

## A CONTINENTAL MANIFESTO

*No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as any manner of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.*

John Donne, 1624

*Europe must federate or perish*

Clement Attlee, 1939

### *Disunited Europe, dependent Europe*

Mankind is growing aware of the Earth's finiteness gradually. Europeans don't rule the world any longer. And that's good. But, their continent, Europe, for lack of unity, is not even able to contribute positively to world governance. That void of power throws relations between continent-wide states out of balance. Since WWII, the USA was never able to solve an international crisis on its own. Russia has not stopped thinking of itself as an empire. Only China is able to dispute the old cold war balance of power. And it is difficult to stabilise a new balance without a united Europe.

The multitude of extreme phenomena – climate change, bio-diversity collapse, explosion of inequalities – are a clear sign of the unsustainability of the growth regime inherited from the European industrial revolution. They signify the Earth's depleted state under the joint effects of productivism, extractivism and consumerism of metals and fossil carbon.

Oil- and gas-producing rentier states harbour illusions of omnipotence. Without a common European energy policy, addiction to fossil fuels has made national energy policies subservient to Middle Eastern and Eurasian autocrats. In the interim, European nation states decided to relinquish their sovereign right to finance deficits or long-run investments through free advances from central banks to treasuries. Ever-growing interest accrued to private banks (the only lenders left), and public indebtedness skyrocketed. So-called “sovereign debt” made national economic and social policies subservient in their turn to the rules and preferences of market finance.

Those twin-dependencies, on both energy and finance, of the disunited nation states of Europe are condemning public policies to an inexorably growing impoverishment, whether their purpose is investment or redistribution. They are a prelude to the extreme hopelessness of rural or derelict areas left behind by manufacturing, while the digital revolution and robots are destroying waged employment massively, and precarity is soaring.

### *A little bit of history to understand better*

To talk about energy and finance disunity is puzzling, given that the beginnings of the EU date back to the pooling of coal and steel production (Paris Treaty, 1951), then of civil atom (Euratom, 1957). And its most recent outcome, which nobody ignores, is a single currency (1999), circulated in 19 Member States. However, **disunity results from France's successive refusals to take any decisive step towards political unity.** The **first refusal** (1954) dismissed the Political Community with the European Defence Community (the second Paris Treaty, 1952). The EDC was yet, just as ECSC and Euratom, a French initiative. That U-turn surprised and disappointed the five partners of

France.

The **second French refusal** opposed a proposal from the Commission including a federal budget (1965). The **third** and **fourth** ones were tacit **rejections of German proposals** to create a first nucleus of a political union (1994) or a federation (2000), the **fifth** one was the negative referendum (2005) about a controversial "constitutional" treaty. While opening the door to parliamentary democracy a bit wider, it locked monetary and economic policies into monetarism and laissez-faire, drifting integration once more away from the founding treaties. Those political biases deprive the Union of any discretion to decide policies and levy autonomous resources on its own. Such discretion was to be missed as soon as a crisis occurred (2008).

Integration has never been more than a long-lasting try at giving Europe the color and taste of unity, without federating it, that is, without addressing the sovereignty issue head on, or in other words without limiting the sovereignty of Member States in favour of a common, limited but real, sovereignty. Member States of the EU stay "sovereign", but that sovereignty of theirs is a dummy one, since they abdicated its reality to foreign or financial powers. **Governments and the Union fooled the public into dangerous beliefs:** (i) that bureaucratic and economic integration would produce a psychological one gradually, and (ii) that integration, making Europeans as well as one Europe, would pave the way to a United States of Europe, as in Victor Hugo's dreams, or the founders' thoughts and wishes. – This to happen later on, always beyond the end of the current term of governments in power.

#### *Disunited Europe, unprepared Europe*

European integration worked well as an interdependence accelerator, but governments have a mandate to govern nation states, not to let Europe as a whole decide and act as a manager of that growing interdependence, especially if things go wrong. Europeans were not prepared to face danger as one people. When the Georgian, financial, Ukrainian, migratory and terrorist crises occurred, Europe was not ready. Those crises seem to have nothing in common. But, in all cases, **the EU couldn't protect itself, in the face of adversity: the crises exposed the Union's incompleteness.**

The Georgian crisis and, even more so, the Ukrainian one, proved that Disunited States of Europe, even nuclear-armed ones, neither deter a powerful neighbour from attacking a weaker one, nor weigh on NATO decisions or US diplomacy in the best interests of Europeans. Energy dependency on the aggressor is a decisive factor of Europe's collective weakness. The eirenic vision of a post-modern Europe, sheltered from war, armed with soft power and excused from hard power responsibilities, is a legacy of liberal internationalism, according to which free trade cures states of *l'esprit de conquête* (the spirit of conquest) and imperialism. A fateful mistake!

