

Interview with Robert Nathan for the Jean Monnet Foundation, Lausanne.
December 18, 1981, in Washington, D.C.

Leonard Tennyson: How far back do you go? When did you first know Monnet?

Robert Nathan: The exact date and the precise circumstances I don't recall, but I first got to know him, I think very early in 1941, when Monnet first came to the United States. I'm not sure when he first arrived here, I should be getting it out of his own memoirs and not checking it from my own thoughts. I was at that time Associate Director of Research of the Defense Agencies. The names changed. The first was the Defense Advisory Commission, starting in the middle of '40, then it became the Office of Production Management, then the Supplies Priorities and Allocations Board, and finally the War Production Board ...

LT: How did Monnet drift into your orbit?

RN: I was working as an economist and a statistician on military requirements. We were trying to define the military requirements of the United States as we were planning the defense effort. In working on these military requirements I met Monnet, who was very much concerned about the whole military requirement program. As I came to know him, it was quite clear why he was interested in it. He was interested because he had one phenomenal idea -- phenomenal, I think at least at that time. In retrospect a lot of people to whom I talked about it have said, "Well, what's so sensational about it?" I said it was sensational then because Monnet came to the United States as Deputy Director of the British Ministry of Supply.

He had told me that when France fell he was in England. He had tried to get Churchill to rally the French morale and French resistance, and you know, even put forth the offer of the common citizenship, which was Monnet's idea. But it was too late. When France fell, Churchill sent Monnet to the United States as Deputy Director of the British Ministry of Supply even though he was a French citizen.

LT: Was there a Canadian on that board too?'

RN: No, no, this was just the British. Later there were international boards. We had the Combined Raw Materials Board, we had the Combined Production Board, and the Combined Production & Resources Board. But this was different, it was straight British. Monnet came here with one principle. It was that American production would be needed to win the war, not American manpower. "Don't bother me with whether America gets into the war or not," he'd say. "That's America's decision. But to win the war, we're going to have to have American production."

LT: Were you quite struck by his single-mindedness?

RN: Oh, the more I got to know Monnet, and work closely with him, the more respectful I was of this capacity of this man to get to the kernel of an issue, to the heart of a solution, and then stick with it, dogmatically. He was not concerned about minutiae.

LT: Why do you suppose Churchill picked him?

RN: Well, I think Churchill knew him from before. Monnet, after WWI, had become involved in the League of Nations. I think that anybody who came to know Monnet, in any meaningful degree, had a tremendous respect for him. One of the things that always impressed

me was how those who knew Monnet were willing to work with him under almost any circumstances. When we were working together on war production requirements in 1941, I found it tremendously amusing and exciting (I was quite young then) to see this man writing messages from Roosevelt to Churchill, and then writing the answers from Churchill to Roosevelt. I'm sure both of them knew that he was doing this, but it was accepted. He had a remarkable ability of instilling confidence in the hearts of public people. He didn't bother unless they were important for him. Once he established rapport, they didn't object to being "used" by him, so to speak.

LT: What sort of rapport did he have with Harry Hopkins?

RN: Well, he used to see Harry Hopkins quite a bit, but Harry was not terribly well then. Harry Hopkins was very fragile. I had known Hopkins all through the '30's, and knew him before the war, when he was already quite sick. I think Harry Hopkins had a great respect for him. I know that people in the White House, others there like Isadore Lubin,¹ who worked closely with Hopkins, had a great respect for him.

LT: Is he still alive?

RN: No, Lubin died about 3 years ago. No, there aren't many of them left.

LT: I used to know him quite well.

¹Commissioner of Labor Statistics

RN: I saw him about three days before he died. Let me tell you about what happened back then because I think a little historical background is important to get a perspective of the difficulties we faced in the early '40's. When Monnet came on the scene I was working on military requirements. I must admit to a very considerable amount of frustration in those days when I would go to the military to talk about requirements. We were concerned about how to get America's production going to meet whatever ambitious requirements we would need. We were thinking both in terms of added raw materials to optimize production and in terms of needed facilities to produce materiel rather than civilian goods. And we were concerned with building facilities that were unique or specifically related to the materiel. When I joined the Defense Advisory Commission in the summer of '40 -- right after we started our defense mobilization effort -- I'd go to the military and find that we couldn't get requirements from them. I remember distinctly going over to talk with people at G-4, saying, "Now what requirements have you, because now we're trying to ..."

