

**INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS OR INSTITUTIONAL POLITICS:
THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AGENDA**

**NATIONAL CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON EUROPE
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I. INTRODUCTION

The prospect of working at an international policy level in the European Union for a Californian, much less a New Zealand businesswoman can be daunting. Of course, I am both. However, let not the weight of these two islands far off in the Pacific dissuade you. On a policy making level, New Zealand often plays far above its weight in the international arena. Vigorous in free trade negotiations ranging from the US to China, responsive in foreign aid, proactive in establishing educational and research based links, known globally as an environmentally responsible developed nation, and exporting more dairy products than any other nation worldwide; New Zealand is increasingly connecting itself on an international scale. With these foundations in mind, I set out to become the first American-born, New Zealand businesswoman to be assigned by the National Centre for Research on Europe to work in the European Parliament. My ambitions were clear: to experience first-hand the dynamic inner workings of the largest multinational government institution in the world and to position myself on a European-focused global scale in the world of corporate strategy and sustainable development. When examining the various European institutions, the Parliament (as the only directly elected institutional body) stands out as uniquely democratic and arguably the closest of the EU institutions in proximity to transparency and perhaps the foundations of sustainability and social responsibility; thus, making the European Parliament an ideal destination to base my approach to international business the “European way” via institutional politics.

As Jeffery McNeill and Lucy Cassels noted in their reports on the European Parliament, the nature of working in the Parliament can vary significantly based on personal and professional background, as well as the framework laid out by the Member of European Parliament one may be involved with. Accordingly, it should come as no surprise that my experience in the European Parliament encompassed vast differences to those New Zealander’s who went before me. To some extent my time in the Parliament was characterized by my own political expectations and business experience. Nevertheless, I attribute even more of the richness and relevance of my experience to the gracious flexibility and encouragement of Neil Parish, MEP whose office I was very fortunate to work with.

Approaching the National Centre for Research on Europe and the European Parliament from an international business background gave me a range of understanding and expectations of the environment of the EU. Having had a solid academic background in the competitive business environment of Europe, through the University of Auckland Business School’s Master of International Business Programme, I was well informed of the unique legislative processes of the European Union and its institutions. Secondly, I was approaching the Parliament with significant professional experience in the realm of US policy-makers, which operate quite differently to their European

counterparts. It was this background and a great desire to experience and influence the European business and political environment, which lead me to the steps of the European Parliament in Brussels.

I take the time to explain my atypical background as a New Zealander in order to demonstrate to those kiwis that may be interested, albeit hesitant, that nothing is impossible. Regardless of the status quo, the ambitions of the National Centre for Research on Europe to further facilitate research and relations between New Zealand and the European Union can be achieved through a variety of backgrounds, races, interests and experiences. As a Californian-New Zealander, with a strong business focus I am only one of the many potential faces of the NCRE at the EU. I must say my accent did throw a few Europeans for a curve at first, but representing the diversity of New Zealand was quickly embraced in such a diverse environment as the European Parliament. I write this report with intentions to motivate, encourage and interest more New Zealanders to be ambitious in pursuing and facilitating a presence in the European Parliament as well as in the European business arena. Inevitably, the future of European business and politics reaches far beyond its own geographical borders, increasingly impacting global society, policy-making and the international business environment, making its relevance to New Zealand especially important in the years to come.

In addition I write this candid report to reiterate my appreciation to Martin Holland and Nicholas Mason and the NCRE, Dr. Maureen Benson-Rea at the University of Auckland Business School, Chargé d'Affaires Maurice Maxwell and the European Commission, Ambassador Wade Armstrong, Janet Lowe, and Stephen Payton and the New Zealand Embassy in Brussels, Fiona Cooper at Fonterra and most of all Neil Parish, MEP and William Surman for their gracious facilitation, accommodation and encouragement of my ambitions into their world of the European Parliament.

II. MOTIVATION EUROPEAN BUSINESS AND POLITICS

As mentioned above, my ambitions for entering the world of the European Parliament were two-fold. Primarily, to experience the dynamic inner workings of the largest multinational government institution in the world as well as to position myself on a European-focused global scale in the world of corporate strategy and sustainable development. Some may question the relevance of my selected title, "International Business or Institutional Politics: The European Union Agenda". To defend such an approach, not only to this report, but even more so to my work in the European Parliament as a whole, I would like to briefly touch on the debate to which I have alluded.

