



Miscellaneous No. 9 (1950)

# Anglo-French Discussions

regarding French proposals for  
the Western European Coal,  
Iron and Steel Industries

May-June, 1950

*Presented by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to Parliament  
by Command of His Majesty*

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**ANGLO-FRENCH DISCUSSIONS REGARDING FRENCH PROPOSALS  
FOR THE WESTERN EUROPEAN COAL, IRON AND STEEL  
INDUSTRIES**

*May-June 1950*

**Document 1**

*Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris*

Sir, *Foreign Office, 9th May, 1950.*

The French Ambassador called on me to-day with an urgent message from M. Schuman, regarding a decision which was taken by the French Cabinet this morning. This decision would be submitted by M. Schuman to the tripartite conference in London this week, and would be published in the press this evening.

2. The substance of the French Cabinet's decision was as follows:—

The French Government proposes that an authority should be created which should take over control and production of all steel and coal in Western Europe. It would not have ownership rights, but it would have controlling power.

M. Massigli explained that the French Government felt this was the first concrete proposal to bring about unity of Western Europe.

3. I told M. Massigli that when we saw the proposal in detail we would, of course, examine it with great care, but that meantime I could make no comment.

I am, &c.

ERNEST BEVIN.

**Document 2**

(T) *The text of the French communiqué to the press was subsequently sent to the Foreign Office under cover of a note from the Ambassador.*

*French Ambassador to Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs*

(Translation)

*French Embassy,*

Sir,

*London, 9th May, 1950.*

I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency the text of the communiqué approved this morning by the Council of Ministers which will be read to the press this evening by M. Schuman. I desire to emphasise that in the conception of my Government this is a plan of European scope. If in the presentation of it to the press particular stress is laid on the Franco-German aspect of the scheme this is in order to give to the grand idea which is the inspiration of the scheme, as striking a form as possible, particularly with regard to German opinion.

I avail, &c.

R. MASSIGLI.



*Communiqué*

(Translation)

World peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of efforts proportionate to the dangers which threaten it. The contribution which an organised and living Europe can bring to civilisation is indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations. In taking upon herself for more than twenty years the rôle of champion of a united Europe France has always had as her essential aim the service of peace. A united Europe was not achieved; and we had war. Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single, general plan. It will be built through concrete achievements, which first create a *de facto* solidarity. The gathering together of the nations of Europe requires the elimination of the age-old opposition of France and Germany. The first concern in any action undertaken must be these two countries.

With this aim in view, the French Government proposes to take action immediately on one limited but decisive point; the French Government proposes to place Franco-German production of coal and steel as a whole under a common higher authority, within the framework of an organisation open to the participation of the other countries of Europe. The pooling of coal and steel production should immediately provide for the setting up of common foundations for economic development as a first step in the federation of Europe, and will change the destinies of those regions which have long been devoted to the manufacture of munitions of war, of which they have been the most constant victims.

The solidarity in production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes, not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible. The setting up of this powerful productive unit, open to all countries willing to take part, and eventually capable of providing all the member countries with the basic elements of industrial production on the same terms, will lay a true foundation for their economic unification. This production will be offered to the world as a whole without distinction or exception, with the aim of contributing to raising living standards and to promoting peaceful achievements. Europe, with new means at her disposal, will be able to pursue the realisation of one of her essential tasks, the development of the African continent.

In this way there will be realised simply and speedily that fusion of interests which is indispensable to the establishment of a common economic system; and that will be the leaven from which may grow a wider and deeper community between countries long opposed to one another by sanguinary divisions. By pooling basic production and by instituting a new higher authority, whose decisions will bind France, Germany and other member countries, these proposals will build the first concrete foundation of the European federation which is indispensable to the preservation of peace.

In order to promote the realisation of the objective it has defined, the French Government is ready to open negotiations on the following basis: that the task with which this common higher authority will be charged will be that of securing in the shortest possible time the modernisation of production and the improvement of its quality; the supply of coal and steel on identical terms to the French and to the German markets as well as to the markets of other member countries; the development in common of export to other countries; and the equalisation as well as improvement of living conditions of workers in these industries.

To achieve these objectives, starting from the very different conditions in which the productions of member countries are at present situated, it is proposed that certain transitional measures should be instituted, such as



the application of production and investment schemes, the establishment of compensating machinery for equating prices, the creation of an amortisation fund to assist the rationalisation of production. The movement of coal and steel between member countries will immediately be freed of all customs duty; it will not be permissible to set up differential transport rates for them. Conditions will gradually be created which will spontaneously provide for the more rational distribution of production at the highest level of productivity. The proposed organisation—in contrast to international cartels, which tend to impose restrictive practices on distribution and the exploitation of national markets and to maintain high profits—will ensure the fusion of markets and the expansion of production.

