

Appeal by the Saar Christian People's Party (CVP) with a view to the referendum on the Saar Statute (13 October 1955)

Caption: On 13 October 1955, the Saar Christian People's Party (CVP) calls on citizens to vote 'Yes' in the referendum on the Saar Statute to be held on 23 October.

Source: CVP-Rundschau : Mitteilungsblatt der Christlichen Volkspartei des Saarlandes. 13.10.1955, Nr. 7. Saarbrücken: Christliche Volkspartei des Saarlandes. "Das Ja wird siegen !".

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The 'Yes' vote will triumph!

The Christian People's Party calls on the people of the Saar

Men and women of the Saar, young people of the Saar!

On 23 October, we must take a very important and momentous decision. Out of the ruins and chaos of 1945, a new state order has been built in the Saar. From the outset, the Christian People's Party placed itself at the service of the rebuilding of our homeland and, as early as its Resolution of 16 April 1946, committed itself to a new order in Europe, acknowledged the special nature of Germany and supported the free expression of the Saar people's will in accordance with democratic principles. The people of the Saar are now being called upon to take a position on the European Statute of the Saar. One has only to think back to 1945 and consider the difficult but successful path which we in the Saar have walked since then in order to realise that a European Statute of the Saar would represent an enormous step forward. This Statute is the outcome of five years of difficult negotiations and has been welcomed by all the peoples and statesmen of Europe. The Saar Statute, which is now being submitted to the people of the Saar, is a joint proposal submitted by the Federal Republic and France which sets out arrangements for our constitutional existence until the Peace Treaty is concluded.

Serving peace

The aim of the European Saar Statute is to serve peace between Germany and France, to develop the Saar economy to the greatest extent possible through joint Franco-German efforts and to guarantee each and every one of us peace, security and prosperity.

The European Saar Statute, which is the only issue at stake on 23 October, will be valid until a Peace Treaty has been concluded. Only the Peace Treaty will determine the Saar's ultimate destiny. For the time being, the discussion simply concerns the joint reconciliation proposal submitted by the Federal Republic and Germany. That is the only matter on which we shall be taking a decision on 23 October.

In the early weeks of the 23 October campaign, the Christian People's Party remained silent. Since then, however, everyone in the Saar has realised which parties are advocating a 'No' vote. You have all experienced their methods, methods which all people of good sense in the Saar were convinced had vanished from political life. Whatever could be imagined in the way of lies, calumny, rabble-rousing, covert pressures and overt terror was indeed served up with only one purpose: to prevent the people of the Saar from making a rational assessment and ensure that they turn the Statute down.

Unworthy of freedom

The 'No' parties organised squads of 'persuaders': men, women and entire families were threatened with retaliatory measures, voters were kept away from our election meetings or were vilified on arrival. In short, we were subjected to forms of political confrontation which observers abroad viewed with horror and condemned, which were unworthy of freedom and could only damage the image of Germany, as the Press Service of the Federal Republic's CDU Party has observed.

Steadfast and determined

But these methods, which in their form and purpose are all too reminiscent of a time whose memory is still with us, have now rebounded upon their authors. By way of contrast, the Christian People's Party has made every effort to conduct a fair and objective campaign and convey to the people of the Saar a true understanding of the meaning and purpose of the European Saar Statute. Above all else, it is the Christian People's Party's determination to meet this onslaught of hatred and lies with the weapons of truth and reason which have earned the esteem of the people of the Saar, as countless men and women from all walks of life in the Saar have assured us.

Despite the organised street terror in front of the Wartburg in Saarbrücken, in St. Ingbert and in Neunkirchen, despite the unbelievably presumptuous moral pressures exercised above all by the Saar CDU, the Christian People's Party has campaigned in a steadfast and determined manner and spread the only message which serves the true interests of the Saar people: vote 'Yes' on 23 October.

The Christian People's Party knows that it can always rely on its electors. But the issue to be determined on 23 October is not one of party politics. The issue is the European Saar Statute and only that. Transcending the narrow bounds of a political party, people from all walks of life and backgrounds, people with the most varied political views, are putting their energies behind a 'Yes' vote on 23 October, informed by reason and conviction.

Reason and sound judgment

Following the initial surge of political passions, reason and sound judgment have once again returned to the people of the Saar.

The miner now knows that a rejection of the Statute could lower his standard of living.