Within my academic experience in the post-graduate world of international business I have continually distinguished a key theme of business from a global and regional approach: Business

does not stand-alone. More specifically, whether in New Zealand or El Salvador, India or China, the United States, or the European Union, business is either affected by or affects its stakeholders, institutional policy-makers. Evidence of these affects can be found in recent Doha Round World Trade Organisation negotiations or seen throughout a range of tariff and non-tariff barriers, trade subsidies, quotas, regulatory restrictions, technical barriers, and photo-sanitary specifications worldwide. These clashes of international business and institutional politics can cost billions, harm domestic industry, and even the global economy as a whole. This list is by no means exhaustive, neither is this report the appropriate place to develop this debate, but suffice it to say, business and politics are highly influential to each other on a progressively global scale. The established debate on globalisation furthers this point on both cultural and economic terms. It is also important to note that the relationship between business and politics differs greatly across regional and national boundaries. Anyone can tell you business is a heavyweight in the realm of US government. However, the nature of business in the European Union has been developing quite differently. I would argue the EU has the essence of the "top-down" approach of management, i.e. The EU makes policies and legislation and hands it down to businesses, which must deal with it. Conversely, the US political approach, which is often criticized for heavy business influence, operates from the "bottom-up" with businesses lobbying up to government for their policy preferences. Entering the democratic centre of the European Union, I sought to further understand the influences and interactions of international businesses and institutional politics.

III. OFFICE OF NEIL PARISH, MEP

As a New Zealander, the Office of UK Conservative Member of Parliament, Neil Parish, was an excellent place to be situated. Neil Parish could easily be considered a seasoned member of the European Parliament, having served as a Conservative representative for the South West of England since 1999. Notably he is the Chair of the Australia-New Zealand Delegation and an active member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, Committee on Environment, Public Health and Consumer policy as well as Vice President of the Animal Welfare Inter-group, Deputy Chief WHIP for the UK Conservatives, and Conservative Party Spokesman on Agriculture and Fisheries. As an active member of so many parliamentary committees, the Office of Neil Parish, MEP was a vibrant place to be based. Not a day passed with out taking part in a variety of meetings with committee members and key industry NGOS, as well as discussions and debates on amendments and integral interactions with his UK constituents.

Managed by William Surman, an adventurously proficient and organized office manager and political assistant, the Office of Neil Parish usually works like clockwork. Hundreds of emails and letters from constituents being at the top of the priority list, Neil Parish exemplifies the role as a true representative of his people in the southwest of England. As a farm owner, and family man, Neil

Parish is incredibly down to earth, yet well versed and charismatic whether entertaining an audience of 800 Members of the European Parliament in a Strasbourg plenary session or 20 young farmers from the Southwest on a tour of the “European Capital” in Brussels.

As Members of the European Parliament maintain extensive freedom in the management and staffing of their offices, each MEP’s domain is a diverse place, with anywhere from none to a collection of staff members including interns, assistants, press secretaries, and political liaisons in Brussels, and active offices back in their home country to manage their local affairs. The office of Neil Parish was quite unique with William Surman managing nearly all of the continental affairs of this active MEP. Understandably, Mr. Surman is a very diligent and meticulous manager and political assistant, regularly setting a standard as the first to arrive in the Parliament in the morning at about 8am, and one of the last to leave in the evening, usually about 7-8pm. To single-handedly manage the continental side of political affairs of an MEP, takes time, commitment, and an in-depth grasp of the affairs of this evolving institution. While in Brussels, I joined in on these motivating working hours, which surprisingly pass quickly with the variety of meetings, conversations and business in the parliament. Through regular press releases, media interviews, legislative amendments, conferences, and campaigns, the Office of Neil Parish extended a great deal of flexibility and encouragement to me to utilize the stature and resources of the Parliament to expand my involvement and aid the research needs of my Masters of International Business Degree. In particular I was given the liberty to be included in any business, or venture off to any committee, which sparked my interest, and there were many. It is for this flexibility and encouragement of the Parish Office that I am truly thankful, for it shaped the richness and relevance of my experience in the European Parliament.