The essential principles and undertakings defined hitherto will be the subject of treaties signed between the States and submitted for the ratification of their Parliaments. The negotiations required to settle details of their application will be undertaken with the help of a referee appointed by common agreement. He will be entrusted with the task of seeing that the agreements reached conform with the principles laid down and in the event of a deadlock, he will decide what solution is to be adopted. The common higher authority entrusted with the management of the scheme will be composed of independent personalities appointed by Governments on an equal basis. A chairman will be chosen by common agreement between Governments; its decisions will have executive force in France, Germany, and other member countries. Appropriate measures will be provided for means of appeal against the decision of the authority. A representative of the United Nations will be accredited to the authority, and will be instructed to make a public report to the United Nations twice yearly, giving an account of the working of the new organism, particularly as concerns the safeguarding of its pacific objects.

The institution of the higher authority will not in any way prejudice the methods of ownership of enterprises. In the exercise of its functions the common higher authority will take into account the powers conferred upon the International Ruhr Authority and the obligations of all sorts imposed upon Germany, so long as these remain in force.

### Document 3

*On 11th May, 1950, the Prime Minister made a statement in the House of Commons on the French Government's proposals.*

*Statement by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on 11th May, 1950*

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a short statement with regard to the French Government's proposals for the integration of French and German coal and steel production, in which I am sure the House is very much interested.

It is the declared policy of the Western Powers to promote the entry of Germany as a free member into the comity of European nations. The French proposals are designed to facilitate that process and must consequently be regarded as a notable contribution towards the solution of a major European problem.

The proposals also have far-reaching implications for the future economic structure of participating countries; and this aspect will require very careful study by His Majesty's Government and the other Governments concerned. His Majesty's Government will approach the problem in a sympathetic spirit and desire to make it clear at the outset that they welcome this French initiative to end the age-long feud with Germany and so bring unity and peace to Europe.



#### Document 4

*Discussions were then undertaken between French and United Kingdom officials with a view to elucidating the French proposals.*

#### Minute

M. Jean Monnet, the French Commissioner-General for Planning, arrived in London on Sunday, 14th May, and left on Friday, 19th May. During that time he had a number of conversations with Sir Edwin Plowden, the Chief Planning Officer to His Majesty's Government, and other officials with a view to the elucidation of the French proposals.

It became clear in the course of these talks that the French Government felt it desirable that the acceptance by other Governments of the principles set out in the French communiqué of 9th May should precede any working out of the practical application of their proposals.

#### Document 5

*On 23rd May, 1950, the Secretary of State informed His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris that he had had a brief discussion with the French Foreign Minister, who had undertaken to consider further the procedure which would be followed for further discussions.*

*Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris,  
23rd May, 1950*

Before M. Schuman returned to Paris, I spoke to him briefly about the French proposal for a Franco-German Coal and Steel Authority. I explained that in the time available I had not been able to study the proposal in detail and he said that he would wish to look into the matter more fully on his return to Paris, with a view to considering in particular what procedure should be followed for further discussions on the subject. He said he would be going into the matter immediately he got back and he would send me a message through you in the course of this week.

#### Document 6

*On 25th May, the Secretary of State directed His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris to deliver a message to the French Foreign Minister, suggesting that the first step to be taken should be Franco-German discussions, in which His Majesty's Government would like to participate from the outset.*

*Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to French Minister for  
Foreign Affairs, 25th May, 1950*

I have now been able to give some thought to the organisation of further discussions about your proposal for a Franco-German Coal and Steel Authority, in which other European countries might participate.

2. I feel that the important thing is to get something started soon. The welcome given to your proposal and the effect which it has had on Franco-German relations lead me to think that no time should be lost in following it up. A full-scale international conference to which no participating country



could come without a great deal of preparation and some degree of commitment seems to me an inappropriate way of handling this affair in the next stage. In my view, the most desirable step would be the earliest institution of direct conversations between France and Germany. His Majesty's Government would like to participate in these from the outset, with the hope that by obtaining a clearer picture of how the proposals would operate in detail, they would be able to join the scheme.

### Document 7

*On the same day, 25th May, the French Ambassador handed to the Minister of State a Memorandum by the French Government suggesting that His Majesty's Government should subscribe to a communiqué to be signed by the countries participating in international discussion of the French proposals.*

#### *French Memorandum of 25th May*

(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.



