany's rearmament did not take place within the framework of a European army - which would have been more in line with the French national interest - but within the framework of a German national army within the Atlantic Alliance.

Today, perhaps European public opinion, faced with the challenge of war on the borders of the European Union, and those posed by its American ally, is mature and ready for a more courageous step.

Recalling the experience of those years and in particular his meeting with De Gasperi, Robert Schuman wrote: *'I sometimes wonder how the realistic prudence of the Lorrain that I am came to be reconciled with so much temerity'*.

But after the disasters of the two world wars, it was clear to him, as it was to Alcide De Gasperi, that there was no choice but to look to the future. *'We had to radically change our visions'*. It was with these words that François Bayrou, who presented his candidacy for the presidency of the Republic in Strasbourg in 2007, wished to pay tribute to Robert Schuman; to *'the memory of this humble man, with a great ideal, a great ambition for his country, a humble man, who didn't like the pomp and circumstance of the Republic, who hated official cars, who refused bodyguards. He would come up to Paris from his Moselle home by train with a sandwich that he had wrapped in greaseproof paper and would eat, and in his briefcase, next to the sandwich, were the most extraordinary files that humanity has ever known in recent millennia'*.

Today, at a particularly complex time in French public life, the Prime Minister is a man who has always claimed a political, intellectual and spiritual affiliation with Robert Schuman[15]. It is true that his government is facing great difficulties and yet, precisely because he is the direct heir to the Christian Democrat tradition, it is to be hoped that

he will be able to take a strong initiative, perhaps with the new German government, which could soon be headed by a Rhineland political leader who claims the heritage of Konrad Adenauer. A European political initiative commensurate with the challenges of the time, which could begin in Paris. France would thus regain the role of key promoter of European integration that it enjoyed with Robert Schuman[16].

In a speech given in Strasbourg in 2007, and quoting Charles Péguy, François Bayrou declared that *'everything begins in mysticism, and everything ends in politics, and in the case of Europe, everything began in mysticism and little by little we have let it slip away into technocracy. Little by little, without realising it, based on good intentions, we have allowed the great European ideal to be reserved or controlled only by experts'*[17].

More than ever before, we need political leaders who can take a step back from day-to-day problems. Who know how to show our fellow citizens major objectives and convince national public opinion of an ambitious project, such as that of a European army, integrated into NATO.

Ambitious but also realistic

Indeed, the text of this treaty opened with the certainty that the integration of European armed forces *'will lead to the most rational and economical use of their countries' resources, in particular through the establishment of a common budget and common armaments programmes'*, so as to *'ensure that the development of their military forces does not affect social progress'*[18].

Alcide De Gasperi concluded his speech in Strasbourg in 1951: *'It is true that each of us has problems in our own country which press us from all sides, it is true that some may wish to continue this work of coordination in other, easier areas, but everyone feels that this is an opportunity which is but a passing one, and which will never come again. We must seize it and make it part of the*

in September 1951, the former demonstrated his readiness to 'accept the Italian thesis of a partial federation with common pre-ministries: defence, foreign affairs, finance'. Plevén had also shown an inclination for all kinds of de facto transactions and accommodations, provided that the first German soldier to be born was in a European uniform (...).

Apart from Schuman's idealism, what drove French politicians was the fear of seeing an autonomous German force emerge, a fear that made them risk all the internal drawbacks of this revolution that would be a European army.

[12] See P.E. Taviani's testimony in *De Gasperi e l'età del centrismo*, Rome, 1984.

[13] *Pour l'Europe*, Robert Schuman, Paris, Nagel, 1963, -

[14] The history of Italy is different from this point of view. Christian Democracy remained the central pivot of all governments for forty years. In the second half of the twentieth century, the Europeanism of the Italian political classes, and of Christian Democracy in particular, 'was to be the guiding star of foreign policy, the greatest contribution to international relations since the time of the republics of Renaissance Italy'. Thus S. Fajolo, *L'idea dell'Europa nelle relazioni internazionali*, Milan, 2009, who observes, however, that 'Italy's European vocation was not always supported by sufficient administrative capacity, wise defence of the national interest, internal solidarity and continuity of government action'.

[15] This legacy was clearly demonstrated at the National Assembly on 14 January 2025, in the government's statement: 'If France is to keep alive its treasure of civilisation and continue to share it with the whole world, Europe must become a strategic community, a power in politics and defence on a par with the economic force it should be. There is only one condition for this: we must agree to define and assert ourselves together. The construction of a political community to bring this community of civilisation to life is the question that has dominated our public life since 1945.' countries

[16] In *Pour l'Europe*, op. cit. Robert Schuman recalls how he prepared the 1950 initiative: 'Before launching this bomb, we had to know how it would be received by the main interlocutors. The main interlocutor for us was the federal government, and that's how we secured the Federal Chancellor's agreement in principle before 9 May. Without this agreement, nothing would have

logic of history. That's why, after paying tribute to the courageous men who started this work and moved it forward, I think it's time to encourage us all to see it through. It is absolutely essential that our task does not fail, that it finds in our countries the collaboration of all the forces of democracy

and social renewal, and that at the same time it restores to all our friends, particularly Americans, faith in the destiny of Europe'.

A message that is timelier now than ever before.

Luigi Gianniti

Member of the Scientific Committee of the
Fondazione De Gasperi

been possible. The other governments - British, Italian, American and those of the Benelux countries - were informed 24 hours before the official proclamation. The surprise was widespread. No one had expected an initiative of this kind, either in France or outside France, and especially not from France. France thus gained an uncontested autonomy in matters of European initiatives, confirmed a few months later with the launch of the Plevin plan, which was nevertheless lost with the vote of 30 August 1954.'

[17] In *Pour l'Europe*, op. cit. Robert Schuman recalled that 'European integration must, in general, avoid the errors of our national democracies, especially the excesses of bureaucracy and technocracy. The complication of the machinery and the accumulation of jobs are no guarantee against abuse but are sometimes themselves the result of one-upmanship and favouritism. Administrative ankylosis is the first danger threatening supranational services.'

[18] The preamble to the Treaty concludes as follows: 'Anxious to safeguard the spiritual and moral values which are the common heritage of their peoples and convinced that within the common force, constituted without discrimination between the participating States, national patriotisms, far from being weakened, can only be consolidated and harmonised within a wider framework; Conscious of thus taking a new and essential step towards the formation of a united Europe.'

You can read all of our publications on our site:
www.robert-schuman.eu/en

Publishing Director: Pascale JOANNIN
ISSN 2402-614X

The opinions expressed in this text are the sole responsibility of the author.

© All rights reserved, Fondation Robert Schuman, 2024

THE FONDATION ROBERT SCHUMAN, created in 1991 and acknowledged by State decree in 1992, is the main French research centre on Europe. It develops research on the European Union and its policies and promotes the content of these in France, Europe and abroad. It encourages, enriches and stimulates European debate thanks to its research, publications and the organisation of conferences. The Foundation is presided over by Mr. Jean-Dominique Giuliani.