A free Europe will be an energy self-sufficient Europe, setting up balanced relationships with the Arab world and Russia. Those regions will make the most of their huge human potential only when they emerge from their current rent economies. A free Europe will be a Europe demonstrating a collective willingness to provide for its own security, and its neighbourhood's as well, through the building up of a common armed force. And, if need be, as a successor to the French nuclear arsenal, a Europe able to protect its territory, and guarantee its integrity without depending on anyone else and to have a seat at the table in order to achieve a world without nuclear arms. All those developments require unity of decision and accountability, as well as negotiating and commanding power that are badly needed in an unfinished Europe.

#### *Emperors have no clothes*

The financial crisis, which came from the USA, shed light on the lack of completion of the monetary union. Without an autonomous tax-and-spend power, the euro area is locked in a straightjacket of "governance by rules", negotiated behind closed doors and imposed on common institutions and national parliaments. As a result, the latter were changed to rubber-stamping houses. No fiscal autonomy of the euro area means no common discretionary policy and, on the contrary, resurgence of "national interests", with Germany's in first place. It would be naive to think that a national interest is the one of a "nation" or a "people", while it is a matter of shared interests, especially in France and Germany, of a country's political class and big corporations, in banking and manufacturing.

**Rebukes from France to Germany at the turn of the century were too much even for the "European Germany" that was, and neighbours have reaped the sour fruit of a "German Europe".** Berlin has built a huge competitive advantage through a negotiated decrease in wages (2000), the deflationary effects of which in the euro area differ little from those of a devaluation under a fixed exchange rate regime. For ideological motives, the German government didn't stimulate demand through public spending, which would have needed a fiscal debt-increasing deficit. They did it by taking market share away from their neighbours. Whether the effects of that corporatist mercantilism were intentional or not, they should make Berlin think twice before boasting about their performance in response to the crisis. If other governments of the euro area had the little courage needed to respond, they should say Germany's current relative prosperity is the product of a theft. Just a little honesty would result in acknowledgement that Berlin had no other choice left, in a Europe of competition between states, to which all of them subscribed and from which they banned solidarity.

On the contrary, those governments are trying, through a reckless imitation of their "German model", to decrease its new competitive advantage, waging against each other a race to the bottom, namely a **competitive deflation**. That unbridled competition between their respective wage, tax and welfare regimes distorts competition between firms, with the same effects on the real economy as **competitive devaluations** in the inter-war period or **competitive disinflation** under the European Monetary System (1979-1999). In that competition between States, the euro area countries have no chance of winning back trade surpluses, unless they rush austerity policies or Germany sets its wages higher again. However, the patent distortions of competition between firms did not preclude governments to renew their commitment to prevent them (Lisbon Treaty, 2009). This is the height of hypocrisy!

Since the financial crisis and the joint bailout of toxic teams of indebted governments and lending banks, there was no lack of decisions, but they came too late and, in the end, they were not enough (European Systemic Risk Board, 2009; European Financial Stability Facility, 2010 and European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism, 2011-13; European Stability Mechanism and European Fiscal Compact, 2012; sovereign debt buy-back by the ECB on secondary markets, 2012; ECB quantitative easing, 2015). They were all outcomes of a plethora of so-called "last chance" European Council meetings. But, Member States never threw off the yoke of the creditor banks maintaining their dependence. They never got rid of the dogma they subscribed to in the wake of Germany: governments' budgets have to be managed just as the Swabian housewife's or a Midlands grocery's ones.

*Emperors are afraid*

**The reason why is simple:** no government willingly accepts that its peers (even more so a federal power) should interfere in the opaque relations between power and money. None can take the risk of spotlighting that connivance. None will recognize years of wrongs made for the sake of a pseudo-science postulating the unlimited rationality of economic agents, neutrality of money and

self-regulation of markets. This results in precluding public authorities from serving the public interest decently. None will admit, after denying it, that what matters is not the volume of debt but its sustainability, i.e. the ability to repay loans, namely the discounted sum of expected budgets surpluses, except interest, which would allow to a decrease in indebtedness.