*Draft Communiqué*

(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.

**Document 8**

*On 27th May, the United Kingdom Government replied to the French Government's Memorandum of 25th May, indicating that they could not accept a commitment to pool resources or set up an authority with certain sovereign powers as a prior condition of joining in international discussions.*

*United Kingdom Memorandum of 27th May*

His Majesty's Government have received the French Government's Memorandum of 25th May about the integration of European coal and steel production and the communiqué enclosed with it, which the French Government propose to issue next week. The French Government will in the meantime have received my message of 25th May and will understand from it that it would not be possible for His Majesty's Government to subscribe to the communiqué, which it is intended to issue, or accept in advance the essential principles and commitments contained in the French communiqué of 9th May.

2. But His Majesty's Government wish to reiterate their desire to participate in any discussions which take place in the manner suggested in my message, and generally to adopt a positive attitude towards the French proposals. It should, however, be realised that if the French Government intend to insist on a commitment to pool resources and set up an authority with certain sovereign powers as a prior condition to joining in the talks, His Majesty's Government would reluctantly be unable to accept such a condition. His Majesty's Government would greatly regret such an outcome.

3. His Majesty's Government appreciate that it would not now be possible to confine the conversations to a purely Franco-German basis if some of the Governments which have been approached wished to participate on the same basis as the German Federal Government, and, further, that it might be necessary to consult such Governments before agreeing to participation in the discussions of other Governments on a different basis.

4. As regards procedure, when the communiqué which the French Government have proposed is issued, His Majesty's Government will issue a communiqué setting out their attitude. Alternatively, the French Government may consider that it would be preferable for a single communiqué to be issued in which the attitude of the respective Governments would be made clear.



### Document 9

*On 28th May, the French Ambassador called on the Minister of State to ask for a further clarification of the United Kingdom Government's attitude as explained in the United Kingdom Memorandum of 27th May.*

#### *Record of Conversation on 28th May between the Minister of State and the French Ambassador*

The French Ambassador, accompanied by M. André, called on me to-day to ask for further clarification of His Majesty's Government's attitude as explained in the United Kingdom Memorandum of 27th May.

2. He asked if he was right in thinking that, while we are not prepared to commit ourselves now to the principle of pooling resources under an international authority possessing certain sovereign powers, we are not taking up an attitude of opposition to this principle but are prepared to enter into discussions with the object of finding a practical method of applying the principle.

3. I told him that I thought that roughly expressed the difference between us. We were certainly not proposing to go to these discussions with our minds set against the principle referred to, but equally we were not prepared to commit ourselves to the principle without having a much clearer idea than we have at present about the way in which it is to be carried into effect. The Ambassador said that he had always felt sure that this was our attitude but had thought it better to get it confirmed by me before passing this interpretation to his Government.

4. He said he found my explanation reassuring since it seemed to him that our reservations would not in any way limit our effective participation in the discussions.

5. He then tried his hand at redrafting the proposed communiqué so as to cover our position as well as that of other countries in a single formula. He succeeded in producing something which seemed to me to be on the whole unobjectionable, but I told him that I thought that if there was to be a single communiqué it would have to explain clearly the attitude of the different Governments, as suggested in paragraph 4 of the United Kingdom Memorandum. The Ambassador agreed with this. He said he had not fully considered the alternatives set out in paragraph 4. I gave it as my personal view that a single communiqué, provided that it honestly revealed the difference in attitude, might make a better impression than two or more separate communiqués.

### Document 10

*On 30th May the French Government replied to the United Kingdom Memorandum of 27th May, indicating that it was not their view that a prior commitment was involved, and that the aim of the communiqué was to secure agreement on principles and fundamental objectives.*

#### *French Memorandum of 30th May*

(Translation)

The French Government have studied with the greatest care the British Memorandum of 27th May replying to their note of 25th May about European coal and steel production.

2. In their message of 25th May the British Government laid emphasis on the change which the French proposal would bring about in Franco-German relations: the first condition and one of the essential aims of the plan is in fact to eliminate the traditional opposition between France and



Germany. As the British Government recognised in their Memorandum of 27th May, the agreement of other Governments to participate in the negotiations on the same basis as the German Federal Government already opens a new phase by broadening the scope of the discussions, which will, from the very beginning, be on a European basis. Nevertheless, in their Memorandum of 27th May the British Government declare that, as regards their own participation, they must hold to the method suggested in their message of 25th May, which only referred to direct conversations between France and Germany.

