

C. 181. M. 51. 1924. I.

FREE CITY OF DANZIG

I.

GENERAL REPORT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR THE PERIOD
OCTOBER 1923 - MARCH 1924¹

The Secretary-General has the honour to forward, for the information of the Council and of the Members of the League, a general report, as a reference document, on questions concerning the Free City of Danzig, for the period from October 1923 to March 1924.

I. QUESTIONS CONSIDERED BY THE COUNCIL AT ITS TWENTY-SEVENTH (DECEMBER 1923)
AND TWENTY-EIGHTH (MARCH 1924) SESSIONS²

A number of Danzig questions were considered by the Council at its twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth sessions³. M. Quiñones de León (Representative of Spain) acted as Rapporteur at both sessions. His reports and the resolutions adopted by the Council on each question will be found in the *Official Journal* as annexes to the Minutes of these sessions. Other documents on the different subjects are indicated in separate footnotes.

1. *Reappointment of Mr MacDonnell*⁴.

On December 13th, Mr. M. S. MACDONNELL was reappointed High Commissioner of the League in Danzig for a further period of one year from February 22nd, 1924.

2. *Depot for Polish War Material in Transit through Danzig.*

In view of the fact that both the Polish and the Danzig Governments were dissatisfied with the situation concerning the site of a depot for Polish war material (including explosives) in transit through Danzig⁵ which had been settled by the High Commissioner's decision of April 7th, 1922, approved by the Council on September 1st, 1922, the Council decided on December 14th, 1923, to set up a Committee of four experts to examine the problem⁶.

On March 14th, 1924, after having heard the views of the Polish and Danzig Governments, the Council decided to substitute for the High Commissioner's decision a resolution which approved the choice by the Expert Committee⁷ of the Westerplatte Peninsula as the permanent site for the depot, and dealt with other points concerning this problem.

3. *Protection of the Interests in Poland of Danzig Nationals and Organisations*⁸

Three cases concerning the alleged property or mortgage rights in Poland of Danzig nationals and organisations — the cases of Herr Johann Schauer⁹ the West Prussian Life

¹ For preceding Report, see *Official Journal* for October 1923, pages 1225-1230.

² See *Official Journal*, February 1924, and April 1924.

The question of the Polish Diplomatic Personnel in Danzig was removed at the last minute from the agenda of the December Council session, as the Polish appeal against the High Commissioner's decision was withdrawn as the result of an agreement which was reached between the two Governments. See Document C.725.1923.I., *Official Journal*, February 1924, page 324, and, for the text of the agreement, the annex to the present Report.

⁴ C.701.M.284.1923.I. Document C.722.1923.I., refers to the salary of the High Commissioner, which was increased for the year 1924-1925.

C.809.1923.I C.721.1923.I C.776.1923.I.

C.17.1924.I and *Official Journal*, February 1924, page 350. With regard to arrangements for the payment of the expenses of the Committee, see Documents C.11.1924.I and C.38.1924.I. The total expenses amounted to 7,487.20 Swiss francs.

⁷ C.43.1924.I.

C.173.1924.I.

C.44.1924.I C.162.1924.I.

Insurance Company¹ the Bauern Bank² — were referred by the High Commissioner to the Council, which decided, on March 11th, 1924, to ask a small Committee of Jurists to examine the question of the competence of the League to deal with these problems, so that the Rapporteur might present a further report to the Council at its June session. The same procedure was followed in the case of Herr von Ruetzen Kositzkau³ Danzig having requested a decision on its appeal against the High Commissioner's decision of June 21st, 1923.

4. Harbour Board Flag.

On March 14th, the Council noted the withdrawal of the Danzig appeal against the High Commissioner's decision dated December 13th, 1923, concerning the Harbour Board Flag⁴

5. Postponement of other Questions.

Six of the Danzig questions on the provisional agenda for the March session were postponed by the Council to its session in June. The Rapporteur suggested certain methods of avoiding such delays in future and explained the position with regard to each question. These questions are

- (i) and (ii) Power of the Harbour Board to raise loans⁵ and to dispose of its properties⁶,
- (iii) Expulsion of Danzig nationals from Poland⁷
- (iv) The Polish Railway Direction in Danzig⁸
- (v) Participation of Danzig in the Berne Railway Conference⁹
- (vi) Issue of passports to Danzig nationals abroad¹⁰

II. NEW DECISIONS BY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER.

Since the last general report on Danzig questions, the High Commissioner has given decisions on the following five questions¹¹

1. The Harbour Board Flag.

Decision December 13th, 1923.