LT: What was G-4?

RN: Well, it was the supply side of the Army. We'd go to the Army-Navy Munition Board, and say, "Look, we're concerned with how much steel capacity we have, how much aluminum capacity we have -- and even wool, if we're cut off from wool supplies in Australia and the like." So we'd ask them, "Now what are the requirements?" They'd reply, "Well, we have tables, tables of allowances, tell me your requirements. What do you want, requirements for a 4 million

man army, a 2 million man army, a 10 million man army? Do you want requirements for a sea war, or an air war, tell us?" All during this period we had grave difficulties with the requirements. It was a frustrating experience. Our single thought was that should America get into the war, would there be enough steel and aluminum to make a major all-out effort? How much conversion would we have to undertake? Because in a sense production goals would be a function of total resources as well as conversions. In the middle of 1940, right after the mobilization planning began, we had a major battle with the steel industry. The steel industry had been running at very low capacity for most of the '30's because of the Depression. The same was true of other industries. When we talked to them about what might be needed in a total all-out war effort by the United States they'd point to our tremendous surplus capacity and ask, "Why should we build more capacity now? We've only been using 60% or 70%." It was very hard to talk to them about it. Many of us then were trying to formulate a set of goals for what America's production capacity might be. At full employment it looked to us as though we'd have inadequate supplies of steel, and of aluminum especially. On this subject a great battle was waged in Washington in 1940 and early 1941.

LT: How did Monnet get into this?

RN: Well, Monnet got into it because we were concerned with trying to optimize. And Monnet was trying to figure out how to get American production moving up. I told Monnet early about how difficult it was to get specific military requirements. Without

these we could not get support for building large quantities of facilities. During that first half of 1941 I was seeing Monnet quite often. He wanted to know what I was doing, and how we were coming along on the requirements side. He was trying to figure out a way to get these requirements up. Finally, around the middle of 1941, Monnet came up with the idea of putting the pressure on to the military by getting Roosevelt and Churchill to agree that ^arequest would be made to the military leadership of the United States, for what the U.S. would need if the U.S. were at war. Now that was a difficult political assumption, because it came not long after the 1940 election when Roosevelt had made a very firm commitment that American men would not be involved in the war. But this didn't raise any question of whether we'd be in or not, but only "if." But once that request was made (and this was Monnet who maneuvered it, Monnet who organized it, Monnet who conceived it, Monnet who manipulated it), then it was clear that the military had to come up with some numbers. They were the ones after all who were going to be the strategists, the tacticians, the operators, and the implementors. So what happened as a result of that? It came to be known by the way, as the Victory Program, so I will use that terminology. But as soon as that Victory Program concept was adopted by Roosevelt and Churchill, then the President said to the military, "Now, I want to know what the U.S. requirements would be if we got into war." Then he sent Batt² I think, to London, as I

²William L. Batt, Director of the Division of Materials of the Office of Production & Management.

recall, and Harriman³ to Moscow. I know that Batt and Harriman went overseas to find out what the needs of our allies from us would be. Then we would have a total drain on the U.S. capability, for the U.S. itself, for the needs of the Russians, and for the needs of the British. They went, and came back, and in the summer of 1941 these numbers began to come in. We began to get from the military the combinations of the total needs, numbers of fighter planes, and bombers, and carriers, and amounts of guns -- large guns and small guns, the antiaircraft guns, the rifles -- merchant shipping, how many million tons would be needed, and how many tanks, and all the important items. As these data began to come in, the problem was how to use them, how to translate them into a meaningful program that then could be carried out, through appropriations, through conversion of our plants and equipment, and the like. As we worked on these I saw Monnet often. He was interested in knowing how we were going to go about making use of this information. What we decided to do (Monnet was in all the discussions and talks) was to convert these numbers into 4 elements. One was steel, because clearly we had to make assumptions about our steel. We knew then what our steel capacity would be, because the decision forcing expansion had been won, in 1940, to get 10 million tons of new steel capacity. That was already well along. Roosevelt had told the industry that if they didn't increase capacity 10 million tons a year the government would. So then we translated these requirements

³W. Averell Harriman, Roosevelt's personal envoy.

into steel, and that was mainly tanks, and merchant ships, and some of the larger guns too, and we used factors, which we worked on with the military of what proportion steel counted for in big items.

LT: I recall hearing that at one time Monnet spoke up and suggested a figure already proposed as a goal be doubled, to lend drama to the whole thing. Then it turned out to be quite realistic. True?