3. The special position in these negotiations which the British Government wishes to preserve is justified in their Memorandum by the intention, said to be held by the French Government, of asking, as a prior condition, for full participation in the discussions, for an undertaking to pool coal and steel resources, and to set up an authority with certain sovereign powers.

4. As their representatives have informed the British representatives orally, the French Government wish particularly to confirm once more that these are not their intentions. As has already been made clear in the French Memorandum of 9th May, there will be no commitment except by the signature of a treaty between the States concerned and its parliamentary ratification.

5. In fact the aim which the French Government propose is quite different. Knowing the practical difficulties which the discussions will have to surmount, it seems essential that they should constantly be guided by common principles. Only if the negotiations are clearly directed by agreement between participating Governments on the fundamental objectives to be reached, will it be possible to work out quickly the ways and means and the supplementary arrangements necessary for giving effect to M. Schuman's plan on 9th May. That is the meaning which should be given to the French word *engagement* (undertaking) in the second paragraph of the draft communiqué.

6. The French Government particularly wish to recall once more the central inspiration of their proposal: it aims at substituting, on a limited but decisive point, a community of interest for the present divisions; it provides for the establishment of a high authority of a new character; it gives that authority the task of providing for a general rise in the standard of living.

7. The British Government are of course legitimately preoccupied with following a policy of economic expansion, of full employment, and of a rising standard of living for the workers. The proposed scheme, far from obstructing such a policy, is calculated in the view of the French Government to avoid the dangers which may suddenly obstruct its course. For competition based on exploiting labour will be substituted a concerted rise in workers' conditions; for the restrictive practices of cartels, the development of outlets; for dumping and discrimination, the rational distribution of products. The policy of full employment only reaches its true objectives if it provides labour with the most productive occupations—and it cannot finally be carried out under pressure of the development of unemployment in other countries. The task entrusted to the high authority thus excludes the possibility of its work compromising the results achieved by this policy where it is already being carried out, and means that it will favour a general expansion, allowing rationalised production to be reconciled with the maintenance of full employment.

8. To carry out its task, the authority will act—within the limits of its mandate and subject to possible appeal by governments—by virtue of a statute which will have been considered by sovereign states and ratified by Parliaments. One of the objects of the negotiations will be to lay down precisely by treaty the conditions under which the authority shall act, the nature of its



powers, and the machinery for appeal. But in order that its work may serve to develop a European community, it is essential that such an authority should be independent both of Governments and of individual interests. This partial fusion of sovereignty is the contribution which the French proposal makes to the solution of European problems. Public opinion has recognised its importance and its novelty.

9. The French Government consider that the above explanations will clear up any misunderstanding about the scope of the proposed basis for negotiation. They do not think that there can be any difference of view between them and the British Government on the objectives put forward. They hope now that this British Government will consider it possible to take part in the projected negotiations on the same basis as the other Governments.

### Document 11

*On 31st May, the United Kingdom Government replied to the French Memorandum of 30th May and enclosed a suggested addition to the proposed communiqué, with the object of clarifying the United Kingdom position.*

#### *United Kingdom Memorandum of 31st May, 1950*

His Majesty's Government are grateful to the French Government for the explanations about their proposals concerning European coal and steel production contained in the French Memorandum of 30th May.

2. After the most careful study of the French Memorandum, it remains the view of His Majesty's Government that to subscribe to the terms of the draft communiqué enclosed in the French Government's Memorandum of 25th May would involve entering into an advance commitment to pool coal and steel resources and to set up an authority, with certain supreme powers, before there had been full opportunity of considering how these important and far-reaching proposals would work in practice. His Majesty's Government are most anxious that these proposals should be discussed and pursued but they feel unable to associate themselves with a communiqué which appears to take decisions prior to, rather than as a result of, intergovernmental discussions. In these circumstances, they would like to take advantage of a suggestion made by M. Schuman to Sir Oliver Harvey when handing over the French Memorandum of 30th May. This was to the effect that a further sentence should be added to the draft communiqué defining the attitude of His Majesty's Government to participation in the discussions. With this purpose in view, a draft paragraph is enclosed, which defines the position of His Majesty's Government and which it is hoped may prove acceptable to the French and other Governments concerned.

