Denis de Rougemont, Swiss writer, tireless campaigner for Europe, founder of the European Cultural Centre in Geneva, and one of the major figures behind the move to establish CERN died on 6 December. His writing talents brought him many literary prizes, but his epic piece in the Gazette de Lausanne on 17 June 1940 after the fall of Paris will always be remembered as a fine expression of contemporary feeling.

After the War, he was one of the main organizers of the historic European Cultural Conference in Lausanne in December 1949, where the idea for a European scientific research centre was first aired. Progress was rapid over the next five years, and on 7 October 1954, as Secretary General of the European Cultural Movement, he attended the first meeting of CERN Council.

One of his last visits to CERN was in September 1984 for the Organization’s 30th anniversary, where guest of honour King Juan Carlos of Spain concluded his address with a de Rougemont quotation: ‘The only way to define Europe is to build it, not so much in time and space, but rather by continuing to refresh its own, universal, genius’. 