

'The Tenth of August 1952' from the Luxemburger Wort (9 August 1952)

Caption: On 9 August 1952, on the eve of the session inaugurating the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in Luxembourg, the Luxembourg daily newspaper Luxemburger Wort notes the historic importance of this date both for Luxembourg and for European integration.

Source: Luxemburger Wort. Für Wahrheit und Recht. 09.08.1952, n° 222; 105e année. Luxembourg: Imprimerie Saint-Paul. "Le 10 août 1952", p. 1.

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The Tenth of August 1952

In the history of Luxembourg there has been — to restrict ourselves solely to events still relatively fresh in our memories — a Tenth of May, a Tenth of October and a Tenth of September. From now on, there will be a Tenth of August, whose name will no longer bring to mind the beginning, the peak or the end of a terrible nightmare but the beginning of widespread hope for peace and material happiness. The Tenth Days in 1940, 1941 and, to some extent, even 1944 remain linked in our memories with the perversion of which the human soul is capable: evil, pain and suffering. The Tenth of August 1952, tomorrow, marks the inauguration of the Schuman Plan which has been discussed so much during the last two years and is essentially the creation of a constructive spirit possessed by man alone even since the time when, in Paradise, he was required to make himself master of earthly things. This characterises and distinguishes it from its counterpart in May 1940 and of the more glorious, but less threatening, one in October 1941.

A creation of the spirit, effectively, originating from both the mediation of a statesman, Mr Robert Schuman, whose vision is wide enough to see beyond national interests and embrace those of the European community, and from the rigorous logic of an eminent economist, Mr Jean Monnet, it marks, more than the Strasbourg debates, the beginning of this European community, the urgent creation of which we all recognise. It officially brings to a close the academic discussion about the means which will bring about European unity. With it, this Tenth of August 1952 eliminates the quarrel between the functionalists and the federalists. It marks the departure towards a functional Europe, towards a Europe essentially united by specialised bodies representing so many common interests safeguarded by joint action. The coal and steel pool is merely a first step. 'The European community will not restrict itself to these interests alone', Mr Robert Schuman stated a few days ago during the interview, a detailed account of which may be read elsewhere. But this first step had to be taken, it was waiting to happen ... And, if not by us, at least with us, here in Luxembourg, it will happen tomorrow.

The event is important enough to be included in the annals of our country. From the High Authority, meeting in Luxembourg, to the first real supranational authority, a European resonance will be released that has been earnestly awaited for years.

It would be distorting the magnitude of this historic event to see it merely as a new expression of materialist conception. Coal and steel, purely material elements, will admittedly be the focus of the work done by the High Authority which is to take up its duties tomorrow. But the High Authority, as President Schuman reminds us, will have the awesome responsibility of monitoring the interests and well-being of everyone, of workers and of consumers, as well as of those whom we call capitalists.

That is why the event that we shall witness directly tomorrow is as of much importance socially as politically and economically. And in boldly entering into the social domain, we believe, this Tenth of August 1952 acquires major significance. For in giving equal weight to the rights of workers and employers under the impartial jurisdiction of the same supranational authority, this date marks the realisation of what even recently sociologists and trade unionists did not dare hope for.