There is one point in the French Memorandum as to which His Majesty's Government wish to dispel any misunderstanding. The French Memorandum suggests that in their Memorandum of 27th May His Majesty's Government have only offered to participate in direct conversations between France and Germany. It had been hoped that it was clear from paragraph 3 of His Majesty's Government's Memorandum of 27th May that the observations made in their Memorandum of 25th May, about the participation of His Majesty's Government in the Franco-German discussions foreshadowed in the original French Memorandum, applied equally to any discussions which the French Government might arrange with other Governments willing to participate on the same basis as the German Federal Government.



## Enclosure

### *Proposed Addition to Communiqué*

The Government of the United Kingdom will participate in the proposed conversation in a constructive spirit and in the hope that, as a result of the discussions, there will emerge a scheme which they will be able to join. But they cannot at this stage enter into any more precise commitment. They recognise the important and far-reaching character of the French proposal, and are in complete accord with the objective of pursuing a common policy aiming at peace, European solidarity and economic and social progress.

### Document 12

*On 1st June the French Government replied to the United Kingdom Government's Memorandum of 31st May, proposing a revised text for the communiqué to which it was intended Governments should subscribe. In handing this communication to His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, M. Schuman asked that the decision of His Majesty's Government should reach the French Government by 8 p.m. on the following day, 2nd June.*

### *French Memorandum of 1st June*

(Translation)

The French Government have studied with the greatest care the British Government's Memorandum of 31st May and the suggested addition to the communiqué annexed thereto.

2. It appears that the text, which several Governments have already accepted, has through certain expressions used given rise to misunderstandings which have led to an exchange of notes between the French and British Governments, in which the intentions of those Governments have been more clearly defined. In order to clear away this obstacle, and because it seems extremely desirable that all Governments should announce in the same terms their participation in the negotiations, the French Government proposes the following new text, concurrence in which is being sought forthwith from all interested Governments.

This communiqué, in the opinion of the French Government, expresses the unity of view which is indispensable for the successful prosecution of the negotiations. If, contrary to the hope of the French Government, the British Government were unable to subscribe to it, the French Government would open negotiations on the stated conditions with the other countries which had accepted them as basis. In that event, they would keep the British Government informed of the progress of the negotiations in their desire to enable the latter to join in whenever they felt able to do so.

### ANNEX

### *Draft communiqué*

(Translation)

"The Governments of . . . in their determination to pursue a common action for peace, European solidarity and economic and social progress have assigned to themselves as their immediate objective the pooling of coal and steel production and the institution of a new high authority whose decisions will bind. . . .

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



*On 2nd June, the United Kingdom Government replied to the French Memorandum of 1st June, suggesting a Meeting of Ministers of the countries concerned at which the question of the most effective and expeditious method of discussing the problem at issue could be examined and settled.*

*United Kingdom Memorandum of 2nd June*

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have studied the French Government's Memorandum of 1st June and appreciate the effort which has been made to find a formula which they could accept. After careful consideration they have come to the conclusion that there is still a difference of approach between the two Governments as to the basis on which the negotiations should be opened. If His Majesty's Government accepted the revised wording they would feel committed in principle to pool their coal and steel resources and to set up a new high authority, whose decisions would bind the Governments concerned, possibilities which they do not exclude but could not accept without full knowledge of their political and economic implications. They would also feel committed to the aim of preparing a treaty establishing a high authority and embodying the principles of the French proposal, without opportunity being given for their practical application to be worked out. In these circumstances His Majesty's Government note with regret that the French Government regard the unity of view expressed in the draft communiqué as the indispensable condition for the successful prosecution of the negotiations. They earnestly hope that the French Government understand that His Majesty's Government are acting in good faith in this matter. They are anxious to do their best to see whether a workable scheme could be produced that is fair and just to all concerned and which would promote peace, European solidarity and economic and social progress. His Majesty's Government feel that this could have been achieved and could still be achieved by a meeting of Ministers of the countries interested at which the question of the most effective and expeditious method of discussing the problems at issue could be examined and settled.

2. If, however, no other course is open, His Majesty's Government reluctantly accept the procedure proposed by the French Government in the last paragraph of their Memorandum. They appreciate the French Government's offer to keep His Majesty's Government informed of the progress of their negotiations.

**Document 14**

*After a series of oral exchanges of view between the British Embassy at Paris and the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, it was learnt that the French Government found it impossible to accept the United Kingdom proposal for a Ministerial meeting. This view was communicated in a French Memorandum dated 3rd June.*

*French Memorandum of 3rd June, 1950*

(Translation)

The French Government thank the British Government for their Memorandum communicated on 2nd June and much appreciate the frankness with which the British position has been stated.

