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Telegramm Alanson B. Houghton an das Department of State (06.03.1923)

Brief

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Regest:

Dieses Telegramm an das US-Amerikanische Außenministerium fasst die Klagen von Firmen zusammen, die in Deutschland ihr Geschäft betrieben, aber zumindest teilweise das Eigentum von US-amerikanischen Firmen bzw. Staatsbürgern waren. Es gibt einen anschaulichen Einblick in die Schwierigkeiten, die sich durch die Besetzung des Ruhrgebietes durch französische und belgische Truppen seit dem 11. Januar 1923 ergaben. Die Etablierung einer Zollgrenze zwischen besetztem und unbesetztem Gebiet warf - wie schon beim besetzten Rheinland - Konflikte der nationalen Souveränität auf und warf die Frage auf, wer wann welche Zölle folgend welchem Recht erheben durfte. Die Franzosen erhoben beispielsweise Ausfuhrzölle, die wiederum nach deutschem Recht nicht errichtet werden durften.

Department's 10, February 17, 5 p.m. Following case presented through American Chamber of Commerce in Berlin by Steinway and Sons, Hamburg, member of Chamber. Firm states that they entered into contract with Wolff Werke, Neuss, Rhineland for the supply of wagon load of ten thousand kilograms hide glue of a particular quality for their special requirements. Contract was concluded on February 6. Invoice for goods dated February 16th. Duly paid for. Goods are thus claimed to be property of firm but it is informed by sellers release of goods for transportation into unoccupied Germany cannot be obtained except by paying ten percent ad valorem to the French authorities which payment strictly prohibited by German Government and which German manufacturer refuses. Firm request intervention of Consul or Ambassador with French authorities.

Scheibler and Company of Crefeld have complained through commercial attache that an order of silk velvet amounting to twenty thousand dollars to Wollschlager and Company, New York, fully paid for and property of American purchases held up by French unless separate license obtained and payment of ten percent tax although stated^[2] that license duly obtained from Badems¹ Bureau before date of French order for controlling customs. Fee for license formerly paid to German authorities amounted to one percent advalorem as against ten percent required by the French. The firm also stated that French are now demanding twenty-five percent of the foreign exchange realized from export orders, reimbursements presumably, to be made at some time and in some way in mark.

Through Consulate General Buschmann, Weissberg and Company, Potsdamer Strasse 123 Berlin all partners in which are American citizens complain that orders placed for Buschmann Brothers, 15 Park Row, New York, for pickled band iron from Hille and Mueller, Dusseldorf, cannot be forwarded on account of demand by French for export license and payment of ten percent export tax, payment of which prohibited by German law. Goods ready at factory are property of complaining firm. Same firm also states that contract between same New York firm and another firm at Dusseldorf for thirty tons of straw boards, balance of a January shipment contract similarly held up. Another contract with same New York firm and a firm at Solingen held up in the same manner. Complaining firm requests assistance in having merchandise shipped.

1 Nicht zu klären.

Through Consulate at Frankfurt-on-Main, Chemische Werke, Brockhues, Nieder-Walluf, complains that they are unable to comply with order from C.J. Osborn Company, 132 Nassau Street, New York, for about 150 barrels vine black and diamond black pigment because of necessity of obtaining export licenses from French authorities and payment of fee of ten percent.

[3]

Through Consul at Hamburg Gruner and Reinhardt, Hamburg, complain that several orders on behalf of New York Blueprint Paper Company and Consolidated Supply Company of New York for special linen paper called cross section paper used by government offices, surveyors, railroads, etcetera, cannot be filled because of French control system although contracts for manufacture are in such form that Articles are American property. Firm states that as they cannot by German law comply with French conditions they are unable to protect the interest of their American friends and are compelled to close down their factories. One of their customers is Eugen Dietzgen, 218 East 23rd Street, New York.

Through Consulate General Deutsche Maizenagesellschaft Barby in unoccupied Germany but controlled by Corn Products Refining Company, 17 Battery Place, New York, complains that numerous machinery parts purchased from concerns at Ruhr district have been held up by the French through the embargo on certain classes of goods from the Rhine and through penalties imposed by German law for asking for export permits from the French.

Pfaunder Werkeag, Schwetzingen in Baden states that it is an American owned corporation engaged in the manufacture of glass enameled steel tanks. Incorporated under German laws in 1907, capital stock of which owned by Pfaunder and Company and its officers of Rochester, New York, complains that materials used in the manufacture are coal, coke and steel from the Ruhr district which articles are now not permitted by the French to come into unoccupied Germany entailing great loss to the company.

HOUGHTON