IV. MY RESEARCH AND INVOLVEMENT

I am extremely appreciative of the range of committees and organisations in which I was able to research and be involved in while working in the European Parliament. My research and involvement spanned both Neil Parish’s focal groups of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development and the Australia-New Zealand Delegation as well as a variety of my own professional and personal interests including the Committee on International Trade, Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Delegations on the United States and Israel, a Conference on Trade and the Environment, Debates on Nuclear Energy, Sustainability, and Fair Trade. Within these areas my involvement ranged from attendance and reporting, to internal meetings and events, observation, recommendation, research, data gathering to networking and interviewing, and especially research for my thesis, which is discussed below (For those interested, I have included in the appendix a brief topical overview of some of the issues I faced in the above committees). Possibly the most valuable portions of my time in the EP were spent in Strasbourg by

the gracious support and funding of Neil Parish, where the majority of debates, and plenary sessions take place.

V. EUROPEAN UNION EMISSIONS TRADING SCHEME

Anyone who has undertaken the daunting task of writing a Masters or Doctoral thesis would likely agree, once you have narrowed down your topic, you are half way there. Thus, much of my time in the Parliament resulted in exploratory research in a number of areas relating to sustainable development, social corporate responsibility, and business strategy within the European Union. After a bulk of research, I was challenged by my supervisors to further develop research on the relevant and very new emerging debate on emissions trading legislation. The prospect of having the wealth of networks and information of the European Parliament at my disposal proved to be an especially unique and valuable means for directing my research. As mentioned previously, I had the exceptional opportunity to attend a variety of committee meetings, and debates on international business, trade and the environment. I was also briefly involved in Neil Parish's Own Initiative Report for the European Commission relating to renewable and alternative energy, and bio-fuels which are relevant to the international debate on sustainable business practices, and furthermore to global concerns of climate change. It was from these foundations that I was able to focus my research efforts on the area of climate change from a unique business perspective.

My time in the parliament perfectly coincided with the introduction of the largest multi-country, multi-sector greenhouse gas emissions trading scheme in the world. In January, 2005 the European Union's Emissions Trading Scheme (EU-ETS) went into force instigating the formation of an international emissions trading market, to manage the risks of climate change through economically sound market based mechanisms, partially derived from the United Nation's Kyoto Protocol. Various new businesses suddenly emerged across Europe and globally as precursors to and results of the EU-ETS, including carbon traders, carbon finance specialists, carbon management specialists, auditors and verifiers. This landmark European scheme has created the need for relevant research on the strategic and operational preparations of private sector firms for such an international emissions trading market. It was here that my business and political ambitions for working in the European Parliament met, as I saw an opportunity to further investigate the implications of international emissions trading markets and legislation on business strategy. Since my time in the European Parliament my research has expanded to encompass strategic business issues of climate change policy and emissions trading strategy in a number of other geographic regions, nevertheless it is because of my unique opportunity to access to the European Union and its resources and information that I was able to develop such a relevant thesis on this topic of emerging international importance.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

While the nature of my work in the European Parliament was guided by my personal expectations and professional experience, as well as the gracious encouragement and flexibility of Neil Parish, MEP, I do believe there are a few characteristics of this institution, its diversity, complexity, and depth which, to a degree, would guide anyone stepping foot in the door. I believe it is important for anyone with ambitions to be involved in the Parliament to understand that this place is much more than a focal point of European policy, but it is a influencer of global business, culture, diversity and equality on a impressive scale.

In conclusion, I want to reiterate my encouragement to any New Zealander who may be considering applying to the National Centre for Research on Europe for a position in the European Parliament. The academic and professional experience of being involved in arguably the most historic multinational democratic government is well worth every sacrifice you may make to get there. And to those who may be planning their arrival, be ambitious, flexible and confident. Try to absorb and interpret everything, keep a journal, take notes. You were chosen to represent New Zealand for a reason, make the most out of that opportunity relationally, politically and professionally. It will not be handed to you; your experience, much like your future is shaped not only by the opportunities placed before you, but even more so by your own determination and attitude towards opinions, positions, policies and diversity you face. As our generation has witnessed the challenge of 25 countries of differences and diversity join together under one flag, one thing is clear: All things are possible to those who believe.

