

Memorandum from Jean Monnet to Robert Schuman (Paris, 15 February 1952)

Caption: In late February 1952, French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman is due to meet his British and American counterparts to discuss the future of Germany. In a memorandum sent to Mr Schuman two weeks earlier, Jean Monnet informs him of the progress made towards breaking up the Ruhr cartels.

Source: Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Correspondance 1947-1953. Lausanne: Fondation Jean Monnet pour l'Europe, Centre de recherches européennes, 1986. 188 p. (Cahiers rouges). p. 131.

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Paris, 15 February 1952

On completion of demergers in the Ruhr.

Contractual agreements

1. In the course of the talks you will be having with Mr Acheson and Mr Eden, the issue of the contractual agreements that the High Commission is negotiating with the Federal Government must be examined.

Among these agreements, one of the appended conventions concerns the application of Law 27 after the contractual statute comes into force, in other words on completion of demergers in the Ruhr.

The demerger operations have now moved into the phase of liquidation and distribution of the assets of the former Konzerns. This process will take several months to reach the point of no return for each of the former Konzerns. The time actually required, which we want to keep as short as possible, will largely depend on how cooperative the Germans prove to be.

I think it is consequently very important that you should confirm to your opposite numbers, and perhaps to Chancellor Adenauer, that:

- we are determined that Law 27 should continue to be applied until its termination, this being an essential condition for setting up the European Coal and Steel Community,
- it is therefore necessary to include the requisite provisions in the contractual agreements,
- and, in particular, no time limit should be placed on the powers of the Allied Agency that will take the place of the existing control groups.

2. The representatives of the Federal Government have, on the contrary, asked for a time limit to be placed on the powers of the Allied Agency. The French, British and American representatives in Germany have agreed to oppose this request, which would jeopardise the whole demerger operation by providing the representatives of the Konzerns with an incentive to delay the settlement of outstanding issues until the Allied Agency is wound up.

DKV [Deutsche Kohlen-Verkaufsgesellschaft]

3. The Federal Government has not yet agreed to the new sales organisation to replace the DKV, as proposed by the German and Allied experts and approved by the High Commission on 25 October.

In the course of talks with Dr Westrick which have been going on since mid-January, the Allied representatives agreed to all the German demands that do not call into question the principle of the new organisation (scope for review, in the light of experience, by the High Authority and a procedure for dealing with any delivery difficulties in the event of an emergency).

The German requests still under discussion are not acceptable. They would lead to a change in the number of sales syndicates and allow the new organisation to be changed so much that it would once again constitute a de facto monopoly.

4. It is particularly urgent for this issue to be settled. I think that it would be very helpful, in your talks with Mr Acheson and Mr Eden, and if appropriate with the Chancellor, to stress the importance we attach to the Federal Government's swiftly agreeing to the new sales organisation which is due to replace the DKV, given the fact that the Treaty establishing the Coal and Steel Community is due to come into force very soon.

5. All of these questions have been referred to Mr McCloy.

Jean Monnet