

Message from the British Embassy in Paris to the French Government (26 May 1950)

Caption: On 26 May 1950, the British Embassy in Paris sends a message to the French Government describing the United Kingdom's hesitations with regard to the Schuman Plan.

Source: Archives Nationales du Luxembourg, Luxembourg. Ministère des Affaires étrangères. Traités. Traités - Economiques et Financiers. Plan Schuman - Négociations - La déclaration Schuman du 9 mai 1950 et les premières réactions - 1950, AE 11346.

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[...]

2. “His Majesty’s Government have received the French Government’s memorandum of the 25th May about 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 the 25th May and will understand 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.

3. “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.

4. “His Majesty’s Government appreciates that it would not now be possible to confine 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.

5. “As regards the 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.”