

will take place this winter if some scheme is not found. There is every probability that refugees will die at least by tens of thousands, perhaps by hundreds of thousands, of starvation, and that the Greek State might become an appalling centre of epidemic disease.

For such a scheme the assistance of the outside world is vital. For this reason the Greek Government, which has throughout followed a courageous policy and has made the greatest possible efforts, appealed to the League to assist it in raising an external loan.

I am delighted that as the result of our deliberations at the last Council session and at this present meeting and as a result of the excellent work done by Colonel Procter, the Greek Sub-Committee of the Council has arrived at a draft scheme which offers a really serious hope that the question may be dealt with in a reconstructive manner, and that there is a sound and reasonable prospect that the Greek Government will secure the loan which is required.

From the very beginning I have always said that only a scheme based on the settlement of the refugees on the open lands of Greece and in other productive enterprises offers a sound solution to the present appalling problem. I am glad to think that the scheme which the Council has evolved is based on this view and will bring about the result for which all who have thought on the refugee problem have earnestly hoped.

In this scheme, which the Council is submitting to the Greek Government, it will be for the Greek Government itself to take the first steps, just as it was for the Austrian Government last year. It will mean a great effort by the Greek Government and the Greek people, and I earnestly hope, and so I am sure will the Council, that Greeks, both inside and outside their mother-country, will make every effort they can to help the Greek Government to solve this great problem. It is the greatest problem in Greek national life. Unless a proper solution is found for it, it will stand in the way of any other reconstructive effort that may be attempted. It is indeed an essential first step in any economic or financial reconstruction for Greece.

I am delighted to know that, in the scheme which has been evolved, the League of Nations will lend its assistance if the Greek Government is able to float the loan which is required. For my part, and speaking for the services which I have had the honour to lead on behalf of the League, I shall do everything in my power to assist the Council or the Greek Government in any way in which they may think that the High Commissariat can be of use.

There is one essential point on which I must insist. No reconstructive scheme, however perfect, can operate immediately. Nor can any such scheme prevent great and wide-spread distress among the refugees until such time as they have been absorbed and become self-supporting in the productive enterprises which will be set on foot. The scheme, therefore, does not in any way diminish the need during the immediate future for the charitable efforts of the relief organisations. On the contrary, it should act as a stimulant and encouragement to the relief organisations, because they can now feel that, in helping the refugees during the interval while the productive enterprises are being established, they are playing an essential part in a great comprehensive scheme. They will not be throwing their charitable help into a bottomless pit. They will be essential factors in a great problem. Their efforts will not be a palliative, as they have hitherto been, but an important contribution towards a real and final solution.

Annex 535.

C. 468. 1923. I.

VARIOUS QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE FREE CITY OF DANZIG.

Report by M. Quiñones de Leon and Resolution adopted by the Council on July 7th, 1923.

In the general report on the problem of Danzig which I have just submitted to you, I suggested that at our next session the Council might come to a decision with regard to the general body of questions in dispute between Danzig and Poland which might still be in suspense.

The Polish representative, in his letter to the Secretary-General of June 26th, 1923, in which he forwarded to the latter the Note from the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs of June 20th concerning the general question of the disputes which have arisen between Poland and Danzig, declared that, in the opinion of the Polish Government, it would be advisable for the Council to adjourn the consideration of the other questions concerning the Free City included in our agenda until the main problem had been settled.

The other questions referred to are as follows

- (1) The situation of property the ownership of which has been transferred to the Danzig Harbour Board.
- (2) Visa fees for Danzig nationals crossing other Polish frontiers than that between Danzig and Poland.
- (3) The financial situation of the Danzig Harbour Board.
- (4) The right of the Danzig Harbour Board to contract loans.

I have examined these four questions. The position is briefly explained below

(1) The question of the property of the Harbour Board was raised in the first instance by the Conference of Ambassadors with a view to arriving at an agreement between the Governments of Poland and Danzig under the auspices of the High Commissioner of the League of Nations at Danzig. The High Commissioner has informed us of the negative results of the negotiations which took place on this matter, while adding that the Polish Government requested him to give a formal decision. The High Commissioner has dealt with this question in his decision on the right of the Harbour Board to contract loans. In that decision he stated that there was nothing in the Treaty of November 9th, 1920, which placed any conditions upon the Harbour Board's right of ownership in the property transferred to it by Article 25 of the Treaty of November 9th.

(2) The question of visa fees was dealt with by the High Commissioner in a decision dated May 1st, 1923. In that decision the High Commissioner declared that nothing in the treaties or agreements specifically prevented Poland from charging Danzig nationals a visa fee, but that, owing to the peculiar political, geographical and commercial situation in which Danzig is placed, the nationals of the Free City had a special claim for exceptional and favourable treatment from Poland in the matter of visas. The Danzig Government has appealed against that decision and the Polish Government has presented certain observations regarding the grounds upon which the High Commissioner based his decision.

(3) The question of the financial situation of the Danzig Harbour Board was dealt with in a decision of the High Commissioner dated April 29th, 1923, and the Polish Government has appealed to us in the matter. The High Commissioner decided that the temporary arrangement dated June 18th, 1921, according to which each of the two Governments undertook to pay half the expenditure of the Harbour Board until this question had been finally settled, while reserving the right of asking that its own country should be reimbursed, should remain in force until the conclusion of the financial convention provided for in Article 23 of the Treaty of November 9th, 1920. The High Commissioner stated in his decision that this Convention ought to be concluded before the beginning of the 1924 financial year, and he gave certain indications as to what the Convention should contain. The reasoned statement of the Polish Government in support of its appeal reached the Secretariat a few days ago, and, as it has not yet been possible to lay the documents in the matter before the members of the Council, we are unable for the moment to make a complete study of the problem.

(4) The question of the Danzig Harbour Board's right to contract loans was the subject of a decision of the High Commissioner dated May 24th, 1923. The High Commissioner was of opinion that nothing in the Treaty of November 9th, 1920, limited the power of the Harbour Board as regards the contracting of loans, or placed any conditions on the Harbour Board's right of ownership in the properties transferred to it under Article 25 of the Treaty of November 9th. The Polish Government has given notice of appeal against this decision but has not yet submitted the grounds of its appeal. It will be advisable not to enter upon the consideration of this question for the moment.

In view of what I have set forth, I am of opinion that the Council should agree to the suggestion of the Polish Government and adjourn the consideration of the four questions referred to until its next session. I must, however, add that the question of the financial situation of the Harbour Board seems to me to be of some urgency. The work of the Harbour Board is naturally gravely inconvenienced as long as the financial situation has not been definitely regulated. It is essential that the normal work of the Harbour Board should be maintained until a final solution has been found, and that until then the Governments of Poland and Danzig should continue to contribute the sums necessary for this purpose in equal shares.

I propose the following resolution for adoption by the Council

“The Council adopts the conclusions of the present report and requests the Secretary-General to communicate it to the High Commissioner of the League of Nations at Danzig, and also to the Governments of Poland and of the Free City of Danzig.”

Annex 536.

C. 457 1923, XI.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE TRAFFIC IN OPIUM.

Report by M. Hymans and resolution adopted by the Council on July 7th, 1923.

In reading the report of the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs (Annex 536 a), my colleagues will have realised that the recent session of the Committee has been of special importance. In addition to the ordinary Government representation on the Committee, the United States of America sent an important and representative delegation. I know I shall not be alone when I express the view that the initiative and interest of this delegation contributed greatly to the very marked progress made during the session.

The Committee has devoted much of its time during the past two years to the promotion of enquiries and to the collection of statistics. It has used all the means in its power to secure