Member States are not afraid of the follow-up to be given to a monetary union in itself, as is needed to solve the debt crisis and to govern the euro area economy. A banking union, and a fiscal union, were both proposed in time by the European Commission. They are afraid of the gross unveiling of their own practices, and the total overhaul and consolidation, triggered by **the creation of a Federal Treasury**. By the way, that administration would stay without legitimacy, then without authority, unless it is included in **a full common system of federal government, constitutional, democratic and sovereign**. A citizens' claim for a separation of European powers between them, of European from national ones, the containment of national oligarchies, a claim for transparency by Nordic standards, the fight against evasion, fraud, corruption and once abolished but endlessly restored privileges, would scare governments. That's why political parties are nurturing a fear of Europe in the public opinion, intentionally or not.

*The stolen dream: integration dynamics*

**The history of European integration can be analysed as two overlapping dynamics:**

- 1. The first one is political: its starting point was a major innovation in international relations, a process supposed to lead from a system of sovereign states to a federal state, according to an original method of cooperation requiring common institutions and a common purpose. That method was named "community method" after the "Communities" (ECSC, 1951 and EEC, 1957). The institutions entrusted with the administration of successive stages in the process were assumed to prefigure the federation, to which Member States would make their way. That specific cooperation was gradually cut to a quasi-permanent negotiation, because France, more and more mimicked by its partners, required unanimous decisions in the Council. Exposed at all times, after de Gaulle and since Thatcher, to the veto of a Member State, negotiations came closer and closer to the usual practice of multilateral organisations. In 2000, Germany offered to federate with its partners, and France ignored the proposal, while the euro made political union necessary. The French rebuff could be interpreted as a total reversal of the original intent of French diplomacy, as expressed in 1950.**
- 2. The second dynamic is economic and is about the integration framework, first the West's, then the world's: the European Community was invented within an international monetary system that sheltered Europe from exchange rate instability and excused it from monetary union, while growth provided for full employment, and the Welfare State for social peace. Undermined by the destabilization of that system (1971), monetary stability was restored only after the long journey to the euro, while unemployment and precarity were creeping up, until the financial crisis led the whole European continent into a depression, then stagnation. Keynesian and Rooseveltian multilateralism gave way to a wild Hayekian and Thatcherite rush towards privatisation and deregulation, then, in Germany, at the heart of the Euro area, to Berlin's corporatist mercantilism, imposing austerity on partners, against the European preference for economic, social and territorial cohesion.**

Member States took the Union away from the peoples, while national political parties were losing their citizens' trust. Given that the Union displays, unconvincingly, a mixed record on the side of efficiency and equity, it struggles to regain legitimacy on the side of democracy, and fails. This is reflected in the lack of interest of citizens in European elections.

The dream came with words, but action has not followed. Governments kept promising, shirking their duty of unity. Facing new risks, peoples and political *élites* are in moral panic. Communication has been cut between voters and elected representatives to the benefit of internal and external enemies of the open society.

### *Voting without a choice*

Always anxious about regaining their lost glory or legitimacy, nation states never miss an opportunity to remind the public that they are the masters of the treaties. That discreet veil of legalism shows a will to cover up the hard truth of a Europe in crisis: creditors are the masters of inter-state compromises. Decisions, taken too late, are nothing other than agreements without an ambition, last minute deals, concluded with the sole concern of the national public perception. The community of situation of European citizens and peoples is deliberately obliterated from their minds in favor of fake differences, keeping alive envy or resentment and leading, in some places, to humiliation and hatred. Member States, as parties to the compromise, are legally equal before the law, but not in fact: creditors and net contributors are more equal than others. But all are constrained by the private banking system, as the sole beneficiary of base money creation, when needed, since governments denied themselves the right to access it.

Then, political parties invited themselves to this picture: the inter-state compromises are based on a consensus among the conservative and progressive parties that governments are coming from. Most of the time, at the end of the negotiation, both sides are dissatisfied with the balance point. And then, negotiators boast about having reached the right compromise. Although they do their best to claim they have won the battle, which may flatter chauvinism, they are soon disappointed. As a matter of fact, right-wing voters realise at once that the compromise is too leftist for them, while left-wing voters find it too rightist, while both see it as a surrender to the lending banks. In all cases, the balance point is not true to pre-election promises, which brings politicians into disrepute, and their mandates are not renewed. Voters then notice that the next government is still a prisoner of that compromise or new similar ones. They voted on written manifestos, but they had no choice actually, because an unwritten agenda, including all past and future compromises between governments, forced upon weak states by their powerful creditors, prevails in the end.