RN: Well, I don't remember doubling after we got these numbers. You see in the spring of 1941 when we couldn't get the numbers he kept talking in terms of jumps, doubling, quadrupling. But once we got these huge numbers then the problem we had was to schedule them.

LT: He must have been a unique gadfly around town.

RN: Unbelievable. I've often said that Monnet may have been the most important single person in terms of the American victory in World War II. Certainly, one of the top few. If it hadn't been for Monnet, with his Victory Program effort in the summer of 1941, we'd have lost months and months and months of vital production.

LT: Did Monnet ever have anything to do with Lend-Lease?

RN: Yes, he had something to do with that. I was not involved in that, but I knew that he worked very closely with Cox, oh, there were some others, Graham, Phil Graham.⁴

LT: What was Oscar Cox doing then?

⁴Philip Graham, at that time an attorney in the Office for Emergency Management in the Lend-Lease Administration, later publisher of the Washington Post newspaper.

RN: He was an attorney, I think he was working with Ed Stettinius*, if I'm not mistaken.

LT: I knew him after the war.

RN: I was not involved in the Lend-Lease. But I know that Monnet was dealing and maneuvering with these people.

LT: Well, it had been said that, once or twice, that it had been a Monnet proposal, but I've never seen that documented anywhere.

RN: It's conceivable, except that Lend-Lease started in 1940.

LT: I know.

RN: And Monnet wasn't here. Now it may well have been, that he was trying to influence Churchill, especially, on this, but I don't believe, I would doubt that when he was here, he had called for doubling our goals.

LT: You must have talked to Monnet quite a bit about economics.

RN: Well, no, I don't know, it's hard to recall. We used to spend hours together, I would go to his house on Foxhall Road, and we'd often breakfast together, and then he'd take me for a walk in what he'd call "his" woods, Rock Creek Park. His house backed onto Rock Creek Park. He would get up in the morning and take a long walk in the woods. He walked like mad. You had to move to keep up with the little fellow.

LT: I went for walks with him in Luxembourg. Later, when he came over here, he'd stay at the Westchester and take walks in the same place.

RN: Yes. And then you'd come back, he'd been talking all the time, and with that little twinkle he had in his eyes. He'd love to throw out ideas and test them. He liked positive responses. But

* Edward R. Stettinius Jr., Lend-Lease administrator from '41 to '43.

anyhow, when these numbers came in, we'd had by then a pretty good idea of what our total steel capacity would be, what our total aluminum and copper supplies would be, and our potential Gross National Product. Also, we had pretty good ideas of how large a portion of our total production could go into materiel. After all, we knew that you had to keep the automobiles going to get the people to their factories, and you had to have trucks to move raw materials around, and trains had to run for transport of people and goods, and we knew maintenance had to be going on, and there had to continue to be housing -- people had to have a place to live. So we had a pretty good idea of what the minimum civilian requirements would be, and what would be left for the military. So when the numbers came in we translated them into these four determinants, working with Monnet and a very small group.

LT: Who were some of the others?

RN: They were mainly statisticians, and the economists, those I worked with in the Defense Advisory Commission. I don't think any of them worked directly with Monnet. I was the Associate Director at the time.

LT: Did Phil Graham have any connection?

RN: No, Phil was in Lend-Lease. Phil did have a relationship with Monnet.

LT: Oh, I knew he did, I just wondered if he was in your group.

RN: No, he wasn't. These were all economists and statisticians, mostly young people. I was at that time myself only thirty-three, I guess, 32. It was a young staff.

LT: Mere whippersnappers.

RN: That's right. The way we went about it was extremely interesting, how we converted these figures into controlling materials. Then the problem was timing. For instance, we had to figure out how many planes needed how much aluminum. Then we had to time it out. If it was determined that 2 billion pounds of aluminum were needed, and we were producing 600 million pounds a year, it would take 3 years and a third to do it. So then we had to schedule out such basic production. Into the early fall we worked on this scheduling and numbers. We started with '42, because it was already moving into late '41. We came up with numbers for airplanes by the end of '42, for tanks, for weapons, ammunition, and so we scheduled them out for '43 and '44. We worked and worked on it and finally refined our numbers down to what we thought were reasonably good figures. They were then sent on to the White House, as I recall, in mid or late October in 1941. When they got to the White House, I was told not long after that that Lord Beaverbrook had been there. He had persuaded the President to increase the numbers, not too much, but somewhat more. Then came Pearl Harbor. Then Roosevelt already had in his hands a bluepring enabling the U.S. to tool up for war. It was tremendously fortunate, because, as you recall, about 2 weeks after Pearl Harbor Roosevelt was on the air and he talked about the Victory Program. He said, "We are going to produce 50 thousand airplanes in '42, and 125 thousand in '43, and we're going to produce 50 thousand tanks." Out poured these numbers. Monnet was

