The History of Sealand

**During WWII, the British government built several Fortress islands in the North Sea to defend its coasts from German invaders. These forts were built illegally in international waters.**

The forts were abandoned in the early 1950’s and whilst built in international waters in a time of world crisis, they should have been pulled down to comply with international law. Except for the aforementioned fortress, the fortresses were subsequently pulled down. This resulted in the portentous uniqueness of the fortress. Fort Roughs Tower, situated at the high seas, had been deserted and abandoned, res derelicta and terra nullius. From a legal point of view, it therefore constituted extra-national territory.

Sealand was founded as a sovereign Principality in 1967 in international waters, six miles off the eastern shores of Britain. The history of Sealand is a story of a struggle for liberty. Sealand was founded on the principle that any group of people dissatisfied with the oppressive laws and restrictions of existing nation states may declare independence in any place not claimed to be under the jurisdiction of another sovereign entity. The location chosen was Roughs Tower, an island fortress created in World War II by Britain and subsequently abandoned to the jurisdiction of the High Seas.

The independence of Sealand was upheld in a 1968 British court decision where the judge held that Roughs Tower stood in international waters and did not fall under the legal jurisdiction of the United Kingdom. This gave birth to Sealand's national motto of E Mare Libertas, or "From the Sea, Freedom".

The official language of Sealand is English and the Sealand Dollar has a fixed exchange rate of one U.S. dollar. Passports and stamps have been in circulation since 1969 and the latter decade of the 20th century saw an impressive expansion in its activity both socially and industrially as it began to develop a growing economic base which underscored its long-standing membership of the international community of States.

**Directions: Glue this article in your journal. After reading about the country of Sealand, answer the following question: Do you believe Sealand is a state, nation, nation-state or neither? Explain your reason with details from the article.**

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