That non-choice fixes European society into a narrow conservatism, without any collective ambition. Europe is lagging behind North America and Australasia. Many Europeans feel downgraded, while inequalities are increasing inexorably, generating multiple frustrations, on the side of the most needy as well as the most innovative. Intensified by the crisis of the euro area, this phenomenon is not a recent one. But, until the crisis, governments contained it either through step-by-step tactics, or placing their feet in the Founders' footsteps, each time a step forward did not affect privileges of the political *élites*, such as the extension of free movement to everyone – from workers to all European residents – or the creation of a central bank. After all, custom officials or border policemen are just civil servants, central banks are government agencies and their governors are not elected representatives.

### *Unfinished Europe, procrastinated Europe*

Europe-building has been brought to a halt since the creation of the euro, because governments are reluctant to establish a common discretionary power in the field of economic policy. Planning a partial abdication of the national tax-and-spend power by finance ministers and parliaments would not only question the status of obscure civil servants, but also the relevance of national political mandates. Not only jobs are at risk, but the privileges of oligarchs as well.

There is evidence of that risk. All definite actions to be taken until reaching the stage of a fiscal

union in the euro area are depending on preconditions, namely: a revision of the treaties or constitutional reforms with institutional hurdles; or the tidying-up of public affairs in Member States; or a change in public policies or even governments to bring them back in line with the prevailing economic doctrine. That is to say, the defense of the status quo or, in other words, of national economic rents, always prevail on the common interest of Europeans, even in the face of adversity.

Political reforms became popular with liberalism in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the social question in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: they were radical changes aimed at more perfect institutions, in the interest of the people at large or the weakest. Quite the contrary, in the European Council's "newspeak", "reforms" are stealth changes to keep to "rules", set in favour of the most powerful and the richest, whose interest is assumed to be identical to the general interest. For European citizens, things just don't change any longer, the less so through "reforms".

Another cause of the do-nothing attitude is governments' propensity to postpone decisions beyond the next election. The most necessary and urgent decisions are now hot potatoes which a government is never willing to take itself, but rather wants to pass onto the next one. **It is amazing to note what governments can do after the next election that they didn't do before it.** An old variation of this scenario is to make that decision dependent, not on one's own reelection, but on a sister party coming to power in another Member State. It is as if completing the union should wait until all governments in power at the same time belong to the same political family or convey the same economic doctrine.

Also, decision-makers in governments or companies are imprisoned; the former by their powerless sovereignties, the latter by the excesses of shareholder capitalism or markets volatility, in shorter and shorter time limits. Those time horizons run from, at best, an elective term of office to a few hours before the bursting of a speculative stock-market bubble, discouraging any prospective analysis, any medium-term budgeting and programming, any long-term vision. In their turn, spatial horizons, larger and larger, continent- or world-wide, leave national decision-makers in an inferior position with respect to continent-wide states, transnational giants in extractive or digital industries, or even multilateral organisations. All of those larger decision-makers are inclined to set down secret rules, out of the scope of democratic scrutiny, made public as it happens by whistle-blowers and decrypted by a precious few analysts. That is what a central bank governor called the "**tragedy of horizons**".

If national politicians do not want to dig Europe's grave, they have to recognise sooner or later that prerequisites or delays or short-termism or sovereigntism, when facing emergency or adversity, must be banned once and for all from governmental practice. **If European citizens do not want to preclude themselves from inventing their future, they must recognise, sooner or later, that national, regional and local democracy will stay vulnerable to any aggression by its enemies. Safety requires the strong shield of a powerful federation, whatever its size, continental or sub-continental, as an essential prerequisite to any change in social or public affairs.**

### *Unfinished Europe, vulnerable Europe*

The 2015 migrants crisis and terrorists attacks on January 7, 8 and 9 and November 13 exposed that vulnerability for all the world to see. Immigration and asylum policies are always and everywhere tightrope policies, between the universal principle of non-discrimination and the majority view, altruism and egoism, recognition of "the other" and self-idolatry, empathy and mutual misunderstanding, sharing and greed, cultural interbreeding and identical reproduction of the social fabric, freedom to come and go and internal passports. But the European Union is trapped in a unique contradiction. It bases European citizenship and its citizens' freedom of movement on the

non-discrimination principle on grounds of national origin while leaving most of the control of its external borders, and the financial cost of that, to the sole border countries, notably impoverished and austerity-torn Greece. That inequity is unbearable, the more so because today refugees are a harbinger of climate migrants. The European Union should expect more migrants, not fewer.