just beside himself. Clearly this was really going to get the American economy moving. So suddenly we had a program. Then, there was an experience which I'll never forget. Monnet was a tremendous helper in this next step. Originally the military thought that it had been extremely venturesome in asking for a half a billion in appropriations, \$800 million for this, and a billion, maybe, for a big shipping program. Then suddenly requests for spending programs began to go to Congress literally in the tens of billions. These days tens of billions do not sound like much. But they were huge amounts in 1941 and '42. Congress responded with huge appropriations. And in these appropriations there was no timing element. Within weeks after the announcement of the Victory Program I had been moved up to be the Chairman of the Planning Committee of the War Production Board. I had a small group with me then. It became clear that we were going to go from an under-utilization of our resources to excess demands with confusion and chaos. It was important to have ambitious goals, and to use fully our resources. Yet it was equally important not to set goals that were unrealistic because once goals were set too high, utter chaos would occur. The Army didn't care what the Navy was going to get, they wanted theirs. And the Air Force didn't care what the Army or the Navy was going to get. They wanted to get theirs too. And none of the armed services cared about merchant shipping operations yet the merchant shippers needed their share. Gen. Brehon Somervell was in charge of the Office of Services' Supplies. He was a

tough old codger, responsible for the military logistics of the Army. But as tough as he was he never really did the coordination between the Services that was needed. It soon became clear to us that there was a danger that we would end up with a lot of excess facilities and no coordination of military supplies. So our Planning Committee Staff did what we called the "feasibility study."

LT: Did you invent that term?

RN: Well, I think so.

LT: I'll send a note to the Oxford Dictionary people (the OED) to give you the credit.

RN: All right. Well, we did a feasibility study in a few weeks and affirmed that we needed ambitious goals or else we would not get anywhere near the optimum. But if we set goals way beyond what was feasible then we would end up with useless plants and pieces and parts of materiel that wouldn't fit together. Don Nelson thought that our study was very good and it was accepted.

LT: Who?

RN: Donald Nelson, who was chairman of the War Production Board.

LT: And Somervell?

RN: Somervell got mad as hell. He sent a letter to Nelson, complaining about "those theorists" in the Planning Committee. "Forget about all this feasibility junk," he wrote. He rejected the whole planning idea of balanced facilities and production. Anyhow, Monnet, all during this feasibility study period, was with us. Here was a man who was an all-outer, if there ever was one.

LT: And an optimist.

RN: A great optimist and a doer. He recognized that we were right, that if you set your goals much too high, if you have 90 million tons of steel and you set your goals and your components on 120 million tons, or 150 million tons, it wouldn't work.

LT: He showed this same trait when he started the Coal & Steel Community -- "Let's bite off a piece at a time and choose a new but realizable goal."

RN: He worked all out with us on the feasibility study. I left and went into the army in '43, but all during '42 I saw a great deal of Monnet.

LT: What did you do when you went into the Army?

RN: Well, I was a private at Camp Meade. They wanted to send me to OSS,⁵ but I had developed a bad back by then. I went into basic training. I ended up in Walter Reed Hospital and they wanted to operate on a disc but didn't. Finally I was discharged. I wasn't very useful to the Army. If you went back through the World War II period to pick key people who were of critical importance in terms of bringing about a Western victory over Germany and Japan, I would put Monnet practically at the top. If it hadn't been for Monnet, in 1941 and into 1942, with his nagging, pushing, maneuvering, and manipulating, and with his clear conception of our needs I think there would have been a lag of many months, and goodness knows what would have happened to Britain before we started pouring materiel over there.

⁵Office of Strategic Services, a wartime intelligence operation.

LT: When the war was over and Monnet went back to France and then became head of the Plan did you keep in touch with him?

RN: I went over to Paris in 1946 to consult with him and with his staff on the Commissariat du Plan. I went at least twice in 1946. Also, in 1944 and '45 I worked with him here in Washington helping lay the groundwork for the Commissariat du Plan and the European Community.

