

'Why Saarbrücken?' from the Saarbrücker Zeitung (25 June 1952)

Caption: During discussions on the subject of the High Authority seat, one of the alternatives was the town of Saarbrücken. On 25 June 1952, the daily newspaper Saarbrücker Zeitung lists the features of the town.

Source: Saarbrücker Zeitung. 25.06.1952. Saarbrücken. "Warum Saarbrücken?".

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Last updated: 06/07/2016



Why Saarbrücken?

[...]

Saarbrücken is the right choice not only for geographical and technical reasons; the political context is very much in our favour, too. A decision in favour of Saarbrücken would be nothing less than a first practical step in a common European endeavour. Through the inevitable development of interests, emanating from both East and West, which intersect here, the Saarland has, very much against its will, been reduced to an object on whose back two rivals play out their differences. This unenviable situation could vanish at a stroke, and, instead, the Saarland could find itself entrusted with one of the finest and most important tasks of our time — if it were assigned this connecting role within Europe. The Saarland, which, to the impartial observer, must at times seem to be caught between the devil and the deep blue sea, could, if politicians of all countries choose not to close their minds to these arguments, suddenly take on incalculable importance for the process of European and Franco-German reconciliation. If, to the Federal Chancellor, Dr Adenauer, to the French Foreign Minister, Robert Schuman, and to many other politicians, the concept of a territory with European status has, to date, seemed rather nebulous, such a far-sighted statesmanlike act could provide a practical and absurdly simple answer to what at first looked like an incredibly intractable problem. Here, political wisdom and economic expediency would join hands, casting new light on the Saar question — which would no longer need to be a question — and clarifying the issues to the satisfaction of probably all parties. But that is not all — the Saar would, through its existence, have brought lasting peace not only to itself but at the same time to the much wider European community.

[...]

Admittedly, the Saarland is no more than a speck on the larger map of Europe, but, if that speck could become the centre of a healing process, then we must be unstinting in our efforts to tend that tiny particle. The vast majority of people in the Saarland would welcome this European solution, regarding it as a first courageous step forward. The people of the Saarland would be little inclined to understanding if the political arguments that we have developed were not to receive special consideration. And it seems likely that the European population as a whole would begin to doubt the acumen and goodwill of those who fail to react to such weighty arguments with the necessary wisdom and courage, taking them forward into practice.