**No society can be totally safe from attacks, whatever their origin. Terrorism can't be totally eradicated. It has to be managed.** An approach focused on security is not enough. But, in the European Union everything becomes more difficult if that management is left to Member States, citing their sovereignty, while their know-how in the field of intelligence and police varies greatly with respect to their history and size, and cooperation between services has failed. Not all Member States have been equally exposed to insecurity or subversion in the past, but all have in common the illusion that they are able to deal with terror in isolation.

In the European Union, every individual has a right to freedom and security. The migrant crisis is a threat to our cherished freedom and terror is a threat to security, which is a fundamental right under the rule of law. It is clear that citizens in Europe are developing a sense of a common situation, calling for a common government. And the answer is nothing less than a state, the primary purposes of which are freedom and security, as Hobbes and Spinoza explained. A **federal coastguard** acts naturally under the control of a Ministry of Home Affairs, **coastguard units** belong to a Federal Navy, terror acts inside the Union's territory are a Federal Police issue, they trigger a demand for sharing collected data over the whole Union, hence the need for a **Federal Intelligence Service**, and, outside the Union, a projection and operational capability, which means in its turn a **common armed force**. But the political will to progress deliberately along those lines, and to give the Union the wanted own resources, is missing.

### *Politics of fear*

It must be made clear that **if the EU is unable to deal with those issues in a Community way**, even if the Treaties makes it mandatory for them, the right to move freely in Europe will be repealed, first by these Member States where the politics of fear will have triumphed, then all over Europe, because the Union will disintegrate. In Europe will coexist, in mutual suspicion at first, then in hostility, national fortresses where, from a state of emergency to a state of siege, democracy itself will be repealed and Europeans will experience “guided democracy” and “illiberal regimes”. **This will inaugurate an era of decay.**

If the European crew limits itself to bail water out, or to seal the leaks, with several meetings of 28 Heads of Government taking place each month, without giving powers and resources similar to those of the USA Administration and Congress to the Union's common institutions, then Member States will keep on passing Europeans off as reckless amateurs, waiting for destiny or compassionate allies or forgiving enemies to protect their freedom and security. The vessel will take on water, and it will sink. It is just a matter of time: the politics of fear will have triumphed anyway. Walls and barbed wire will partition the continent again.

If powers and resources are not given for freedom and security, why would they be for the energy transition or the completion of monetary union? Middle classes were victims of austerity policies, designed by Member States' creditors under the infamous Washington consensus. They are and will be victims of the stagnation that those policies led to. Sooner or later, they will realise that they took too much of a risk, either by meeting the TINA (“there is no alternative”) principle, without having to agree knowingly to it, or by trying to “upturn the table” at the invitation of demagogues.

Political scientists of European integration have noticed long ago the emergence of an alliance between intergovernmentalism (national sovereigntism) and neo-liberalism (the deregulation

dogma). Under the alliance's rule, national politics came down to a mere market where polls, almost always national ones, are supposed to express the political demand, and where national political agendas, assumed to satisfy the revealed national preferences, are supplied to national voters, downgraded to passive consumers. Intergovernmentalism is just a comfortable habit (as seen by naive people) or a cynical trick (as seen by smarter people) to limit that political supply to only one policy. The only one available is the one defined by consensus among a majority of governments supporting the dogma, with the huge advantage of protecting established positions in the national political and media spheres.

TINA destroyed trust in mainstream parties and yesterday's politics, identified as they are with globalisation and "Brussels". It paved the way to success for democratic candidates against austerity (the radical left) or national-capitalist ones against democracy (neo-fascism). "Extreme-centre" politicians, from the less social-minded liberals to the more laissez-faire-minded socialists, made a choice to humiliate democracy. In so doing, they succeeded in maintaining the status quo and saving banks (that is how Greece has been dealt with), but they were challenged to expose, in full public view, the secret (post-democratic) working of the euro-group. They even went as far as pre-empting the extreme-right agenda, anticipating its implementation (pre-fascism), as it happened in France. Only radically democratic politics and economics, in all areas of public life on a continental scale, or at least in a first federal core, can cure Europeans of fear.