LT: Would you like to talk a little bit about that?

RN: Monnet stayed here, of course, until he could go back. He was having his problems with the French, he and DeGaulle never did click. But in that period one of my associates, Sid Lerner, a consultant with me, and I did some work with Monnet. We put together data and programs for European recovery. Late in the war it was quite clear to Monnet that it would not be long before the Germans were defeated, and so he began to be concerned about Europe, post-war European developments.

LT: So he did spend some time in Washington talking to friends about some of his ideas for post-war Europe?

RN: Oh, without question.

LT: About what he was going to do?

RN: Yes. In November of '44 I undertook a study on the Middle East -- on the economic potential of Palestine. Before I went over there, from December of '44 into '45 (I was in Washington working on that) I saw Monnet quite a bit. I talked with him a great deal on this, about the recovery of France and of a united

post-war Europe. Then the week that Roosevelt died, in April 1945, I was approached by Fred Vinson.

LT: What was he doing then?

RN: Fred Vinson was then head of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion. The Office of War Mobilization was set up in 1943 when it became clear that the war production program would not be adequate without a top civilian coordinator to inter-relate all strategies -- the diplomatic strategy, the international strategy, and the domestic allocation of civilian and military resources. Roosevelt set this up with James Byrnes as director of the Office of War Mobilization. His deputy became General Lucius Clay, a very decent and able guy. He was tough as nails and very able -- also direct, forthright, and fair. By the spring of '45 Byrnes had become disenchanted with Roosevelt because he had hoped to be picked as Vice President instead of Truman. So Byrnes retired and Clay quit with him. Soon thereafter Clay was designated to go over to the European theater, where he became of course the head of U.S. occupation forces in Germany. Fred Vinson, head of the Office of Price Stabilization, succeeded Byrnes. He asked me if I would come in as his deputy. I agreed to do so around the first of April -- giving me a couple of weeks to work on this book, The Palestine Problem & Promise. It turned out that my other two colleagues had to finish the book because I reported for duty a day or two after Roosevelt died. I had wanted to stay out, I didn't really want to come back in. I had known Truman, and had testified before his Committee many times. Still I didn't really want to

join the government again. But Vinson was adamant. He said, "Look, it's more important than ever, because Truman doesn't know everything, he's never been kept informed of details." No Vice President ever does anyhow, by the way. So I went in and I stayed for 8 months. Vinson stayed about 4 months, then moved over to become Secretary of the Treasury and from there to the Supreme Court as Chief Justice. They changed the name about then, to the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, and I became the deputy director in charge of reconversion to plan the transition. It was clear, you know, that the war was moving toward an end. I worked there for Vinson until John Snyder took over from him.

LT: What were some of the specific things that Monnet was talking about in those days, apropos putting together Europe and doing something about France?

RN: Well, mainly we were talking about what kind of a rehabilitation and redevelopment program might be needed. Monnet had ideas that he regularly tossed out. One of these was his concept of planning. Not only was he not afraid of planning, he knew that planning was essential. Monnet's idea was that Europe must have a very strong focus on the investment side at an early stage. He asked questions such as how are we going to get industry going again, how are we going to get productivity, where are we going to get the plant and equipment? You know, the Commissariat du Plan, which he eventually set up in France, was mainly an investment program. It was aimed at avoiding wasteful duplication. It was the same idea we had in the war production program -- that with

limited resources, go for the necessities, for that which will have a multiplier effect. We talked about this at great length. Tied to this was his idea that if you're really going to get Europe back on its feet and keep it peaceful you had to have a united Europe. This was embedded in his philosophy. I used to talk with him quite a bit about it. I thought it a wonderful idea. He was convinced and adamant.

LT: Had he convinced many other Americans/^{of}that early on?

RN: No, I don't think he was concerned about convincing Americans as much as he was concerned about getting his own perspective straight before he went back into the European picture.

LT: I'd like you to talk about Monnet as you remember seeing him after the war in Europe. Tell me about his preoccupations, what he was thinking about and any particular insights he had that you thought were interesting at the time.

RN: There's one thing I can say generally, is that the concepts and strategies in the U.S. production effort and ultimately in the military effort that made for victory had a lot of applicability for Monnet in terms of postwar problems.

LT: Let me just interrupt, with a question I had wanted to ask you earlier: did Monnet and Roosevelt have any connection at all?

