

'The Council of Ministers of the European Coal and Steel Community' from the Luxemburger Wort (9 September 1952)

Caption: On 9 September 1952, the Luxembourg daily newspaper Luxemburger Wort reports on the course of the inaugural session of the Council of Ministers of the ECSC, held in Luxembourg City the previous day.

Source: Luxemburger Wort. Für Wahrheit und Recht. 09.09.1952, n° 253; 105e année. Luxembourg: Imprimerie Saint-Paul. "Der Ministerrat der europäischen Kohle- und Stahlgemeinschaft", p. 1.

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The Council of Ministers of the European Coal and Steel Community

Yesterday, today and tomorrow in Luxembourg

Luxembourg, 9 September. The Council of Ministers of the European Coal and Steel Community met yesterday afternoon for its inaugural session in the conference hall of Luxembourg's City Hall. In accordance with the alphabetical rotation of the Six, Konrad Adenauer, German Federal Chancellor, chaired the meeting. In his inaugural address, which was followed attentively, the Federal Chancellor indicated that the implementation of the concept of the Schuman Plan marked the beginning of a new era in Europe, 'an era of peace, harmony and a new prosperity'. The Federal Chancellor went on: 'In the interests of peace, in the interests of progress, we must make Europe, and we shall make it.'

Chancellor Adenauer then outlined the responsibilities of the Council of Ministers of the European Coal and Steel Community and concluded with a convincing explanation of why European unity could not consist in creating a European centralism. Rather it must have a federalist basis and take into account both the uniqueness of individual countries and the unity of the Union.

Jean Monnet, President of the High Authority, responded to the Federal Chancellor's speech. The exact wording of both addresses may be found on page 3 of today's edition. There the reader will find President Monnet's exceedingly complimentary remarks about Luxembourg when he thanked the City for the warm hospitality with which it had received the High Authority. Turning to the Council of Ministers, President Monnet said: 'I do not want to conclude without thanking you for sending us to Luxembourg. We were given a most outstanding welcome. We are very well supported in our work here, and we are glad that we were able to begin our activities here.'

Chancellor Adenauer had arrived in Luxembourg during the afternoon. The other Ministers had arrived shortly before him. Alcide De Gasperi, Italian Prime Minister, and Pietro Campilli, his Finance Minister, had come by train and were greeted, on arrival at the station, by Joseph Bech, Foreign Minister, Michel Rasquin, Finance Minister, and Albert Wehrer, the Luxembourg Representative in the High Authority.

The Federal Chancellor arrived at the City Hall shortly before five o'clock, followed by the other Ministers. When he got out of his car, Robert Schuman, French Foreign Minister, was visibly pleased to be greeted with a spontaneous and hearty ovation by a large audience that had gathered at the 'Knuedler' (Place Guillaume).

The lobby, staircase and conference hall in the City Hall had been very tastefully decorated by the city gardener, Mr A. Beffort. There were flowers, palm trees and plants everywhere. The flags of the six Member States of the Community established by the Schuman Plan were hanging from the pillars of the Hall.

Every last seat in the hall was taken. At the front were the conference members, including the Foreign Ministers and Finance Ministers of the six participating States. The Belgian Foreign Minister, Paul Van Zeeland, had sent a representative. It seems that he is expected to arrive at the ministerial talks sometime today.

Next were the members of the High Authority established by the Schuman Plan. Then the guests of honour: members of the Luxembourg Government, the Diplomatic Corps, delegations from the United Kingdom and the United States accredited to the High Authority, representatives from the public sector and government and, finally, some 120 representatives of the press from across the world.

After the inaugural session, which lasted for about an hour (both addresses were translated as appropriate into German, French, Italian and Dutch), a reception was held in the hall of the City Hall. Even as the guests were still conversing there, Ministers were meeting once again in a private room to discuss some as yet unresolved items on the agenda.

In the evening, the Luxembourg Government invited the Ministers to a banquet in the Casino.

Early this morning, the Council of Ministers will commence its real work behind closed doors at the Chamber of Representatives. Today and tomorrow, as the Associated Press (AP) discovered, the Council of Ministers will examine, among other things, the Franco-Italian proposal to investigate the possibility of establishing a political federation and relations between the European Coal and Steel Community and the Council of Europe. The Council will continue to deal with the work of the High Authority carried out to date.

The AP goes on to report: The Federal Chancellor and the French Foreign Minister will renew their efforts to resolve the dispute over the Saar at a special conference. The issue of the official seat of the High Authority will probably be postponed. After the final session on Wednesday morning, Ministers will attend the Assembly's inaugural session in Strasbourg.