

Letter from Pietro Campilli to Victor Larock (19 June 1958)

Caption: Letter sent by the President of the European Investment Bank, Pietro Campilli, on 19 June 1958, to the President of the Council of the European Economic Community, Victor Larock, on the occasion of the position taking of the presidents of the institutions of the European Communities concerning the choice of the seat of the Communities.

Source: Lettre de Monsieur Pietro Campilli, Président de la Banque Européenne d'Investissement, en date du 19 juin 1958, à Monsieur Victor Larock, Président du Conseil de la Communauté Economique Européenne, Objet: Avis des Présidents des Institutions des Communautés Européennes concernant le choix du siège des Communautés. 615 f/58 ao. Bruxelles: Conseil de la Communauté économique européenne; Conseil de la Communauté européenne de l'énergie atomique, 23.06.1958. 2 p.

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Brussels, 19 June 1958

Mr President,

In your letter dated 31 May, you asked me for my opinion concerning the seat of the Communities.

Thank you for doing me that honour, Mr President. I should say, first of all, that the choice of a permanent seat for the Communities needs to be considered both from an administrative and a political point of view.

We are all firmly of the belief that the economic integration of Europe must be crowned in the future by a genuine political Community; so the choice of seat must take account of the fundamental requirements which result from that fact.

The European Community must have a capital which it can call its own and which has all the necessary qualities in terms not only of location but also of structural and functional capacity.

For this reason, I should like to see a European district with its own special status and its own physical features to distinguish it from the Member State capitals. For a variety of reasons, which clearly do not need to be spelled out, I think that the European district ought to be located close to a city capable of providing the infrastructure required for the coordination of the services which the Community institutions will need if they are to operate smoothly. I should add that, from the point of view of the European Investment Bank, the city in question should have all the facilities of a first-rate financial centre.

Assuming that it is not possible to select the location for this district immediately, a fixed and final deadline (of six to nine months) should be set by which the final choice must be made.

Until such time as this district is able to meet the basic requirements of the institutions in full, and for a predetermined period (four years, for example), the various Institutions should have their temporary seats established in a manner which takes account of their operational requirements. This solution must include appropriate coordination, but it must be implemented with due caution in order to ensure that a temporary situation does not become a permanent one.

In the present political climate, the choice of capital may be of decisive importance to the future Community; that is why, in making that choice, we must leave aside all considerations of local and personal advantage.

These are my thoughts on the matter. I thank you again, Mr President, and remain,

Yours faithfully,

(sgd) Pietro Campilli