



Second Generation in European Parliament

Brussels, Belgium, December 5, 2017

By Jonathan Hoyte

On Tuesday 5th December, UPF Europe held an event at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium to discuss 'Radicalisation and Violent Extremism in Europe: Focus on Prevention' with guests and members of Parliament from different countries with a range of expert speakers on the topic. The violent radicalisation of young people has been a growing issue here in Europe especially in the wake of the numerous terrorist incidents that have occurred across the continent. As a result, many people are looking for ways in which to counter this and the speakers presented a wide array of methods to deal with this from women equality to community-based support. It was a diverse and, at times, passionate discussion on this very pertinent topic.

The more internal motive of the event was the inauguration of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) in

the European Parliament. Flavio Zanonato, a member of the European Parliament, hosted the event and proudly supports IAPP - a project of UPF.

Three young Unificationist Second Generation members from the UK (Victor Bidard, Joshua McGuigan and Jonathan Hoyte pictured above from left to right) were invited by Universal Peace Federation UK to attend the event as well as the internal meeting held the day after with Dr and Mrs Balcomb, our European Regional Directors, and share their thoughts on the event as written below.

"Several ideas and policies were put forward with the intention of, not just limiting, but preventing the Radicalisation of young people throughout Europe. I found this very refreshing as, many times, it seems as though discussion takes place and measures to limit or reduce problems are put in place but not the removal of

the cause of the problem. One Speaker in particular spoke on the need to develop deeper relationships with each other in order to break down barriers between cultures and integrate people into our societies so people have a sense of belonging and desire to support each other. This would reduce one of the causes of Radicalisation - a lack of a sense of belonging in Europe. Hopefully, the family structure and ideal can be uplifted and supported to be a key component in this effort to promote a sense of belonging and community.

I am grateful to have participated in this event and look forward to new opportunities, particularly, True Mother's visit to Vienna in April 2018 and the Senegal gathering to happen soon."

~ Jonathan Hoyte

Inside the European Parliament during the first session moderated by

Lea Perekrests of Human Right Without Frontiers

"The European Parliament is impressive, I thought, far more so than the Parliament back home. What was more impressive, was the knowledge and range of the speakers which shared deep insight into the prevalent and growing issue of Radicalization in Europe. Through the conference, I became more aware of this issue and came to a better understanding of the problems at hand. What impacted me most was the call for real, substantial action to be taken - as without proper education, Extremism will only continue to worsen. What was hopeful however, was hearing what has been done so far and the forthcoming plans, which strive towards integration and understanding. An overall, insightful experience."

~ Joshua McGuigan

The afternoon session held in the Renaissance Hotel moderated by Robin Marsh Secretary General of UPF-UK

"A greater perspective has been given to me, in relation to, the power of the family. I was able to observe several individuals discuss about extremism and their views and ideas on what can be done, in their area of politics. Extremism is embedded in European society not just within the Islamic community. How to challenge this extremism, I believe, and what a lady from Dakota put forward within the 2nd session, was family education. The family is the cornerstone to each society, in the world. We must protect this structure. I am 25 years old but will I get to 30 and still see the father and mother structure still prevalent? Me and my wife are good examples to our younger brothers and sisters and I felt I could represent us both here in Brussels. We hope to continue to be good examples, physically and spiritually.

What can be done next is to look forward to supporting True Mother's arrival to Vienna, Austria, in April. Thank you."

~ Victor Bidard

Looking forward, there are more opportunities coming up for second generation members to get involved. From December 28th to January 21st, True Mother is calling for young members to join Her for a large-scale gathering leading up to the Africa Summit in Senegal. It is expected to be a great experience doing service projects and spending time with True Mother. After this, there is Mother's visit to Austria in April where another large-scale gathering of second generation will take place. Details on the second event will be made public at a later date.

Once again, many thanks to Universal Peace Federation UK, FFWPU UK, Matthew Huish and Dr & Mrs Balcomb for sponsoring and supporting our trip to Brussels for the EU Parliament event as well as Yvo Bruffaerts for finding us accommodation for the night.

