

Memorandum from the French Government to the British Government (25 May 1950)

Caption: On 25 May 1950, the French Government invites London to take part in the negotiations for the establishment of a European coal and steel pool.

Source: Anglo-French Discussions regarding French proposals for the Western European Coal, Iron and Steel Industries May-June 1950. N°9, Miscellaneous, Cmd 7970. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1950. 15 p. p. 7-8.

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Memorandum from the French Government to the British Government (25 May 1950)

(Translation)

On 9th May the French Government sent to the British Government the text of a declaration which subsequently was published by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

With the primary object of assuring peace, European solidarity and economic and social progress the French Government have proposed action in a limited and decisive field. This action consists of ensuring the pooling of European coal and steel production and the institution of a new high authority whose decisions would bind all countries which joined it.

The French document further indicates the details of the basis on which the French Government are ready to open negotiations for a treaty to be signed by participating countries and submitted for the ratification of their Parliaments.

From the outset, the French Government have been anxious that the British Government should associate itself with the French initiative. To this end, in the course of conversations which took place in London on 11th May and on the following days, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and M. Jean Monnet sought to give additional explanations to certain members of the British Government and to certain high officials. They pointed out that if it were desired to reach concrete results it was necessary that the Governments should be in agreement from the beginning on the principles and the essential undertakings defined in the French Government's document, but that the numerous problems which would arise from putting the project into effect would require discussions and studies which would have to be pursued in common with the object of achieving the signature of the proposed treaty.

Since then, the Chancellor of the German Federal Government has informed the French Government that he agrees to engage in negotiations on the basis indicated, and that in consequence he accepts the terms of the attached communiqué. The text has been transmitted to the Belgian, Netherlands, Luxembourg and Italian Governments with the indication that the French Government intends to publish it towards the middle of next week.

The French Government express the hope that the British Government for its part will be able to participate on the same conditions in these negotiations from the outset.

Annex

Draft communique

(Translation)

The Governments of are resolved to carry out a common action aiming at peace, European solidarity and economic and social progress by pooling their coal and steel production and by the institution of a new higher authority whose decisions will bind and the countries which may adhere to it in the future.

Negotiations on the basis of the principles and essential undertakings contained in the French proposals of 9th May last will open on a date which will be proposed almost at once by the French Government, with a view to working out the terms of a treaty which will be submitted for ratification to the respective Parliaments.