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Franco-German Agreements on the Saar

Communication

Committee of Ministers

1. Letter from the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers to the President of the Assembly

Luxembourg, 7th January 1957

Mr. President,

At the Nineteenth Session of the Committee of Ministers, held in Paris on 15th and 16th December 1956, the representatives of the Governments of France and the Federal Republic of Germany made a declaration concerning the settlement of the Saar problem.

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of this declaration.

I am, Sir

Your obedient Servant

Signed ; BECH

Chairman of the Committee of Ministers

2. Declaration

M. HALLSTEIN, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany:

" Recently the French National Assembly and the German Bundestag have approved the overall Franco-German Agreement on the Saar. One consequence of this will be that henceforth there will be no special representatives of the Saar in our Committee of Ministers. I should not like this event to go by without having expressed the feelings in our minds on this historic occasion.

In the first place we have the human satisfaction of the workman who has completed a very long and very difficult task. This task has taken many years and it is only necessary to glance at the text of our treaty, even from the outside, to realise, from its very bulk, what sum of energy and imagination was called for in order to satisfy all the requirements.

I am also happy to be able once more, in the forum of this Committee, to pay tribute to the French Government for the attitude which it adopted after the Saar referendum. The French Government showed a generous spirit worthy of the best traditions of France, when, without a moment's hesitation, it drew from the result of the referendum the conclusions which, in its opinion as in ours, obedience to the principles of democracy demanded. The French Government, while remaining alive, as is quite natural, to its vital interests, has throughout the negotiations shown a spirit of absolute fairness.



Lastly, we welcome the disappearance of a problem which was a heavy handicap to Franco-German relations. Now that this problem has been settled, we have seen the last of the questions which, in the wake of the war, weighed so heavily on the relations between our two countries. We can now go forward together, in closer agreement than ever before, towards a happier future for the peoples of Europe.

In conclusion, there is one thing that I very much want to say. Another and indeed the main reason for which we welcome our joint success is t h a t it furthers the cause of the European Community. I should like to express my Government's sincerest thanks to the Council of Europe for all that it has contributed to the solution of t h e Saar problem. Sometimes perhaps—and I say this in the knowledge t h a t my words cannot henceforth be misinterpreted—we have asked too much of the European idea, in thinking that the Saar problem could be solved entirely on the In conclusion, there is one thing that I very much want to say. Another and indeed the main reason for which we welcome our joint success is t h a t it furthers the cause of the European Community. I should like to express my Government's sincerest thanks to the Council of Europe for all that it has contributed to the solution of t h e Saar problem. Sometimes perhaps—and I say this in the knowledge t h a t my words cannot henceforth be misinterpreted—we have asked too much of the European idea, in thinking that the Saar problem could be solved entirely on the

M. MAURICE FAURE, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the French Republic :

" Given the heavy handicap which history has placed on the relations between our two ancient European countries, it is quite natural t h a t now and then acute political and economic difficulties should have come to a head. It is one of these difficulties which we have just resolved, I think I can say for good and all. The Council of Europe has played a useful part in the solution of the Saar question. It has on very many occasions given its attention to it, and none of us has forgotten the excellent and well-documented report prepared by M. van der Goes van Naters.

I am sure that all members of this Committee and all European countries, convinced that Franco-German reconciliation is fundamental to the constructive work we are called upon to carry out, accept this agreement with relief, nay more, with pleasure,"