

Monnet Lauds Clayton's Vision

In the summer of 1957 Mr. Jean Monnet, President of the *Comite d'Action four les Etats-Unis il'Eurofc*, said of Clayton, whom he had first met in 1944:

I also met him in 1947, in Paris, when I talked with him about how to best implement the Marshall Plan in France. Soon after the Marshall Plan was pronounced, Mr. Clayton came to Europe. I remember having many meetings with him in the Mcurice Hotel in Paris. During these talks I had my first vision of how the Marshall Plan could best help in the reconstruction of Europe, by using the counterpart of the American goods imported in investments in basic industries. I will illustrate what I mean. The French government imported coal, for instance, and sold it to French merchants, who gave the counterpart in francs to the French government so that it could have funds to use in investment in France to develop dams, railways, steel mills, etc. (basic industries). I had already worked out a modernization plan for France—to create within our country the means of production needed to make progress, but the difficulty was how to finance it without inflation. It was your father who, in his talks with me, developed the idea that the counterpart in francs of Marshall Plan aid could be used for investments to modernize the coal mines and Other basic industries ... Of course other officials, too, talked with Mr. Clayton, in which talks I joined, and out of these conferences and my private talks with him the idea of how to link the Marshall Plan aid with modernization of French industry evolved.

Your father never gave a word or thought to whom the credit of any of these ideas should go. He is an exceptional, a very exceptional man. As I said, we met first over the question of supplies from the U. S. to France at the time of the liberation—1944, 1945. He was very helpful in arranging things with the administration and government agencies, etc., to get the materials for France—the goods, food etc. Then I met him at the time of the Marshall Plan.

I also met him another time in connection with the Ruhr. We met before the Ruhr coal and steel community had come to fruition. It was in my talks with Mr. Clayton that the germ of the idea developed that Ruhr production should be utilized not only for Germany or as the result of bilateral arrangements, but that it should contribute to the production of the whole of Europe. The talks with Mr. Clayton helped me clarify my ideas which resulted in the creation of the coal and steel community [commonly known as the Schumann Plan]; the idea that the goods produced must serve all and not just one.

Mr. Clayton also played a vital part in GATT. This and all his other activities marked with extreme simplicity. Mr. Clayton's superiority over most people was in the fact that he discussed the problem objectively, never introducing himself into the center. His great gift is in solving difficult things with the utmost ease, in clarifying complicated matters and making them seem simple. It was also noted that he was not interested in a situation just from his own country's point of view, but that he dealt with problems in a way to help others generally, and this was undoubtedly mentioned many times in the French newspapers of the times.