

'What is the Schuman Plan? (I)' from the Tägliche Rundschau (29 January 1952)

Caption: On 29 January 1952, the East German daily newspaper Tägliche Rundschau vigorously denounces the West German Government's approval of the Schuman Plan as a national betrayal of the German people.

Source: Tägliche Rundschau. Zeitung für Politik, Wirtschaft und Kultur. 29.01.1952, n° 24 (2050); 8. Jg. Berlin NO: Tägliche Rundschau. "Schuman-Plan was ist das ?", auteur:H., G. , p. 3.

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What is the Schuman Plan? (I)

The Bundestag in Bonn has approved the Schuman Plan, dictated by the warmongering US imperialists, or to be more precise, it has approved the European Coal and Steel Community. None of the MPs who voted in favour of the Treaty have ever been authorised to do so by their constituents. The decision to accept the Schuman Plan is a decision taken *without* and *against* the will of the German people. It constitutes high treason.

But why is this the case? What does the Schuman Plan entail?

According to this Plan, the *coal and steel industries* of Western Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg are to be united for 50 years. This association has been adorned with the extremely pretentious title: ‘European Coal and Steel Community’. The authors of the Schuman Plan do not seem to have learned much from their geography lessons. Since when do those six countries – the first of which only constitutes one half of an unlawfully divided nation – represent Europe! As we know, there are several other countries in Europe, quite big ones even. Hence, ‘European’ does not even come into it, nor does ‘Community’ – however grand that may sound. This alliance would instead represent a common-or-garden *cartel*, albeit a gargantuan one, that is to say a monopolist amalgamation of various undertakings for the purpose of establishing a common policy on production, price fixing, sales regulations, etc.

A poorly disguised arms cartel

The first question that arises is: why is it the coal and steel industries which are being merged? Why not, for example, the textile industries? There are two reasons for this. *Firstly*: all the other industries are more or less dependent on coal and steel. A cartel consisting of the coal and steel industries is thus in a position to influence the economic policy of all other branches of industry. *Secondly*: coal and steel are the basic materials required for arms production. No coal and steel, no artillery pieces, tanks or aeroplanes. A six-nation cartel of the coal and steel industries would therefore enable the warmongers to speed up their efforts, unite their armaments and multiply them. A cartel of this kind would resemble a gigantic armoury. Supporters of rearmament in Bonn do not even try to make a secret of this. A propaganda document drafted by the Adenauer Government entitled ‘What has the Schuman Plan got in it for us?’ states quite bluntly: ‘The military might of a nation depends on coal and steel. No nation deprived of steel can fight a war, whether it be aggressive or defensive.’ And, on 24 November 1950 before the so-called Council of Europe in Strasbourg, the French Foreign Minister, Robert Schuman, described the ECSC as ‘*the economic basis*’ for the ‘*military structures*’ to be set up, by which he was referring to the so-called ‘European army’. In connection with this, the proposal tabled by the French Government is particularly conclusive, to raise the ‘decision-making bodies’ of the ECSC to the status of the ‘highest political and parliamentary authorities’ for the European Army. All this is clear enough: the Schuman Plan is not intended to serve ‘the works of peace’ as the preamble of the ECSC Treaty hypocritically claims, instead it serves rearmament and preparations for war.

Immediately after the ratification of the Schuman Plan by a parliamentary majority in Bonn bribed by the Ruhr barons, the Adenauer Government also called for the West German armaments industries to be granted the right to manufacture weapons again. At a press conference in Bonn on 14 January, Adenauer’s ‘security adviser’, Theodor Blank, (it is said that he will shortly be made Minister of Defence) stated that West Germany was prepared to ‘accept all types of armament restrictions, as long as they were also accepted by the others, but to reject anything that might be interpreted as discrimination.’ This means that if the other five Member States of the ECSC are rearming, West Germany must also be allowed to rearm. The equality demanded by Bonn in the ECSC is the equal right to participate in the arms race. West German and West Berlin tabloids are already openly saying that the Ruhr will soon be resuming its armaments production; first, infantry weapons are to be produced, followed by heavy equipment, such as tanks and guns.

Cartel ‘rights’

The European Coal and Steel Community is therefore nothing more than a poorly disguised armaments

cartel, which is to secure total power via the coal and steel industries of the six participating countries. The prerequisite for this under Article 1 of the Treaty is to form a ‘*common market*’ for coal and steel; that means that there are to be no internal borders or customs for coal and steel in the six countries. The armaments cartel is to be granted the right to determine in the six countries how much coal is to be mined, how much iron and steel are to be produced, and what is to be manufactured from it. The sale of coal and steel within the common market, as well as the six countries’ foreign trade with ‘third countries’, countries not included in the ECSC, are to be regulated. It is to lay down prices for coal, iron and steel as well as transport rates for these goods. The ECSC will be in charge of all loans made to and investment in the coal and steel industry. It will influence wages and working conditions of miners and steel workers and, apparently, guarantee their ‘mobility’.

Theft of sovereignty

For Germany this means that, if the ECSC were to become reality, the German people would be deprived of their sovereignty over their most precious raw materials and most important industries, and that for a period of 50 years. This horrendous theft of sovereignty would suit the Rhine and Ruhr monopolists only too well. ‘Adopting the Schuman Plan would put an end to the idle talk surrounding socialisation,’ the managing director of the Klöckner group, Günter *Henle*, declared recently. Nor do the West German coal and steel barons try to hide their delight that the ECSC would put a stop to any co-determination rights that employees might have.

And there is another aspect that will affect Germany: the ECSC would cut off all trade relations between West Germany and the GDR as well as between West Germany and the Saar, because the German Democratic Republic is regarded by the cartel as a ‘third country’. Adenauer did at first deny, with his usual audacity, that the ECSC would affect inter-German trade. Then, however, he had to admit that, pursuant to the Treaty, trade between West and East Germany would require authorisation by the cartel. That means that the inhabitants of the GDR may receive coal from the Ruhr, *which is also their coal*, only if the gentlemen from the ECSC agree. The situation in the Saar, however, is the following: in the ECSC, the Saar would be represented by France. Article 21 reads: ‘The representatives of the peoples of the Saar shall be included in the number of representatives allocated to France.’ The Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community thereby confirms the unlawful but de facto severing of the Saar from Germany by France. Accordingly, whoever approves this Treaty is condoning the theft of the Saar.

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(To be continued.)