VII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the many individuals and organisations that made this valuable experience possible. First, I would like to express my gratitude to those in New Zealand at the National Centre for Research on Europe to Director Martin Holland and Nicholas Mason, for their tireless work in arranging these opportunities, also to Dr. Maureen Benson-Rea at the University of Auckland Business School, for her advice and assistance in the application processes as well as her rigorous supervision of my research and to Chargé d'Affaires Maurice Maxwell and the European Commission for investing in relations with New Zealand. I would also like to thank the NCRE Business Advisory Board and especially Fiona Cooper and Fonterra for their funding and support.

To those in Brussels, I am indebted to the New Zealand Embassy in Brussels for their facilitation in not only in my placement, but also in welcoming me into their offices and homes during my time in Belgium. Especially to Ambassador Wade Armstrong, Janet Lowe, Stephen Payton and all the other staff who assisted in this excellent opportunity. Furthermore, I would like to thank the non-profit organisation, Youth With a Mission, Brussels, their staff and especially Directors Kevin and Nicki Colyer for providing me with access to such a positive community and central accommodation in Brussels. I would also like to thank the UK Conservatives and the EPP-ED in the Parliament for welcoming me into their work and lives, and especially my colleagues and friends Judith Crawford, Laura Jones, Jennifer Forrest, Timothy Williams and Helen Gale.

Most of all I would like to express my gratitude and admiration to Neil Parish, MEP and William Surman for their gracious facilitation, accommodation and encouragement of my ambitions into their world of the European Parliament. Finally, I am thankful to the European Union, for helping fund the growth of determined New Zealanders in a unique experiential and professional way.

APPENDIX A

AREAS OF RESEARCH AND INVOLVEMENT

This appendix gives a brief outline of some of the key issues going through Parliament, which I was involved in, attended or observed.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Reform of Sugar Regime June 2006

Own Initiative Report on Bio-fuels

- Due in December: Rapporteur Neil Parish
- Government Incentives for Bio-fuels investment
- Bio-ethanol blends for consumer vehicles
- Non-Food Crops, Alternative Land use, Bio-mass, Bio-crops

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

DOHA Round - CAP Reform

- Implementation began January 2005
 - Phasing out of Production Subsidies
 - Replaced with Single Farm payments based on area of Land and Environmental Compliance
- Campaign for Compassion in World Farming
- Live Export of Cattle

COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND ENERGY

Introduction of the EU Carbon Emissions Trading Scheme

REACH Chemicals Directive

- Australia's Concerns: Metals and Mining Industries

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Transatlantic Relations

- US Visit of President Bush to Brussels

NATO

Public Debate on US - EU Relations by the Heritage Foundation

Bilateral Trade Issues

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Prospects for trade relations between the EU and China

Gateway programs for SME's and Asia

EU-Funded research centres (NCRE's)

Report on Exploitation of Children in developing countries

CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

"How to Avoid a Collision Course" April 7, 2005

WTO Agricultural Subsidies

Need for collaboration between member states

- 25 Trade Experts

CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development

- "Is implementing ecological concerns in the WTO protectionist?"
- Kyoto and WTO
- Co-existing climate and trade rules
 - Dispute settlements of Kyoto and WTO

AUSTRALIA-NEW ZEALAND DELEGATION

Australia Delegation Visit: Discussions, Scheduling

Upcoming visit of Delegation Members to New Zealand

APPENDIX B

MAKING THE MOST OUT OF THE OPPORTUNITY

For many who venture off to Europe, Belgium may not be at the top of their must see list. From my previous experiences in Europe, I would have to admit I fell into this category. Yet there is something surprising about having minimum expectations and I quickly found myself intrigued and impressed with Brussels and the surrounding Belgian countryside. While my primary motive was to fully experience work in the European Parliament, I was fortunate to have active colleagues and friends, who included me on some great adventures, which I thought might be interesting to anyone planning a move to Brussels. Of course these adventures are not covered by the NCRE stipend, so plan accordingly.

