

## Address given by Maurice Thorez on the dangers of the Schuman Plan (24 June 1950)

**Caption:** On 24 June 1950, Maurice Thorez, General Secretary of the French Communist Party (PCF), severely criticises the Schuman Plan and its economic implications.

**Source:** L'Humanité. Organe Central du Parti Communiste Français. 24.06.1950. Paris: L'Humanité.

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So here we have the Schuman Plan. Its purpose is to incorporate West Germany fully into the bloc of the Atlantic Pact aggressors, to make West Germany the principal base for the American aggressors by accelerating its economic, political and soon military recovery. Its purpose is to subjugate France completely to the American masters. It also aims to put maximum pressure on Britain to bring it round unconditionally to the American imperialists' side, to strip it even of the role of broker between the United States and a Marshallised Europe. But at the same time Germany emerges clearly, as the late Zhdanov used to say, as the bone of contention between the American, British and French leaders.

We have already said what this entails for our country: it will bring us to heel for good; it will do away with every vestige of national independence; we will face the prospect of a worsening economic situation, the winding-up of large numbers of businesses and falling living standards for the masses. Naturally this creates anxiety among all good French people, in the working class and the middle classes; and voices are even being raised in industrial circles in protest against such a serious threat to our country.

It is, in fact, another step along the path to a war economy. A recent report by Mr Pellenc admitted that our basic industries have gone back to more or less 1913 levels, that textile production has fallen to two thirds of its 1913 level and the building industry to half the level of activity of 1913. The war economy accentuates the basic contradiction in the capitalist system, that is the contradiction between rising production capacity and the increasingly limited possibilities of consumption.

This means that in passing we can rebuff the arguments of demagogues who talk about 'distribution according to justice', when distribution takes place in accordance with the law of profit, is dictated by the method of production, and is only one aspect of the method of production. The war economy exacerbates the unprecedented waste of productive forces and of means of production.