

6. PROPOSED INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION TO SECURE UNIFORMITY IN THE INFORMATION DERIVED FROM CUSTOMS STATISTICS IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES.

By resolution of September 23rd, 1935,¹ the Council invited the Economic Committee to study a proposal for an international convention for securing uniformity in the information derived from Customs statistics. Having examined this proposal, the Committee has been led to the view that a number of difficulties which are for the moment insurmountable stand in the way of arriving at any general system of regulation for this purpose. It has consequently reached the conclusion that it would be better to leave to each State the task of ensuring the conformity of its commercial statistics with those of other countries in so far as such conformity can be obtained by means of bilateral agreement.

7 DEFINITION OF THE LEGAL CONCEPTION CONVEYED BY THE TERMS "IMPORTER" AND "EXPORTER"

The Committee was invited, by resolution of the Council of September 9th, 1935,² to take under consideration the question of an international agreement on the definition of the terms "importer" and "exporter" and to inform the Council of its findings. The Committee's enquiries into this matter have made it clear that in an important number of countries no necessity has been felt for establishing for international use a uniform legal interpretation of these terms, and that the lack of precision in various regulations where they appear does not in practice constitute a serious inconvenience in these countries. Accordingly the Committee has not thought it advisable to pursue its enquiries further.

ANNEX 1620.

C.398.1936.VII.

FREE CITY OF DANZIG VISIT OF THE CRUISER "LEIPZIG" TO THE PORT OF DANZIG.

LETTER, DATED SEPTEMBER 22ND, 1936, FROM THE POLISH MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL.

[Translation.]

Geneva, September 22nd, 1936.

I have the honour to forward to you herewith the report which the Polish Government submits to the Council, in accordance with the mandate entrusted to it by the resolution of July 4th last,³ regarding the incident that occurred at Danzig during the visit of the German cruiser *Leipzig*, and I would request you to communicate it to the Members of the Council of the League of Nations.

(Signed) J. BECK,
Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In connection with a report from the High Commissioner at Danzig, dated June 30th, 1936,⁴ the Council of the League of Nations at its meeting on July 4th last dealt with an incident which occurred during the visit to Danzig of the German cruiser *Leipzig* on June 25th.

The Council reached the conclusion that the incident in question was of an international character and, having regard to the fact that, in accordance with the Statute of the Free City Poland is called upon to undertake the conduct of the foreign relations of Danzig, decided

" to request the Polish Government to deal with the matter on its behalf through the diplomatic channel and to furnish the Council at its next ordinary session with a report on the results of the action which it may have been found possible to take."

¹ See *Official Journal*, November 1935, pages 1184 and 1288.

² See *Official Journal*, November 1935, pages 1158 and 1251.

³ See *Official Journal*, July 1936, page 762.

⁴ See *Official Journal*, July 1936, page 895.

Under this definite mandate conferred upon it by the Council, the Polish Government on July 7th instructed its Ambassador in Berlin to enter into conversations with the Government of the Reich in order to elucidate the question in all its aspects.

On the essential points of the arguments put forward, the Polish Government's views were shared by the German Government, so that it was possible on July 24th to proceed to an exchange of notes, a French translation of which is enclosed herewith.

[Translation from Polish.]

POLISH EMBASSY.

Berlin, July 24th, 1936.

“ Your Excellency

“ Under instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform Your Excellency as follows:

“ On June 25th, the cruiser *Leipzig* arrived on a visit to the Free City of Danzig. The commander of this vessel, in making the official visits provided for in an agreement between the Polish Government and the Senate of the Free City omitted to pay a visit to Mr. Lester, the High Commissioner of the League of Nations.

“ The matter was widely reported in the German Press and this gave rise to various comments.

“ In view of this fact, the Council of the League of Nations placed the question on its agenda and, after taking note of the High Commissioner's report and hearing the declaration by the President of the Senate of the Free City and the opinions of the Members of the Council, decided on July 4th to apply to the Polish Government, which is entrusted with the conduct of the foreign relations of the Free City and to request it to clear up the matter through the diplomatic channel.

“ I have accordingly the honour to request Your Excellency to be good enough to give me such information regarding the attitude of the Government of the Reich in this matter as would enable the Polish Government to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it.

(Signed) J LIPSKI.”

His Excellency Baron von Neurath,
Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Berlin.

[Translation from the German.]

MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Berlin, July 24th, 1936.

“ Your Excellency

“ I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Excellency's note of July 24th, 1936. In this note, you informed me that, at the meeting on July 4th, the Council of the League of Nations decided to request the Polish Government to obtain information through the diplomatic channel from the German Government regarding the omission by the commander of the German cruiser *Leipzig*, on June 25th of this year, to pay an official visit to the High Commissioner of the League of Nations at Danzig. At the same time, you request the German Government in your note to give you such information regarding its attitude in this matter as would enable the Polish Government to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it.

“ On behalf of the German Government, I have the honour to give the following reply:

“ Having regard to the well-known incidents which took place at the reception given at the end of August last year by Mr. Lester, High Commissioner of the League of Nations, in honour of the officers of the German battleship *Admiral Scheer* the German Government did not wish to expose the German officers to a repetition of such annoyance and therefore instructed the commander of the cruiser *Leipzig* not to pay a visit to Mr. Lester.

“ There was thus no intention of acting contrary to the Statute of the Free City or against the rights of Poland.

(Signed) Freiherr VON NEURATH.”

His Excellency Monsieur Joseph Lipski,
Polish Ambassador,
Berlin, W 35, Kurfürsten-Str. 136.

* * *

On the other hand, the visit paid by the three sailing yachts of the German navy on July 17th to Danzig was settled, on the initiative of the Polish Government, in accordance with the desires of all the interested parties.

The Council will no doubt be interested to learn that, in the meantime, no fresh incident similar to that submitted to us has occurred at Danzig.

The Polish Government hopes that the Members of the Council will find that the notes exchanged at Berlin and the present report bear witness to the efforts it has made within the terms of its mandate to maintain the normal state of affairs at Danzig.

The Polish Government wishes to state for its part that it is always prepared to exercise its conciliatory action in future in order to remove any difficulties in questions relating to the Free City of Danzig.