BRUSSELS AND SURROUNDING BELGIUM

After living a few months in Brussels, I found the city has quite a few hidden treasures worth exploring. While most visitors would make their first stop the Grand Place with its gold dripping structures and cobblestone cafes, I avoided this tourist trap and others until my last few weeks in town. Instead I enjoyed walking through the markets on the weekends, joining friends and colleagues at the Parliament's nearby Plaza Luxembourg for a drink and a chat after work, and venturing off to little locals spots in the city. Some of the best cafes just a short walk from the Parliament are in Boniface, a tight square of restaurants and cafes cornered by a steep cathedral face. Another good dining area is around Saint Geri, with an eclectic range of restaurants, cafes and bars.

I was very fortunate to have extremely affordable accommodation with YWAM, International, a non-profit organization I had previously worked with in Australia and Thailand, who maintains a variety of bases in over 800 locations worldwide. The Brussels base happened to be perfectly situated in Etterbeek, just a 20-minute walk from the Parliament on Ave des Celtes near the famous Parc Cinquantaire. The international organization runs a pregnancy crisis and counseling centre called Alternatives, a café where they often have live music and special events, as well as one of the only Christian bookstores in Brussels that carries English language books, CDs and DVDs. YWAM bases are always a great place to be, with a global mix of staff, programmes, and community involvement and I was thankful to be around inspiring and devoted staff members and visiting volunteers. My home in Etterbeek was just steps away from the Parc Cinquantaire, a great place to enjoy tossing a rugby ball with friends, taking a jog around the Parc, or enjoying the shade and a good book. I did hear a few stories of muggings in the Parc at night, so I would not advise walking through alone after dark. Overall, I felt like Brussels was a pretty safe place, but as in any bustling city it is always good to be aware of your surroundings and try to walk with a friend or in a lit area after dark.

I must admit to Jeffrey McNeill's that I never tried the pommes frites in Place Jordan, perhaps in fear of heart attack or because I usually ate too many pommes frites at the Parliament during lunch, but I do recommend the great sushi place just around the corner. Because I lived so close to the European Institutions area, I rarely used the bus or metro, unless going into the central city. If you are situated within walking distance to the Parliament, I suggest purchasing 10 trip, (Diez voyages) which cost about 10 euros and can be used on any bus or metro as needed.

SNOW IN THE CITY

I must mention that in Brussels in February, it can snow. I was quite surprised the first time I noticed whirls of white streaming past the Parliament window. A few friends from the Parliament and I decided to make the most of it and go "skiing" in Belgium over the weekend. After the scenic two-hour drive, we arrived at the mountain. Only, there was no mountain at all. No Mt.Hutt, no Aspen, not even a Rueapahu. Yet we noticed everyone parking and walking down the road with their skis. We figured it must be hidden in the distance, and we just had to rent the skis there, park and perhaps shuttle to the lifts. The website had said, three "pists" (that's three "runs" in Californian), and it was very affordable, so we ventured off, picked up some skis and walked the kilometer or so in the direction of the others. Through some trees and around a bend, we noticed we were standing on the top of the main pist! Except it looked more like the sloping hill in the neighbor's back yard, and it was shorter than the kilometer walk we had just taken lugging the skis from the car. What seemed like a stone's throw away was the bottom of the slope, and one rope tow "lift" which was clearly injuring more skiers than it actually dragged up the hill. To their credit, the snow was amazing and had we actually had snowboards like we were hoping for, and an incline of any sort it would have been amazing. On the drive home we did find a beautiful forest surrounding an old stone farmhouse turned restaurant, which maintained a bison farm for entertainment. It was incredible to see the thick-coated bison run through deep blankets of snow. Unforgettable for the scenery, but if you are really into skiing or snowboarding, I'd advise an alternative journey to perhaps Chamonix, France.

ROYAL GARDENS

I happened to be in Brussels during the rare opening of the Royal Gardens, which only takes place two weeks of the year. These picturesque greenhouses and hillside views of Belgium are well worth the small entry fee and bus ride to the edge of town. It amazed me how intricate the collection was from flowers to trees, even tropical plants and ferns with large koru's reminding me of home.

PLACE SAINT CATHERINE & LIVE MUSIC

One of my favorite weekends was spent around Place Saint Catharine sitting in the window of Monk, a centuries old building recently renovated to a café with thick dark wood floors and walls and a baby grand piano in the center of the cafe for casual live entertainment. I happened to be there when a member of the Buena Vista Social Club was playing in the warmth of the spring sun among many parliament friends. It was a bit like Cuba meets Europe. I greatly encourage those in Brussels to seek out the special events on during their time in the city, as many talented musicians, performers and art exhibits are frequent in the city.