Appeal by Danzig, withdrawn during the March Council session.

The High Commissioner's decision confirmed three decisions of the Harbour Board, which provided that the flag of the Board, a composite flag showing the arms of both Poland and Danzig, should be flown at the stern of Harbour Board vessels.

2. The Representation of Danzig at the Berne Railway Conference.

Decision January 8th, 1924.

Appeal by Poland question postponed from the March to the June 1924 Council session.

3. The Issue of Passports to Danzig Nationals Abroad.

Decision January 28th, 1924.

Appeal by Poland question postponed from the March to the June 1924 Council session.

4. The Upkeep of the Mottlau and the Kaiserhafen.

Decision January 29th, 1924.

Appeal by Danzig.

5. A Special Polish Postal Sorting Office for Overseas Parcels.

Decision February 23rd, 1924.

Appeal by Danzig.

¹ C.44.1924.I C.98.1924.I.

² C.87.1924.I.

³ C.88.1924.I.

⁴ C.39.1924.I C.100.1924.I and Part II of the present Report.

⁵ C.82.1924.I.

⁶ C.81.1924.I.

⁷ C.101.1924.I.

⁸ C.61.1924.I C.163.1924.I.

No document has yet been circulated.

¹⁰ C.158.1924.I.

¹¹ For further reference to each of the first three questions, see under I above.

III. POLISH-DANZIG AGREEMENTS.

The High Commissioner has recently forwarded to the Secretariat the text of eleven Polish-Danzig Agreements signed in 1922, 1923 and 1924. They are as follows

(1), (2), (3), (4). Protocols dated March 17th, 1922, concerning (1) the adjustment of the spirits tax laws in Danzig and Poland (2) the traffic in petroleum products (3) the abolition of the economic frontier between Danzig and Poland and (4) deliveries of salt by Poland to Danzig.

(5) Protocol dated April 10th, 1922, concerning the traffic in saccharine and methylated spirits.

(6) Protocol dated July 12th, 1922, with four annexes, concerning a provisional arrangement pending the incorporation into Danzig law of the Polish export and import restrictions.

(7) and (8) Protocols dated August 17th, 1923, concerning (7) the traffic in goods between Poland and Danzig, and more especially the traffic in bonds and foreign currencies and money transactions with foreign countries and (8) the guaranteeing of the payment of taxes by Polish nationals in the Free City

(9) Protocol dated October 24th, 1923, concerning the acceptance of the provisional Danzig gulden (*Zwischengulden*) by the Polish Treasury Offices.

(10) Agreement dated December 6th, 1923, concerning the Polish diplomatic personnel in Danzig¹

(11) Agreement of January 23rd, 1924 (in execution of Article 4 of the Agreement of September 22nd, 1923), concerning the group of Polish banks participating in the consortium charged with the creation of the Bank of Danzig²

IV OTHER QUESTIONS.

1. *Presidency of the Harbour Board*³

Colonel DE REYNIER (Swiss) is to remain as President of the Harbour Board for another year (his fourth) from March 10th, 1924.

2. *Outstanding Polish-Danzig Questions.*

In a general report dated February 22nd, 1924⁴ in which the High Commissioner outlined the position of outstanding Polish-Danzig questions, he dealt with the problem of appeals against the decisions of the Harbour Board and the question of the *port d'attache* for Polish war vessels, and indicated that negotiations are going on regarding the following questions

(a) Convention concerning the Finances of the Harbour Board (Article 23 of the November 9th Treaty)

(b) Administration of the Vistula in Danzig territory (Article 20 of the November 9th Treaty)

(c) Execution of the Harbour Board Police Arrangement

(d) Interpretation of Article 33 of the November 9th Treaty

(e) Certain Customs questions.

(f) Participation of Danzig in treaties between Poland and other countries.

(g) Employment of Danzig nationals in Polish Consulates.

(h) Polish Commercial Academy at Danzig.

3. *The Economic, Financial and Political Situation in Danzig.*

In the same general report, the High Commissioner dealt with various phases of the general situation in Danzig, mentioning the general elections of November 1923 for the Danzig Popular Assembly the proposal to reduce the number of seats in the Assembly, the reform of the currency of the Free City and the foundation of a combined Danzig-Polish commercial organisation.

