

Problems arising from the establishment of an International High Authority (3 May 1950)

Caption: In this discussion paper of 3 May 1950, Jean Monnet considers the compatibility between the international control of the Ruhr and the establishment of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

Source: Fondation Jean Monnet pour l'Europe, [s.l.]. Archives Jean Monnet. Fonds AMG. 2/3/2.

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Problems arising from the establishment of an International High Authority by comparison with the current situation in the Ruhr (3 May 1950)

The current situation in the Ruhr must be considered from two angles:

1. The ownership of mines and equipment

The ownership of mines and equipment is not, for the time being, legally determined. However, it must be noted that the plan to establish an International High Authority does not in any way, or for anyone, call into question the issue of ownership. Undertakings are called upon to be governed by the High Authority, whatever the nature of the ownership and whoever the owner: the State, private companies or trusts that manage on behalf of whoever owns them. Therefore, the problem of ownership can and must be resolved separately from the plan to establish the International High Authority.

2. International control over the Ruhr basin

Such control exists, and it must be taken into consideration, not only for reasons of both domestic and foreign policy but also for a fundamental legal reason: for the time being, the Germans have no direct international powers, either in general terms or over the Ruhr basin in particular. If the plan to establish an International High Authority is to succeed, British and American consent is required.

However, that in no way means that the French proposal is, on these grounds, useless or impossible. Indeed, the procedure for its implementation may be set out as follows: initially, international controls and guarantees over the Ruhr would be maintained, which might, on the one hand, lead to the appointment of non-Germans to represent Germany in the International High Authority. On the other hand, the establishment and operation of the High Authority would gradually lead to the abolition of inter-allied control: that last point is crucial, since it demonstrates that, far from contradicting the creation of inter-allied control, the establishment of an International High Authority will be the only way to facilitate the evolution of that control, by making it ineffective, because it would be replaced by another body of a different kind, a body with broader objectives and the only one that would be acceptable to the Germans.

It is possible that, during the period when the International High Authority and inter-allied control exist in tandem, the latter's retention of powers will lead to the imposition of certain limitations with regard to the exercise of the powers of the International High Authority. However, this outcome would not lead to any insurmountable difficulties.