

Draft joint declaration by the Socialist parties (30 July 1951)

Caption: On 30 July 1951, the Socialist Parties of Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Luxembourg adopt a draft joint declaration on the conditions which must be met if the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) is to succeed.

Source: Archives historiques des Communautés européennes, Florence, Villa Il Poggiolo. Dépôts, DEP. Fernand Dehousse, FD. FD 127.

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The Socialist parties of

- West Germany,
- Belgium,
- France,
- Italy,
- Luxembourg,
- the Netherlands,

in line with the resolutions adopted in London in 1950 and Paris in 1951, approve the creation of a coal and steel community, in so far as it aims, with regard for the rules of democracy and in a spirit of broad social progress, to achieve closer union between the peoples of Europe.

Aware of the Treaty recently signed by the Ministers of the six countries, they consider that, in order to achieve such an objective, the new Community should unequivocally fulfil the following conditions.

1. The organic status of the Community should not in any way prevent a contracting state from placing under public administration all or part of its coal and steel industries.
2. The realisation of the Community must ensure full employment by expanding the opportunities for making integral use of the employment potential offered by all the partner territories, and not by rationing the work of those in a position to offer their services.
3. The different economic policies applied in each of the contracting countries may not, under any circumstances, constitute an obstacle to the adoption of plans necessary for the creation of a coal and steel community.
4. The operation of all the bodies on which the Community's activities hinge should be subject to democratic scrutiny.

This scrutiny should be automatically assured both by the provisions governing the composition of the Community bodies and by the measures governing the regular and ongoing provision of information concerning the objectives set and the results obtained.

Before the Community was created, the actions of each of the national governments were held up to open, precise and regular parliamentary scrutiny. The supranational bodies called on to assume, in place of these governments, responsibilities that were previously the latter's domain, should be subject to at least the same level of democratic monitoring.

5. When members of the High Authority are appointed, account should be taken firstly of their ability to act in a supranational spirit by putting themselves above the direct interests of their own country, and secondly of their competence.

All national appointments motivated by a partisan attitude should be strictly precluded through the coordinated vigilance of all the contracting states.

The competence required of members of the High Authority stands in direct relation to the desire to see this High Authority perform adequately the important duties assigned to it.

It is essential, therefore, that the High Authority includes a workers' representation able to promote and

defend the social interests for which the Community is responsible.

Furthermore, once the Community has eliminated the fundamental differences standing in the way of the creation of a single market, transport will remain likely to cause considerable disruption to the free movement of coal and steel. It is important for the High Authority to be composed in such a way as to be fully capable of dealing with these transport problems.

6. The common alignment of coal and steel manufacturing activities is ultimately dependent on the application of appropriate measures at national level by each of the participating countries.

It is essential not only for each country to be willing, but also and above all for it to have the means to adopt the necessary implementing provisions. Where these means are not in place, they must be established. This concerns, in particular, the areas of financing, investment, controls on the level of industrial activity and price regulation.

7. The substitution of a supranational authority for national authorities in those areas defined by the Treaty must not, under any circumstances, affect the social advantages that workers have gained from the regular contact that has been established between them and their respective governments.

8. Various provisions of the Treaty set out, in general terms, the requirements or leeway as regards the publication of information by the High Authority. These provisions are not adequate to guarantee proper public information or, more importantly, to lend the actions of this High Authority the effective backing of well-informed public opinion.

It is vital, for instance, that widely distributed monthly publications provide the following:

a) precise information concerning the standard of living for miners and steel workers in the individual contracting states, including the cost of social security;

b) indications of transfers of workers in mines and the steel industry from one country to another;

c) unemployment figures in the various countries, in particular for the basic industries, along with essential statistics on the general level of employment;

d) essential information about the High Authority's achievements as regards the creation of new industries where its intervention has been sought.

9. The body responsible for direct scrutiny of the High Authority's actions is the Assembly, an ordinary meeting of which is scheduled to take place once a year. In order to prevent a parody of scrutiny such as that staged by limited companies, owing to the illusory and distant nature of contact between their management and their general assembly, the following must be ensured:

- firstly, that there is ongoing contact between the officers of the Assembly and the High Authority;

- secondly, that the Assembly's restricted committees, specialising in political, social and economic matters, are permitted to establish the same ongoing contact with the High Authority.

10. The notion of Community involves the participation on an equal footing of all the contracting parties, which means that all bodies prescribing different rights for individual participants must be abolished, in particular the International Authority for the Ruhr.

The Community mechanism must also ensure that no participating country lags behind in keeping its machinery in line with its production capacity.

11. It is in Europe's interest that Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries should be part of a common policy on coal and steel production and distribution.