

Extract from the address given by Jean Monnet (Luxembourg, inaugural session of the High Authority, 10 August 1952)

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The Assembly has been elected by the national parliaments. There is already provision for it to be directly elected by the citizens. The members of the Assembly are not bound by any national mandate. They vote freely on their own account and not according to the nation to which they belong. Each one represents the entire Community, not his or her country. The Assembly supervises what we do. It has the power to withdraw its confidence from us. It is the first European assembly with sovereign powers. Acts of the High Authority are subject to appeal. Such appeals will not be heard before national courts but before a European court, the Court of Justice. And I am glad to welcome Mr Pilotti, President of our Court of Justice, who is here with us today. All these institutions can be modified and improved in the light of experience. What will not be called into question is that they are supranational and, let us say the word, federal institutions. They are institutions which, within the limits of their powers, are sovereign, in other words they have the right to take decisions and enforce them. Coal and steel, however, are only part of the economy. That is why a permanent link needs to be set up between the High Authority and the governments, which remain responsible for the overall economic policy of their countries. The Council of Ministers has not been set up to exercise control or carry out supervision, but to establish that link and make sure there is consonance between the actions of the High Authority and the policies of the Member States.