WATERLOO, ANTWERP & GHENT

Surrounding Brussels I explored the battlegrounds of Waterloo, on a particularly freezing day arriving to a mound of displaced dirt with a grand looking statue of a lion resting on the peak. It was interesting to see the location of such a commemorated battle, however the opportunities for exploration are a bit limited in Waterloo. Alternatively, great place for shopping and a city walk is Antwerp, just outside of Brussels and convenient by either train or car. It's the Diamond capitol of the world, but is also lined with cute cafes, more international fashion retailers, and a rich history of architecture and heritage.

Ghent is a perfect town to check out on a lazy weekend, and I ended up going twice. I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the Buscolla Symphony Orchestra, where my colleague and friend from the Parliament, Helen Gale, starred playing the cello. Ghent is also home to one of my favorite Belgian beers, Jan van Ghent, only found locally, coming in a unique paper-wrapped thick glass bottle. The city also boasts a castle, a few cathedrals, and a peaceful river lined with places for an afternoon coffee.

LEUVEN & KNOKKE

While any tourist guide would likely lead you to Brugge with its specialty shops of chocolate and lace, and the astounding architecture and horse drawn carriages, I was much more drawn to Leuven's weekend markets, and Knokke's beachside boardwalk. Leuven, is only about 20 minutes from Brussels, and on Easter weekend was filled with festival dancing groups from all the European member states, fresh farmers markets, and people selling odds and ends. The beach at Knokke was a great escape to my city life, with sweeping white sand reminiscent of California, an all too built up boardwalk, a wonderfully jumpy dog named after Winston Churchill, and an overall great place to enjoy the sunshine and a coastal walk.

OUTSIDE BELGIUM

I was blessed to spend a weekend sharing the joys of commitment and training with a few Parliament colleagues and friends at the 2005 Paris Marathon. With Paris only an hour and a half train ride away, and the prospects of witnessing something I always assumed was an impossible task, I signed up to support the team, along with Helen Gale, from the Office of Geoffrey Van Orden. Never did I imagine the life changing experience of watching 70,000 people of all shapes sizes, races, ages and sexes run a grueling 42 kilometers from the Arc D' Triumph down the Champs Élysées, and throughout the city. Helen and I ran a marathon ourselves trying to meet and cheer for our colleagues and friends at different points of the Paris course. It was truly inspiring to watch the variety of people take on this challenge, commit to it, and complete it. Inspiration enough to even get me running!

STRASBOURG

As the second home to the European Parliament, this unique French and German bordering city has an eclectic range of cafes, cobblestone alleyways and elaborate European Institutions. The city comes alive for the week as members and staff from the EU institutions pour in for one week of the month. Strasbourg is fairly pleasant to get around, and is welcoming to a Parliament newcomer, but as hotels rooms fill and restaurants book, I recommend planning ahead if possible. The Parliament itself in Strasbourg is not so easy to navigate, its no wonder its design resembles the ancient Tower of Babel, as confusion is quite an attribute when trying to negotiate its plethora of hallways, lifts and split level floors. But fear not, a few weeks of exploring the nooks and crannies will prove quite the adventure.

Some of my most memorable experiences were at the monthly Prayer Breakfasts, held in Strasbourg. Here a number of Members of Parliament and other Parliament staff representing a range of Member States and political parties meet to discuss the biblical relevance of key EU issues, share stories of need or success and pray collectively for the EU issues at hand. Diversity is represented not only by nationality in these Prayer Breakfasts but also by the variety of Christian denominations, including Catholics, Protestants alike. This is a side of the European Parliament many would never see, but I attest that witnessing politicians heartfelt beliefs, and true care for the people of Europe and the issues therein, is quite an experience. There are also weekly prayer meetings in the Parliament in Brussels, which many assistants, translators and Secretariat staff attend.

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TO THE NCRE

Thank you for this valuable opportunity to work in these historic times in such a dynamic multinational institution. I greatly appreciate working within the European Parliament, and the opportunity to utilize this experience to platform New Zealand as a valuable business partner in the international arena.