Certain other documents concerning the financial situation of the Free City have been communicated to the Financial Committee of the League. They deal with the question of a moratorium to be granted to Danzig by the Reparation Commission⁵ the proposed Danzig loan of 500,000 gold marks⁶ and give the texts of the Danzig laws concerning the introduction

¹ See footnote 2, page 812 also, for the text of the Agreement, the annex to the present Report.

² The text of this Agreement will be published later in the *Official Journal*. C.42.1924.I.

⁴ See pages 816-819.

⁵ For essential documents see C.661.1923.I. F.111 F.132.

of the new currency, the gulden, and the creation of the Danzig Bank of Issue¹ The text of a Polish-Danzig Agreement of January 23rd, 1924, supplementing the Agreement of September last and also the Statutes of the Bank, will be published later in the *Official Journal* of the League.

4. *The High Commissioner's Post.*

(a) *Staff.* In November 1923, the High Commissioner engaged Mr. BOWLEY at a monthly salary of £25, as chief clerk, to replace Mr. Ryan. In view of the increased cost of living in Danzig, the Secretary-General agreed to the High Commissioner's proposal to grant the members of his staff a special allowance, subject to periodical revision.

(b) *Contributions.* Poland and Danzig have, since the last report² paid to the financial administration of the League a total of 55,000 gold francs, the sum requested to meet the advances made by the League of Nations for the upkeep of the High Commissioner's post from July 1st to December 31st, 1923.

5. *Participation of Danzig in International Conferences and Conventions.*

The Free City was represented at the second General Conference on Transit and Communications, held in Geneva in November and December 1923, and three of the four draft Conventions adopted by the Conference were signed in Danzig's name by the Polish representative at the Conference.

On March 31st, 1924, the Convention of September 12th, 1923, on Obscene Publications, was signed on behalf of the Free City by the Polish representative accredited to the League of Nations. Danzig's adhesion on May 29th, 1923, to the International Sanitary Convention of January 17th, 1912, has been registered with the Secretariat of the League.

The annual report from Danzig for 1922 concerning the traffic in women and children, and certain correspondence concerning the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs, have been received in the Secretariat through the Polish Government.

6. *Publications concerning Danzig.*

The Secretariat has received a copy of a booklet entitled "Der Hafen von Danzig" ("The Danzig Harbour"), published by the Danzig Harbour Board. It contains detailed information on the port and its activities, including statistical material, diagrams and maps.

7 *Miscellaneous Questions.*

Correspondence has also been received in the Secretariat on the following subjects

(a) The temporary storage in Danzig, under exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the High Commissioner, of a shipment of safety cartridges.

(b) Conditions of intellectual life in Danzig.

(c) The instruction of Danzig school-children with regard to the League of Nations.

Annex.

AGREEMENT CONCERNING THE POLISH DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL IN DANZIG.

[*Translation from the German*]

In pursuance of the Agreement entered into at Geneva on May 17th, 1922³ the following Agreement, supplementary to the High Commissioner's decision of May 23rd, 1923⁴ has been concluded.

The number of persons, not Danzig nationals, appointed by the Polish diplomatic representative as members of his staff and possessing the status of diplomatic agents, shall be fixed at sixty. One-third of this number shall be senior officials, one-third intermediate officials and the remainder subordinate personnel. In classifying these officials, regard may also be had to the remuneration they receive. These sixty officials shall enjoy within the territory of the Free City of Danzig, the privileges granted in accordance with international usage to persons possessing the status of diplomatic agents.

Persons entitled to exemption from taxation under the Paris provisional Agreement of February 1st, 1923, shall not be called upon to pay the taxes from which they had hitherto been exempted in respect of the period up to December 1923.

The present Agreement shall henceforward be regarded as supplementary to the High Commissioner's decision of May 23rd, 1923.

The Polish Government withdraws its appeal against the decision in question.

Danzig, December 6th, 1923.

(Signed) K. MORAWSKI,
Dr. ZIEHM.

¹ F.121., F.142.

² *Official Journal*, October 1923, page 1229.

³ *Official Journal*, June 1922, pages 678 and 679.

⁴ *Official Journal*, October 1923, page 1228.