### *Politics of hope*

**A democratic transformation of Europe is already happening**, alongside the rising tide of nationalism, xenophobia, racism and intolerance. In the end, all of those have the same ideological matrix: the exclusive nation. Democratic transformation will not succeed in a Europe of absolutely sovereign states, a Europe of the European Council or the euro-group. Whereas national governments have already trampled democratic rights, or are tempted to, only a federal constitution can **guarantee** national constitutional **guarantees** to citizens and peoples in the end. If not, what would be the remedy for a citizen deprived of his rights by his Member State of origin or residence? For that "**guarantee of guarantees**" (René Cassin) to be given, "sovereign" states have to make way to "member" states. They cannot pretend any longer to a monopoly of public authority.

**For that democratic transformation of Europe not to be confined within borders, it has to cross them, and feed itself from all current or planned citizens' practices. It has to be transnational.** For sure, nothing precludes anybody from addressing governments with prayers, without believing too much that they will be heard. The prayers would ask for their European action not to be dependent any longer on arbitrary rules and their denial of global realities. A mere vote in the Council and the Parliament would be enough to overcome their reluctance to move forward, if only the minority was willing to defer to the majority. But why would national governments or parties show today, when catastrophes are threatening, a courage they did not show in quieter times? They inherited and own common assets. Why do they not use them? Worse, why do they squander them? **Citizens, cities, and companies must carry out that transformation, bottom to top, without waiting for anything from governments or political parties**, but by putting them under increasing pressure, to the point where they cannot contain it any longer.

**Hope must be reborn. Hope can be reborn.** It is enough to remember the circumstances in which plans for a free and united Europe were drawn up: under the boots of occupying powers, in hiding under totalitarian regimes, in gaols and camps, in the Resistance Maquis and networks. Are our rulers, representatives, and the rich and the powerful all over Europe, not ridiculous to shy away from getting out of their respective comfort zones and address the 21<sup>st</sup> century issues? Do they not deserve our contempt for believing that laissez-faire and laissez-passer, quantitative growth and waged employment are universal answers to our fears, and the threats to the future of mankind?



However, aren't we, ordinary citizens, just as guilty as they are, of indifference to the fate of future generations, our own children and grand-children? Aren't we wrong to distrust politics and democracy, while counting on the old demons of national or religious discrimination to deal with our suffering, instead of mobilising our energies in support of free participation, from communities or neighbourhoods where we are living, to the continent, which is our commons.

### *A United Pact for Europe*

*Nous ne coalisons pas des Etats. Nous unissons des hommes.*  
Jean Monnet, 1952.

The time has come to proclaim that the European dream is more than a market, that **Europe is a plan to add a common wellness without denying diversity**. It is up to the peoples and citizens of Europe to take back from Member States a sovereignty they usurped since they proved their failure in the face of adversity, and to redistribute sovereign powers between Member States and common institutions. The time has come to understand that **a federation doesn't federate states only, but citizens in the first place, as citizens of the states – peoples of the states – and as citizens of the federation – a federal people**. Citizens in a federation are citizens twice. The federation is a plan for a political community based on a founding principle, stated after the experience of Nazism, **the principle of non-discrimination**. This principle outlaws all discriminations, whether they are of origin, of religion, of gender, or of nationality as well. It then addresses the very discrimination that underpins the closing of the nation state and the division of Europe.

At the origin of the extreme-right progression is a lack of social and cultural inclusion. Those votes are proof that the agenda of parties fomenting exclusion is keeping pace with an existential crisis of national societies. Their presence all over Europe is a paradoxical demonstration, if still needed, of the existence of a European society, already transnational. Those parties, in the quest of an illusory “purity” are preaching the exclusion of “those who are different”, asserting the supremacy of nationals over foreigners and practitioners of one religion over those of another, wanting to close borders against the right to asylum and the duty of hospitality, planning to reconsider gender equality. And that short list is not exhaustive.

