

## EIGHTH MEETING (PUBLIC)

*Held at Geneva on Friday, March 14th, 1924, at 5 p.m.*

Present All the representatives of the Members of the Council, and the Secretary-General.

**1186. Free City of Danzig Depot for Polish War Material in Transit.**

Admiral Zwierkowski, representative of Poland M. Sahn, representative of the Free City of Danzig and Mr. MacDonnell, High Commissioner, came to the Council table.

M. QUIÑONES DE LEÓN reopened the discussion on his report (Annex 620), which had been read at the previous meeting. He proposed to modify paragraph (d) of the draft resolution in his report by the addition of the following sentence

“ Moreover, during a period of not more than six months, Poland is authorised to continue to use the depot on the Holm Island mentioned in the Decision of the High Commissioner of April 7th, 1922, for the unloading of war material other than explosives. ”  
The draft resolutions proposed by M. Quiñones de León were as follows

“ (1) The decision of the High Commissioner of the League of Nations in Danzig, of April 7th, 1922, concerning the site for a depot for Polish war material in transit through Danzig, previously approved by the Council, is, in view of the results of recent expert investigations of this problem, replaced by the following provisions

“ (a) The Westerplatte peninsula shall be placed at the disposal of the Polish Government, solely for the purpose of the unloading, storage and despatch to Poland of war material and explosives in transit. The ownership of the peninsula shall be transferred, according to the provisions of M. Quiñones de Leon's report of March 14th, 1924, to the Harbour Board, but the exclusive use of this area for the purpose mentioned above shall be permanently leased to Poland, without payment of rent, taxes or any other charge.

“ (b) The Harbour Board shall be requested to provide immediately for the construction of the basin and the railway extension provided for in the report of the Committee of Enquiry dated February 8th, 1924 (Annex 620a), and to plan for its completion within one year. Any question concerning the execution of this work or of its financing by the Board shall be finally settled by the decision of the Board.

“ (c) The Danzig and Polish Governments shall divide equally between them the costs of the undertaking, which shall be financed in accordance with the provisions laid down in the report of M. Quiñones de Leon dated March 14th, 1924, unless the two Governments within one month agree upon some other method.

“ (d) Until the Westerplatte site has been made available, war material and explosives in transit to Poland shall be unloaded in the basin of the Free Port. This will not prevent other more suitable and expeditious arrangements being made by the Harbour Board for the unloading of non-explosive war material in some other part of the port.

“ Moreover, during a period of not more than six months, Poland is authorised to continue to use the depot on the Holm Island, mentioned in the Decision of the High Commissioner of April 7th, 1922, for the unloading of war material other than explosives.

“ (e) Regulations for munition ships or ships carrying explosives entering the territorial waters of Danzig, and for unloading munitions and explosives and despatching them through Danzig territory shall be drawn up by a Committee consisting of two members of the Harbour Board (one Polish and one Danzig delegate), two delegates from the Polish Government, and two delegates from the Danzig Government. One of the delegates of the Polish Government will be appointed Chairman of the Committee, with a casting vote. The Committee shall also have power to make such changes in the rules as may from time to time, be considered advisable.

“ (f) The Polish Government will undertake to expedite in every possible way the rapid transit through the territory of the Free City of material of an explosive nature, and whenever explosives exceeding 200 (two hundred) tons have been stored in the depot for forty-eight hours, the High Commissioner shall be informed of the fact within the following twenty-four hours.

“ (g) After Poland has begun to use the Westerplatte peninsula, the Polish Government alone shall be responsible for providing any reasonable compensation for injury to individuals and damage to property in the event of an explosion of

her munitions or other explosives in transit through the territorial waters or territory of the Free City, such compensation being fixed at the time by agreement between the two Governments.

" 2. The Council requests the Secretary-General to thank the Committee of Enquiry for the valuable services which it has rendered in bringing about a final settlement of this question.

" 3. The Council, declaring that the work of this Committee of Enquiry is work undertaken by the League and therefore covered by Article 33 (2) of the Financial Regulations, formally approves the action of the Secretary-General in making to the Committee a recoverable advance out of the Working Capital Fund to a maximum amount of 7,000 Swiss francs.

" The Council instructs the Secretary-General to inform the Danzig and Polish Governments of the amount of their respective shares of this expenditure, with the request that they should pay them as soon as possible."

Admiral ZWIERSKI referred to the passage in the draft resolution in which it was stipulated that the Danzig and Polish Governments should divide equally between them the cost of the undertaking. He pointed out that the Polish Minister of Finance could hardly give his approval to an unknown amount of expenditure.

The PRESIDENT said that the observation of the Polish representative would be noted.

Admiral ZWIERSKI asked whether it would be possible to obtain an extension of the period of six months if the work could not be completed in that time.

M. SAHM said that this remark made the intentions of the Polish Government clear. It would be better, in his view, to delete the additional sentence proposed by the Rapporteur.

M. BRANTING said that he could only accept the additional clause on the clear understanding that the period of six months would not be prolonged.

Lord PARMOOR agreed with M. Branting.

M. HANOTAUX pointed out that the text of the additional clause was very clear. If need arose, the matter could always be brought before the League for a fresh decision.

*The resolutions proposed by the Rapporteur were adopted.*

M. QUIÑONES DE LEÓN said that the solution proposed by the Committee of Experts was not entirely satisfactory, either for the Free City or for Poland. It was, nevertheless, a just solution, and was in the interests of the two parties. The execution of the programme might give rise to differences of opinion on certain points. It was in the interests of the two Governments to regulate these difficulties without delay, and they could count upon the support of the High Commissioner, as well as the President of the Harbour Board, whenever such might prove of use. A programme had been drawn up a spirit of goodwill was all that was necessary to make it possible to realise it. He felt sure that, in this respect, the Council could rely both on Poland and on the Free City of Danzig.

Mr. MACDONNELL referred to the reservation made by the representative of Poland regarding the financial settlement of the undertaking. In another case, a reservation had been inserted in the Minutes. He desired to know, for his own guidance, whether reservations made during a discussion affected the resolutions adopted by the Council. Cases had occurred in which reservations had been quoted in support of an opinion in opposition to that expressed by the Council in its resolutions.

M. QUIÑONES DE LEÓN said that the Council had approved the resolution without any reservations.

M. HANOTAUX explained that the observations and reservations had no legal significance, but might facilitate the application of the resolution.

M. SAHM reminded the Council that he had explained at the preceding meeting the reasons for which he had been unable to accept the Council's decision. He desired to add that the Free City could accept no responsibility should any unfortunate consequences result from this decision.

Admiral Zwiwerski, M. Sahn and Mr. MacDonnell withdrew.

#### 1187 Reduction of Armaments Extension of the Principles of the Washington Naval Treaty to Non-Signatory States.

M. BENES read a report (Annex 622) on the extension to States non-signatories of the Treaty of Washington of the principles of that treaty regarding the limitation of naval armaments.

He read the following resolution

" The Council requests the Secretary-General to forward to all States Members or non-Members of the League copies of the report of the Rome Naval Meeting (Annex 622a), and to invite those States to communicate through the Secretary-General, if possible before the June session of the Council, any observations or suggestions concerning their countries which they may think desirable, in order to enable the Council to take a decision as to a second technical meeting and to determine the final date of the International Conference for the purpose of concluding the Convention."

*The resolution was adopted.*