RN: Well, I think he saw Roosevelt, but not very often. Monnet didn't care, necessarily, about seeing Roosevelt, the guy was busy. He was very happy if he could work through Stimson⁶ and McCloy⁷ and

⁶Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War

⁷John McCloy, Undersecretary of War

Harry Hopkins⁸ and Leon Henderson^{*} and people like that.

LT: McCloy was Undersecretary of War at that time?

RN: I think that's right, McCloy was Undersecretary of the War Department at that time, and Robert Patterson⁹ was a secretary, and Monnet saw Patterson, but I don't think Monnet and Patterson were terribly close. Patterson was a hell of a good guy, somewhat formal and formidable. And you know Monnet was very informal in his manner. He loved to talk, and consider, and discuss, and think things through. But he didn't like to waste time. For instance, if somebody impressed Monnet on one or two visits as not being an activist, not moving, Monnet wouldn't bother with him.

LT: It has been said that he was one of the great people users of all time.

RN: That's right. And if he figured that he could do better with McCloy than with Patterson, he'd go to McCloy, and so on. I really doubt if he saw Roosevelt very much. Oh, I'm positive there must have been occasions, but I don't remember his going around saying, "So I said to the President this, and the President said this." But he always got the message that the President sent. I'd often say jokingly about Monnet, "It's very seldom if ever that the top leadership was aware that this guy was writing the answers as well as writing the questions." And it was perfectly acceptable because he was so impressive.

LT: As an economist, what did you think of Monnet's ideas, first

⁸Harry L. Hopkins, special assistant to the President during WWII.

⁹Robert Patterson, Assistant Secretary of War.

^{*}Leon Henderson, chief of Office of Price Administration.

in the Commissariat du Plan and also in the Coal & Steel Community? Most of the economists in this country thought that the Coal & Steel Community was a crackbrained idea.

RN: Well, I always thought it was good. I guess it depends on what kind of an economist you are. If you really, really believe that the marketplace has divine origin, and will solve the problems of the universe, then of course you'd think that the Coal & Steel Community, or any such plan in peacetime, would make no sense. As a matter of fact, it's surprising how, occasionally, we'd run into a fairly good theoretical economist, even during WWII, who was not very helpful. These kinds still had a desire to let the marketplace function. I leaned always heavily toward the planning side, knowing that you had to allocate resources, you couldn't really rely on persons' patriotic instincts.

LT: Did he ask your advice after the Schuman Plan had been announced, when he was putting together his team?

RN: No, my main work with him after the war was with the Commissariat du Plan. I went to Paris, I think it was twice, maybe 3 times in 1946, and I worked with him and with Marjolin, Hirsch and Uri. Many of these guys are still around, Uri is still around.

LT: They are all very much alive.

RN: I saw Uri in Paris about 3 weeks ago, he's still quite vigorous. I haven't seen Marjolin for a while.

LT: I saw Marjolin about a year ago, he gave a series of lectures at the Council on Foreign Relations. The thing that I was struck

by was that Marjolin had never lost his cautious pessimism. He was a brilliant man...

RN: Very brilliant.

LT: But he had opposite polarity from Monnet.

RN: But Monnet could still use a Marjolin. Monnet would listen, get impatient, and raise opposition but nonetheless he battled and argued, and he was learning.

LT: Monnet was able to use a man who was very difficult to use. That was Pierre Uri. A very capable economist.

RN: Oh, yes. You know, he's been working with Mitterand in France. He was here in May, and had to rush back to Paris for the vote. We talked about what he did in the Mitterand campaign. A very able person. There were other men that Monnet had.

LT: Hirsch was an extraordinary man.

RN: Yes, yes, Hirsch was excellent. Monnet really had a lot of people around him with whom I was impressed. When I went to Paris, in the early days of the Commissariat du Plan, I had problems because I didn't speak French, I could understand just a touch here and there. Monnet would be sitting there, and say, "Look, Bob doesn't speak French, and we can all talk English." They all could speak English. We'd start discussing things in English for about 15 minutes, and then somebody would slip into French, and off everyone would go. I'd sit there, being totally confused, and suddenly Monnet would look at me and say, "Hey!" Then things would start in English again. And then if Monnet got excited he'd run off into French. I don't remember how many weeks I spent there,

in those two trips, probably, maybe, a month or so. It was purely on a consulting basis. I went over their ideas, the kinds of information they were developing, the kinds of projections they were making, and their assumptions of resources, how fast the program would move and whether it made sense. By the way, those two experiences working with Monnet and his people in the Plan and also my 3-month visit in Palestine in '44 and into '45 were invaluable, ultimately, to me in working with the less developed countries. The people and ideas that come out of the New Deal, in my judgment, made possible the wartime planning effort, and, in turn, made it possible to help the rehabilitation of Western Europe. They furnished a kind of continuity of experience and learning which eventually led to programs for the developing world. I think of Monnet who was so valuable to the war effort, and to European rehabilitation, to the Common Market. He believed in planning, he believed in organizing. He was not a Socialist in any sense of wanting government ownership.

