

## Memorandum from Jean Monnet to Robert Schuman (16 September 1950)

**Caption:** In this draft memorandum to French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman, Jean Monnet establishes the framework within which he believes West German rearmament should take place and the country should be incorporated in the European defence system.

**Source:** Fondation Jean Monnet pour l'Europe, [s.l.]. Archives Jean Monnet. Fonds AMG. 6/6/1.

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1. The events in Korea have convinced everyone that Germany's involvement is essential for Western defence. So much is obvious, but it means we must now choose between two alternatives. Either we resign ourselves to historical inevitability and bring Germany back into the international community with armed forces and all the attributes of sovereignty or, as proposed in the Schuman Plan, we integrate Germany into Western continental Europe. This would speed up the integration of Western Europe, which is essential for Atlantic defence as a whole and for the prosperity of the community of free peoples. It would also ensure that German military and national sentiment gives way to the sense of belonging to a European community.

In short, we must decide whether to approach the issue in terms of Germany or of continental Europe. If we take a European approach, we can find a positive solution to the German problem. If we deal with Germany in isolation we will prevent the creation of Europe.

2. If Germany's necessary participation in joint defence is organised on a national basis rather than by integrating it into Western Europe, we shall be giving it the means to detach itself. Its resultant room for manoeuvre would allow it — and, in certain circumstances, tempt it — to switch its allegiance from West to East. In the final analysis, rearming Germany as a separate nation, far from strengthening Western Europe, would leave it more disunited, and that means weaker, than it is today.

It would lead in fact to greater disarray on the continent than prevailed before Schuman's proposal. Neighbouring countries would anxiously monitor every move by a rearmed Germany, which, having regained its sovereignty, could use its industrial and demographic power for its own national ends.

3. It would also mean the failure of the Schuman Plan, if the current negotiations were to lead nowhere or end in a purely technical agreement on coal and steel without any political content or future.

The Schuman Plan was intended as — and still can be — the beginning of the creation of a Western Europe organised at France's initiative. It is also the only possible solution to the German problem, i.e. the political and substantive integration of Germany in a supranational community together with France, Italy and the Benelux countries.

The pooling of coal and steel production, the creation of a single market, and the establishment of a supranational High Authority and a Common Assembly, could lay the first economic and psychological foundations of such a community. Other achievements could follow, gradually merging the lives of countries that were previously disunited and mutually hostile.

4. If the Germans were to obtain the immediate benefits they hope to gain from the Schuman Plan, but outside its framework — that is, if they were allowed to contribute to Western defence as a separate nation, with their current status modified accordingly — then there is the risk that they would turn their back on us and again be dominated by nationalist sentiment.

Implementation of the Schuman Plan and the construction of a united Europe would become impossible.

5. German public opinion is already wavering and split. Some we speak to, like Professor Hallstein (who, as far as we can judge, also reflects Chancellor Adenauer's view), continue to support the Schuman Plan and the creation of a Western Europe in which Germany would be genuinely integrated. Others, whose voices are becoming louder every day, have only national concerns at heart.

6. For all the above reasons, we should study the following two proposals, under item 4 of the agenda in the communiqué issued on the evening of the 15th:

(1) that Germany's involvement in common defence be organised within the European, supranational framework of an enlarged Schuman Plan, a plan to be drawn up on France's initiative with the participation of the United Kingdom and the United States;

(2) that it be agreed:

(a) that the Atlantic community comprises:

- the United States,
- the United Kingdom and the Dominions,
- the countries of Western Europe;

(b) that the defence and other organisations of this community should be built on that basis;

(c) that within this wider community, the countries of Western Europe will pursue their efforts to create a continental community in accordance with the principles of the Schuman Plan and at France's initiative.

This approach would ensure that the existing organs of the Atlantic community, reformed accordingly, would be more effective than is now the case.