

Resolution of the Social Democratic Party of the Saar (SPS) on the Europeanisation of the Saar (7 November 1953)

Caption: On 7 November 1953, the Saar Social Democratic Party (SPS) adopts a resolution on the question of the possible Europeanisation of the Saar.

Source: Landespartei Vorstand der Sozialdemokratischen Partei des Saarlandes (Hrsg.). Die Saarfrage, eine Dokumentensammlung. Saarbrücken: Sozialdemokratische Partei des Saarlandes, 1954. 72 S. p. 13-14.

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Resolution of the Social Democratic Party of the Saar (SPS) on the Europeanisation of the Saar (7 November 1953)

At its meeting on 7 November 1953, the Executive Committee of the Social Democratic Party of the Saar (SPS) once again expressed its views on the issue of the Europeanisation of the Saar. The Executive Committee recalled that, since the first SPS Congress was held in 1946 at the Saarland State Theatre in Saarbrücken, the competent party bodies have taken every opportunity to refer to the need for a European solution to the Saar question. The Party has repeatedly emphasised that, as the subject of a dispute between France and Germany, the Saar question poses a threat to European integration.

Fully aware of the claims being made by France and Germany as well as of the interests and needs of the people of the Saar, the Party soon came to the conclusion that reconciling interests is not possible at nation-state level; but at European level, a community of interests may emerge from these conflicts of interest. However, such a community of interests can be achieved only if, at some stage, all parties concerned dare to step boldly into the future and renounce *present* partial interests. This will be made all the easier once the Saar becomes a European territory as a result of this renunciation, and is released from the dispute between the existing nation states. Henceforth, the Saar will be able to accomplish the self-imposed task of forging links between France and Germany and helping the two countries move further along the road to Europe. Any alternative development, namely any attempt by one of the parties concerned to find a solution according to the conventional nation-state approach (whether this would involve the reintegration of the Saar into Germany, its annexation by France or its establishment as a sovereign state), is bound, whether the parties concerned wish it or not, to lead to nationalistic conflicts and, as a result, cause the most severe form of disturbances in Europe.

The development which is now clearly visible to all on the political horizon was already foreseen by the Social Democratic Party in 1946, and has been raised by the Party on numerous occasions. Having come to the same realisation, the Committee of the International Socialist Conference (Comisco) stated the following in its 1950 Copenhagen Resolution:

‘The International Socialist Conference considers that the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) in Paris and the Council of Europe in Strasbourg are called upon to find a practical solution to the Saar question as a European problem of the first order.’

The Party’s commitment to this decision still holds true today. In August 1952, at a time when the ‘Europeanisation’ of the Saar was still a vague concept, the Party submitted practical proposals for the Europeanisation of the Saar based on this Comisco statement. Only the Social Democratic Party of the Saar is therefore entitled to welcome the Europeanisation plan put forward by the Dutch Delegate, Marinus van der Goes van Naters. The Executive Committee notes this with satisfaction, all the more so since here is a leading neutral who has carried out a comprehensive study of the entire Saar issue and has come up with a proposal which justifies our policy. The Executive Committee believes that this report also deserves to be endorsed throughout the Saar.

The Executive Committee is also of the opinion that the Europeanisation plan put forward by the Dutch Council of Europe Delegate can, with some minor amendments, be achieved in its present form.

It is extremely positive that, in addition to insightful statesmen, there is public awareness in all European countries of the situation that is unfolding in the Saar. The Executive Committee especially welcomes the fact that the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), in its memorandum addressed to the Socialist International, declares that, under normal conditions, it is not against the principles that are common to all the Socialist International member parties to advocate the separation of a population from an existing country.

The Executive Committee believes that these normal conditions do actually exist today, that, as a step towards a promising future, the Saar should be made into a European territory, and that this decision must ultimately be approved by the people of the Saar in the exercise of their right of self-determination.

The Executive Committee therefore notes with satisfaction that the Social Democratic Party of the Saar, which has been steadfastly pursuing its policy since 1946 in line with the tenets of international socialism, has served and will continue to serve as a springboard towards achieving the objective of European integration. It notes that the fruits of this development — an end to the age-old enmity between Germany and France — are now beginning to ripen, and the path towards the unification of Europe is being cleared.