LT: Ideologically, he was non-sectarian.

RN: That's right. No, he had nothing of Reagan's rigid ideology.

LT: No.

RN: But Monnet was a wonderful mixture of real planning and pragmatism.

LT: I find the French are more predisposed toward planning than are Americans.

RN: Oh, I think there's no question about it. In America there's

almost an anti-intellectual abhorrence of planning. It's really because the business leadership in this country doesn't understand what planning is. They have no capacity, most of them -- or at least their prejudices don't permit them -- to differentiate between regimentation on the one hand and planning on the other. Good planning is an anathema to them.

LT: Another of Monnet's qualities of genius was in being able to draw intellectual nurture from everyone.

RN: I recall a dinner at his house one evening during the war. There were 8 or 10 of the top people in the War Mobilization arrangement. We'd had plenty of very good food and drink, and afterwards we were all yawning a bit. Monnet jokingly said, "Good food and good talk don't go together." Monnet, incidentally, wouldn't let himself get caught in the Washington social circuit. He abhorred cocktail parties, receptions, and large crowds. He loved to work with individuals, or in a small company of people.

LT: Certainly that became more true in his latter years in Europe.

RN: As a matter of fact the amazing thing was how he managed to keep out of the press in America in '42 and '43 and '44. You won't find a lot of references to Monnet in the American press in that period.

LT: Yet when he wanted the press he was always able to get it.

RN: Oh, sure.

LT: He could cultivate the press -- and he did it very well. But not often for himself.

RN: But for a cause, yes. If he judged a public appearance as

important for a cause he was all out. But it was his impatience with mediocrity and generalities that led him to avoid big gatherings. He wanted to have nothing to do with that.

LT: Well, Bob, I think I've taken enough of your time this morning. Do you want to give this interview a closing note perhaps by saying something about the last time you saw Monnet, or provide any little anecdote?

RN: Well, the last time I saw Monnet, I don't remember whether it was Teheran or Beirut. I was travelling in the Middle East and Far East, and he was coming through. We ran into each other at the airport and we sat and talked, I don't know, for a half hour or an hour. I regret, very seriously, that in the last years of his life I didn't see enough of him, because I never went to Paris. I was working mainly in the less-developed countries, Afghanistan, Burma, Indonesia, and the African countries. We have worked in some 50 countries in the developing world in the last 20, 25 years.

LT: Have you read his memoirs?

RN: I have his memoirs, I never read the whole, but parts of it.

LT: It's written by François Fontaine, a former colleague of mine of many years. He had a great deal of rapport with Monnet. He started when Monnet was getting rather old. Monnet had delayed work on his memoirs too long. Nonetheless I was struck in reading the memoirs how closely they really get to his person. The book carries Monnet's mode of expression.

RN: In what I'd read in the memoirs, I found an element of modesty. Monnet was a strange mixture, modesty and pride. He

didn't mind recognition from those he respected. In fact, he was sort of pleased in these circumstances when his accomplishments were recognized. But he was never a self-publicist. Even in the memoirs, dealing with the war period, I think Monnet understates his role a great deal.

LT: You've shed important light on this period of Monnet's life.

###

ROBERT R. NATHAN

Education: B.S., University of Pennsylvania, 1931
M.S., University of Pennsylvania, 1933
L.L.B., Georgetown University, 1938
L.L.D. (honorary) Georgetown University, 1972

Experience: Chairman, Robert R. Nathan Associates, Inc., consulting economists, Washington, D. C., 1978 to date; Chairman and President, RRNA, 1946 to 1978. Service as economic adviser to France, Burma, United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency, Puerto Rico, Israel, Colombia, Ghana, Afghanistan, El Salvador, Iran, Costa Rica, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, Republic of Malaysia, Taiwan, Guyana, Venezuela, Vietnam, Honduras, Bolivia, Bangladesh, Thailand, Indonesia.