2. The French Government for their part remain convinced that the inevitably complex negotiations necessitated by the proposal contained in their declaration of 9th May cannot hope to succeed unless the countries



taking part have already from the start indicated their unity of view upon the objectives of those negotiations. The French Government propose therefore, as the British Government have already been informed, to open without delay negotiations with the five Governments who have already signified their concurrence.

3. The British suggestion to hold a meeting of Ministers of the interested countries has been most carefully considered by the French Government. The French Government believe that the attitude of the two Governments has been defined without ambiguity in the course of the recent exchange of notes and they do not see how the proposed meeting could bring any further clarification. Such a meeting moreover would have the effect of delaying the opening of the negotiations without offering any real possibility of reconciling divergent points.

4. The French Government are happy to note that the British Government accept the French proposal to keep them informed of the progress of negotiations. The French Government will lose no opportunity of engaging in exchanges of view with the British Government which will permit them during the course of the discussions to take carefully into account the point of view of the British Government in order to enable the latter to participate in, or associate themselves with, the common task as soon as they feel able to do so. The French Government earnestly hope that the procedure for these consultations can be worked out by common agreement.

#### **Documents 15, 16, 17**

*In the course of the same oral exchanges, arrangements were concerted for the issue of the following three communiqués:—*

#### **Document 15**

##### *Six-Power communiqué of 3rd June*

(Translation)

The French, German, Belgian, Italian, Luxembourg, and Dutch Governments, in their determination to pursue a common action for peace and European solidarity, and economic and social progress, have assigned to themselves as their immediate objective the pooling of the production of coal and steel and the institution of a new high authority whose decisions will bind France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and other countries which may adhere to it in the future.

Negotiations on the basis of the French proposal 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.

#### **Document 16**

##### *United Kingdom communiqué of 3rd June*

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have from the outset welcomed the French initiative of 9th May and have been fully alive to its bold character and far-reaching importance for future relations between France and Germany in particular. They earnestly hope that the international discussions upon it may lead to a new era in Franco-German relations, with beneficial effects for Western Europe as a whole.

2. His Majesty's Government have been most anxious to be associated with these discussions and have made their position in this respect clear



to the French Government from the outset. It is their view that these discussions should serve to clarify the practical application of the French proposal, which must necessarily be worked out on an international basis, and they strongly desire to make a helpful, constructive and practical contribution in the hope that a detailed scheme would emerge which they would be able to join.

3. The French Government, for their part, have taken the view that the first step in the execution of their plan must be an international conference of countries prepared to accept a commitment in principle to pool their coal and steel resources and to set up a new high authority whose decisions would bind the Governments concerned. In the view of the French Government, the negotiations should be aimed, in the first instance, at the preparation of a treaty embodying these principles, and establishing the high authority, to be submitted to ratification by Parliament. His Majesty's Government do not feel able to accept in advance, nor do they wish to reject in advance, the principles underlying the French proposal. They consider that a detailed discussion, which would throw light on the nature of the scheme and its full political and economic consequences, is a normal and, indeed, essential preliminary to the conclusion of a treaty. They feel that there is a substantial difference of approach between the two Governments as to the basis on which the negotiations should be opened. An unhappy situation would arise if, having bound themselves to certain principles without knowing how they would work out in practice, they were to find themselves, as a result of the discussion, compelled to withdraw from their undertakings. They have accordingly, to their regret, found it impossible in view of their responsibility to Parliament and people to associate themselves with the negotiations on the terms proposed by the French Government.

His Majesty's Government are anxious to do their best to see whether a workable scheme could be produced that is fair and just to all concerned and they feel that this could best be furthered by a meeting of Ministers of the countries interested at which the question of the most effective and expeditious method of discussing the problem at issue could be examined and settled. If the French Government were prepared to reconsider their attitude and arrange a meeting of Ministers to reach agreement on the procedure for the opening of the negotiations, His Majesty's Government would be glad to participate and they have so informed the French Government.

### **Document 17**

#### *French communiqué of 3rd June*

(Translation)

In present circumstances, the British Government have not felt able to join the six other Governments which signed the communiqué published to-day on the French proposals of 9th May, 1950.

Nevertheless, the French Government are happy to observe that the British Government have accepted the proposal made to them that they should be kept informed of the progress of negotiations. The French Government will at all times keep in mind the need to carry out exchanges of views with the British Government, which will enable the French Government, in the course of the negotiations, to take into account to the greatest possible extent the point of view of the British Government, so that the latter may find it possible to join or to associate themselves with the common effort at the time when they judge it to be possible.



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