Therefore, it is the non-discrimination principle, as stated by the European Convention of Human Rights and confirmed in the EU by the Charter of Fundamental Rights, that can found the politics of hope. Citizens and networks, representative organisations of civil society, not contaminated by the ideology of exclusion, can work up together **a European Civil Pact** for equal rights, political equality, just as resistance fighters or post-war constituents did, to spare Europe new nightmares. Parties and social partners could be invited to subscribe **in each and every Member State a transpartisan Republican (or United) Pact for Europe, valid until the constitution of the federation, to leave a range of actions out of business-as-usual, namely electoral competition between mainstream parties and collective bargaining between social partners. The Pacts should include a social contract, an economic New Deal and a political constitution:**

1) **The social contract aims at fighting inequality and precarity while mitigating the collateral damage of austerity policies in the euro area. Competitive deflation is pitting Member States and peoples against each other in a race to the bottom of wage, tax and welfare regimes, at a time when full employment has become an inaccessible goal. On the contrary, European citizens should be given a clear sense of belonging to a cohesive community beyond Member States, a continental social body. To that end, an unconditional basic income for all should be instituted as a new “continental commons”, partly separating households' resources from wage-earning jobs, and guaranteeing equality before hazards of life to all Europeans. That new expenditure would be covered by a (financial) transactions tax.**

**2) The New Deal for Europe (NewDeal4Europe) is a transnational policy commitment to energy frugality and jobs creation through both the transition to renewables and the power autonomy of housing. It assigns sustainable development to research and innovation as their priority aim. The New Deal, contributing heavily to the emergence of a European consciousness, requires (i) the prior creation of federal financial agencies to complete monetary union, (ii) the institution, without delay, of a carbon value – as another “continental commons” – and (iii) a European strategic network of industrial projects opened to competing firms without distortion from the stupid competition between Member States.**

**3) The constitution, through democratic and peaceful means, bottom to top, according to a participative method, of a *res publica europae* – a United States of Europe. Revisions of Member States constitutions would follow, sooner or later, including the federalisation of unitary centralized states, with the prime concern to protect European citizens from the nasty consequences of professional politics. Trust in public institutions would then be restored across the continent.**

Those commitments and constitutions are the main specification for the construction site to be opened by sealing Europe Civil Pact and Republican or United Pacts for Europe, and convening local constituents based on citizens' initiatives. This Continental Manifesto aims at striking up a public conversation: how to involve citizens in a constitutional process, then in the governance of public affairs? How is it possible, for all Europeans, to live a decent life together? How to bridge the gap between the moral narrative and real practices while rethinking the firm and the state? That is the way out of the crisis, to prevent the next one, to save the planet, to fix Europe and democracy, to return to the principles of the European Enlightenment, the “good life” and the “commons”.

*Epilogue*

*Soyons la même République, soyons les Etats-Unis d'Europe, soyons la fédération continentale.*  
Victor Hugo

Europe can't serve mankind without being a cosmopolitical republic for Europeans as well as for others. Any other perspective is fatal. A Europe that would not be up to its own humanism and Enlightenment would be engulfed by barbarity and obscurantism.

The only available answer is openness to all those who have already experienced bombs, lethal gas, and rape, i.e. horror, and still have enough courage to defy death and seek refuge on a continent they see as an eldorado.

A closed society, whether by walls or by ignorance, is suicidal. It pretends to stop time. To freeze Europe as it is now, is tantamount to programming its death.

The Europe of nation states is locked in a long-lasting stagnation. It is self-destroying. It gives to its residents of today, including refugees, only one prospect: sharing in penury and fear of tomorrow.

Zero carbon, distributed energy, the Internet of Things, circular economics, the unconditional basic income: all those innovations are drawing up a single vision for our continent, for its neighbours and the planet. The crisis of rural areas and the urban malaise have to be examined in the light of it.

That vision is one of a construction site and a garden: the construction site of energy self-sufficiency of each and every home, the garden of a fixed nature and a species reconciled with its habitat.

The path to hope is a metamorphosis of Europe. Europeans must leave the 20<sup>th</sup> century, at last. Europeans must stop navel gazing. Past national glories will not come back.

Together, we must invent an open democracy (with humility), a sustainable and equitable model. There is no other way to silence the hate mongers: federate Europe to open the construction site and grow the garden. The time has come – it is overdue – to institute the Republic of Europe.

*The author is Bernard Barthalay. "A Continental Manifesto" results from a conversation established years ago with his friends of Puissance Europe/Weltmacht Europa (PE/WE), a transnational network of initiatives founded by a handful of long-haul European federalists, and on social networks as well, especially on his personal Facebook page, and on the PE/WE and the United States of Europe ones. It is less the text of an author than the expression of a strong common understanding between individuals learning to debate together about the future of Europe from a finding that Spinelli made already in the fifties: national governments usurped the role of a European government, which is not theirs, without any explicit popular mandate. The system of sovereign states (the European Council and the euro-group) is still there.*