

EUROPEAN COAL AND
STEEL COMMUNITY

HIGH AUTHORITY

GENERAL SECRETARY

LUXEMBOURG
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THE EUROPEAN MINER'S CHARTER

Speech by Mr. Finet, Member of the High Authority,
during the European Parliament's debate

The survival of the coal industry will in the future depend less on the wealth of the coal seams than on the number of the workers who will still be prepared to work underground in the mines, said Mr. Paul Finet when he took part in the European Parliament's debate on the European Miner's Charter. This meant that even if one discounted all the social and humanitarian considerations in its favour, the Charter (intended to codify special social advantages for miners in the six member countries) was more than justified. Mr. Finet reminded the Parliament that only last June the President of the High Authority had underlined the vital importance which the High Authority attaches to the European Miner's Charter when he spoke to a gathering of some 20,000 miners at Dortmund.

The Parliamentary debate took place on the report presented by Mr. Arendt. Explaining the position of the High Authority, Mr. Finet said that two main factors would guide its action in the forthcoming months. On the one hand, he thought it possible to deduce from what had been said by some members of Parliament that the coal producers of the Community and certain governments would be adopting a more favourable attitude and thus open new ways of approach. On the other hand, the application of the Protocol of Agreement on Energy would give the High Authority the occasion to initiate a new and vigorous action in favour of the European Miner's Charter.

The High Authority was determined to promote new contacts with the coal producers and the trade unions as well as with the governments. It hoped that the latter would not, as they had tended to do in the past, give a too narrow interpretation to the Treaty and that they would instead agree to discuss the idea of a European Miner's Charter and to foresee means of putting it into application.