The 60 000 workers in the manufacturing industries and their wives are conscious of the risk to their livelihoods if the European Saar Statute fails to be approved.

The men in the iron and steel works have noticed that the 'No' parties have no idea whatever about what is supposed to happen if the vote goes the wrong way on 23 October.

Pensioners and those living on their savings should consider what will happen if we do not vote 'Yes': their pensions and savings will be under threat.

The self-employed, people who earn their living through commerce, trade and crafts all realise that their individual prosperity and the security of their place in society are dependent on the country's general prosperity and overall economic situation.

Young people should bear in mind that, in defending the European Saar Statute, the Christian People's Party is thinking particularly of them and their future, a future which can be secured only where there is peace and reconciliation, paving the way for tomorrow's Europe.

Nor will the women of the Saar refuse to heed our call. For they know that if the Statute is turned down, the Saar will once again become a bone of contention between Germany and France. And that would result in great dangers for our land and for its sons and daughters. The women of the Saar yearn for peace, and there is nothing greater than the peace which the European Saar Statute is specifically intended to serve.

We are all Germans

By now, the people of the Saar have come to appreciate that the 23 October referendum does not constitute a decision for or against Germany. We are all Germans, and that is precisely why we understand that a 'Yes' vote will also be in the German interest. The European Saar Statute helps Germany. In this respect too it represents a consistent continuation of the political line established by the Christian People's Party, which in its Resolution of 16 April 1946 made it very clear that the German language, the Christian German education and the special nature of the people of the Saar all had to be respected. The rich cultural life which has developed along the River Saar is testimony to the success of our policies. Acceptance of the European Saar Statute will, in turn, demonstrate that the people of the Saar are capable of defending the true interests of the German people. Approval of the Saar Statute is a sure test of the new spirit in which the German people intends to build its future.

This is why you must search your conscience with the seriousness which the European Saar Statute so clearly merits in view of its many implications. The Christian People's Party says 'Yes' to the European

Saar Statute precisely because a sense of Christian responsibility requires it to serve peace and the common good. All those who are deeply committed to freedom and the common good must vote 'Yes' in all Christian conscience.

Profound responsibility

We say 'Yes' to the Saar Statute out of a sense of responsibility for the destiny of our homeland, for the future of our young people, for peace in our families, for the daily bread of our workforce and for the peaceful twilight years of our pensioners. Above all, however, we say 'Yes' out of a deep commitment to the achievement of a definitive reconciliation between Germany and France. People of the Saar, be mindful of the catastrophes which conflict between Germany and France has so often brought down upon our land. Be mindful of that, and you will say 'Yes' to the European Saar Statute, which will ensure lasting peace between Germany and France.

It lies in your hands

The European Saar Statute is, moreover, a further step along the path towards a United States of Europe, which in turn represents the only sure way of resolving the problems of Europe's future. Out of this sense of responsibility, the Christian People's Party calls on all the people of the Saar, on those who are still wavering or undecided and on those too who are not bound to any political party, to give a clear and decisive 'Yes' to the Saar Statute on 23 October.

Men and women of the Saar, young people of the Saar, set aside all petty reservations! Do not choose this moment to search the past for things that you did not like. Now is not the time for personal rancour, however understandable it often was or is. The issue is a momentous one! The decision is of the greatest importance for us all! Hatred or peace, disorder or security, economic distress or maintenance of our welfare provisions, rejection of Europe or a further step towards reconciliation between its peoples; all these things are in your hands. Each and every one of you is responsible for the outcome on 23 October. Cast your vote; your conscience demands it of you! Those who do not vote 'Yes' will be failing the attempt to secure peace which the European Saar Statute represents. Those who decide against the Statute must take personal responsibility for all the grave consequences that would result from a rejection. There is only one right decision:

Vote 'YES' on 23 October

Men and women of the Saar, young people of the Saar! Form a living community, an irresistible front in favour of the 'Yes' vote! 23 October is our day of victory: victory for the industrious people of the Saar, victory for all men and women who love their homeland, who care for their future and that of their families, who strive for peace between peoples and who, far from obstinately ignoring their neighbour's hand stretched out in friendship, are only too happy to grasp it.

Men and women of the Saar, young people of the Saar!

Carry the 'Yes' into every household along the Saar. Carry it into the hearts of your families, relatives and friends. See the 'Yes' as a sign of hope and peace!