Deputy Director, Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, 1945.

Private, U.S. Army, 1943.

Chairman, Planning Committee, War Production Board, 1942-43.

Chief, Requirements Division, Defense Advisory Commission and Office of Production Management, 1940-41.

Chief, National Income Division, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1934-40.

Assistant Director of Research, Pennsylvania State Emergency Relief Board, 1934.

Economist, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1933-34.

Research Assistant, Industrial Research Department, University of Pennsylvania, 1931-33.

Author: National Income, 1929-36, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1937.

Mobilizing for Abundance, McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, New York City, 1944.

Coauthor: Palestine, Problem and Promise, Public Affairs Press, Washington, D. C., 1946.

A National Wage Policy for 1947.

A National Economic Policy for 1949.

Economic Position of the Steel Industry, 1949.

Unemployment in Philadelphia, U.S. Department of Labor, 1931.

Numerous articles on economic subjects for magazines and other publications. Testimony before Congressional committees and in many administrative and judicial proceedings on economic matters.

Associations:

American Economic Association, 1931 -
 American Freedom from Hunger Foundation, member of board, 1961 to 1978; President, 1966-72.
 American-Korean Foundation, Inc., member of Board, 1969-75.
 American Statistical Association, 1931 - ; Fellow; Vice President, 1940.
 American Veterans Committee, 1946 - ; National Board, 1980 -
 Americans for Democratic Action, 1947-70; Chairman, Executive Committee 1952-57; National Chairman, 1957-59.
 Americans for Energy Independence, Chairman, Executive Committee, 1977 -
 Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, member, National Commission; Honorary Vice Chairman; Co-Chairman, Society of Fellows.
 Asia Society, Trustee 1970 - 82; member, Afghanistan Council, 1964-82.
 B'nai B'rith John F. Kennedy Lodge, 1964 - ; (founding President)
 B'nai B'rith Public Affairs Policy Committee, 1979 - ;
 Board of Trustees, Retirement Plans, 1979 - ;
 Commission to Plan Future of B'nai B'rith, 1981 -
 Boston University, member, Department of Economics Board of Visitors, 1977 - 81.
 Committee for Economic Development, Trustee, 1972 -81; *Honorary Trustee*
 member, Research & Policy Committee, 1967 -
 Council on Foreign Relations, member, 1962 -
 District of Columbia Bar, member, 1948 -
 District of Columbia Democratic Central Committee, 1956-59
 Gas Research Institute; member, Advisory Council, 1976 -
 Georgetown University - member, Founders' Council,
 Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, School of Foreign Service, 1978 - ; member, Public Services Laboratory Advisory Board, 1980 -
 Institute for Jewish Policy Planning and Research, 1979 -
 International Development Conference, member of Board, 1967.
 National Academy of Public Administration, 1971 - ; member of Board, 1973-76; Co-Chairman, Development Committee, 1979 -
 National Consumers League, Chairman, 1967-78.
 National Commission on Money and Credit, 1958-61.
 National Policy Exchange, member of board, 1981 -
 Pan American Development Foundation, Trustee, 1973 - *PZ*
 Pan Pacific Community Association, U.S. Advisory Board, 1980 -

Population Crisis Committee, Director, 19 - 81. ^{3.} *Honorary Fellow*
Population Reference Bureau, Chairman, 1968-74.
President's Pay Advisory Committee, 1979 - 81.
Public Interest Economics Foundation/Center, Trustee,
1980 -
Rockefeller Public Service Awards Selection Committee,
1966 - ; Chairman, 1977 -
Society for International Development, member, 1958 - ;
member, National Council, 1971-74.
Time Magazine Board of Economists, member, 1969 - 80.
United Nations Association of the USA: Chairman, National
Policy Panel on Space Communications and the
United Nations, 1972; member of Board, 1977 - ;
member, Economic Policy Council, 1978 -
University of Pennsylvania, Associate Trustee
University of Pennsylvania, The Wharton School Board
of Overseers; 1973 -
Volvo Corporation, International Board of Advisers, 1974 -

Member of the Board:

District of Columbia National Bank, 1968-80; consultant, 1981 -
Josam Manufacturing Company, 1969 -
TransCentury Corporation, 1969 -

Member:

Cosmos Club, Washington, D. C., 1954 -
George Washington University Club
National Economists Club
National Capital Democratic Club, Charter member, 1960 -