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COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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Strasbourg 1 February 1980

AS/Loc/Prix (31) 7

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY



COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL PLANNING
AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Sub-Committee on the Europe Prize and
the propagation of the European idea

EUROPE PRIZE

Candidature of the town of LUDWIGSBURG (Baden-Wurttemberg),
Federal Republic of Germany

- Letter from the Mayor
- Reply to the questionnaire

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Ludwigsburg, 6 February 1979

I hereby apply on behalf of the town of Ludwigsburg for award of the Council of Europe Flag.

Ludwigsburg's efforts to further the cause of European unification are fully dealt with in the attached questionnaire. May I nevertheless point out that Ludwigsburg and the French town of Montbeliard were the first towns to establish a pairing link between France and Germany after the second world war.

The Federal President, Mr Scheel, made a special mention of this fact in an address sent in 1975 to mark the 25th anniversary of the pairing.

I thank you for your benevolent consideration of our candidature.

Yours faithfully,

(signed) Dr. Ulshofer

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Question 1: Membership in organisations of local authorities

Reply

The town of Ludwigsburg is a member of the International Union of Mayors.

Question 2: Contribution to their activities

Reply

The "Deutsch-Französische Institut Ludwigsburg" (Ludwigsburg Franco-German Institute) has existed in the town for over 30 years. The town currently contributes 35,000 DM to it annually. In addition, Ludwigsburg supports the Institute's functions and holds receptions for it.

Joint pilot projects to foster town pairings have also been set in motion.

Question 3: "Twinning" activities

Reply

Ludwigsburg has been paired with:

1. Montbéliard (25 - Doubs) - since 1950
(the first Franco-German town pairing after World War II)
2. Rhymney Valley District - since 1960
(up to 1974 with Caerphilly, which became part of Rhymney Valley District after the local government reorganisation in the UK).

The 25th anniversary of the first Franco-German pairing was celebrated on two weekends in September 1975 - one in Ludwigsburg and one in Montbéliard - with considerable public participation. The Federal President, Mr Scheel, sent his good wishes and there was considerable press coverage of the occasion.

On 22 March 1975, Ludwigsburg (and Montbéliard) received the "Prix France-Allemagne" (France-Germany Prize).

As Ludwigsburg and Montbéliard are not too far apart there are very frequent exchange visits by associations, clubs and individuals; there are also numerous links between choirs and individuals from Ludwigsburg and Rhymney Valley District.

Question 4: Other relations with municipalities abroad

Reply

As Montbeliard and Rhymney Valley are too small to have school exchanges with all the Ludwigsburg schools, our secondary schools have relations with a number of French and British schools in other towns.

Question 5: Exchange of persons

Reply

For a number of years now, working parties from Ludwigsburg and Montbeliard have exchanged visits to obtain useful information on clearly defined subjects in the other town, with the practical similarities and differences. The working parties have six to ten members, including town councillors, members of the administration and experts. So far, town planning, traffic planning, education and sport have been discussed. This year's theme will be social questions.

Question 6: Organisation of European events

Reply

1. When the Olympic Games were held in Munich in 1972, the "Ludwigsburger Stadtverband für Leibesübungen" (Ludwigsburg Physical Training Association) and the town of Ludwigsburg organised an international youth camp near Munich, which was attended by a total of 200 young people from Germany, France and Great Britain.

2. The newly-built youth hostel in Ludwigsburg has an international meeting centre (55 beds in double and single rooms) to give German, foreign and mixed youth groups an opportunity for residential joint programmes.

This opportunity is used regularly and leads to encounters with young people from all over the world.

3. The annual Ludwigsburg Palace Festival derives an international flavour from both the events and the visitors.

Question 7: Europe Day

Reply

In the past, Europe Day has, whenever possible, been celebrated by a joint event with one of the twin towns. For many years it has been customary to hoist flags on public buildings and make appropriate announcements in the press.

Question 8: Support to European movements

Reply

The town of Ludwigsburg gives both material and moral support to the district association of the European Union. It places halls and rooms in the cultural centre and other public buildings at the disposal of foreign groups for their activities.

Various working parties set up by the town with foreigners are seeking opportunities for coexistence based on greater understanding.

Question 9: Propagation of the European idea

Reply

The municipal adult education centre regularly organises lectures, individually and in series, and seminars on European problems, arranges study trips aimed at greater understanding and, in conjunction with the Franco-German Institute, prepares people for individual and group visits to European countries by means of the corresponding language and geography courses.

In addition, the attached 1979/I work plan includes numerous slogans to publicise the elections for the European Parliament.

The town library is expanding its stock of non-fiction books, also with the intention of deepening European understanding, and arranges relevant book exhibitions.

Art exhibitions are exchanged between the paired towns.

Question 10: Actions of European solidarity

Reply

When a slag heap slipped in the Welsh mining village of Aberfan in 1966, burying over 100 children, the town of Ludwigsburg offered financial help.

In the aftermath of the 1976 Friuli earthquake disaster the town youth centre collected clothes and furniture and made several journeys to take them to the afflicted area.

Question 11: Presentation

Reply

Ludwigsburg would celebrate the award of the European Flag appropriately.

Question 12: Other initiatives

Reply

1. For two years now, at Christmas, Ludwigsburg has sent 15,000 copies of a French translation of its "Kaleidoscope" (annual review) to Montbéliard, which includes it with its own "Municipal Review".

In this way, every household in Montbéliard receives greetings from its German twin town (see attached example).

2. Ludwigsburg and its Franco-German Institute prepare, in conjunction with teachers and students at the Teacher Training College, information on the two paired towns in loose-leaf form.

The leaves, in two languages, are intended to help both sides to prepare for visits and, when these are over, to give them further information on what they have seen and experienced. For this reason special importance is attached to educationally skilful presentation.