

Reactions in France

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Political circles in France, from the Christian Democrats to the Socialists, were broadly in support of the Foreign Minister's initiative. Notwithstanding some reservations, the Popular Republican Movement (MRP) and the French Section of the Workers' International (*Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière*) (SFIO) supported Robert Schuman's proposal. The Socialists, while fearing that Europe would bear the stamp of the Christian Democrats, recognised the economic advantages that the Schuman Plan appeared to offer. Right-wing nationalists, however, rejected any agreement with Germany, as did the Communist opposition. The Communist Party saw the establishment of a Western European entity as being hostile to the Soviet Union and of benefit only to the American economy. The steel lobby, who feared foreign competition and central planning, also engaged in a virulent campaign against the plan to establish a High Authority. As for public opinion in France, it showed broad support for the French Foreign Minister's initiative.