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Report of Conversations between Experts in Reference to the German Government's Observations on the Report of the Third Committee, held on Sunday, 10th August, 1924

Sitzungsprotokoll

Bearbeitet von: Roman Köster

Fundort: National Archives College Park, RG 43, Box 1, Entry 836

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Regest:

Anhand dieser Quelle aus dem Zusammenhang der Dawes-Verhandlungen in London wird deutlich, wie eng die Fragen der Reparationszahlungen und der Währungsstabilisierung mit Fragen der Gestaltung der Handelsbeziehungen zwischen den großen Wirtschaftsmächten verknüpft waren. Das entscheidende Argument in den Verhandlungen lautete von deutscher Seite, dass sich die anderen Länder seit 1914 eigene Produktionskapazitäten in der Farbenherstellung aufgebaut hätten. Von der vormaligen deutschen Beherrschung des internationalen Farbenmarktes könne also nicht mehr gesprochen werden. Deswegen sei eine allgemeine Regelung der Handelspreise abzulehnen und eine Liberalisierung des Marktes (die weniger politische Diskriminierung ermöglichte) vorzuziehen. Eine stärkere Liberalisierung sollte jedoch erst mit den verschiedenen Handelsverträgen der zweiten Hälfte der 1920er Jahre erreicht werden.

REPORT OF CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN EXPERTS IN REFERENCE TO THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT'S OBSERVATIONS ON THE REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE, HELD ON SUNDAY, 10th AUGUST, 1924.

At 10.30 a.m. Monsieur Aron and Mr. Leith Ross agreed upon the terms of a new text for paragraph (d) of Resolution No. I embodying the principles discussed the previous day.

At 12.30 p.m. the German representatives, accompanied by experts in regard to dye-stuffs, met the British and French experts and the text as agreed upon between Monsieur Aron and Mr. Leith Ross was handed to them.

Herr Weinberg made the following statement in regard to deliveries and dye-stuffs. Under the Peace Treaty dyes have to be delivered at the cheapest price at which they are sold in any market¹; but from 1925 these obligations under the Treaty will cease. The difficulty which the German Delegation foresees is that there are thousands of different products, each product has a different price and in the case of each country there may be dozens of different prices for one product; it was often part of the arrangement that if one product was taken another should be taken at the same time. Under these complicated arrangements the cheapest price in any market was frequently very much less than the cost price and involved a loss to the suppliers accordingly the German Delegation feared that great complications would arise. The paragraphs spoke of making contracts, but dyestuffs were not purchased by long-term contracts but bought from hand to mouth as that they would be in constant[2] difficulty. The market is a very small one, as Great Britain, France and Italy have now a

1 Bezug ist hier der Artikel 267 des Versailler Vertrags, der die deutsche Pflicht zur Meistbegünstigung postulierte: "Alle Vergünstigungen, Befreiungen oder Vorzugsrechte in bezug auf die Einfuhr, Ausfuhr oder Durchfuhr von Waren, die von Deutschland irgendeinem der alliierten oder assoziierten Staaten oder irgendeinem anderen fremden Lande eingeräumt werden, treten gleichzeitig und bedingungslos ohne besonderen Antrag und ohne Gegenleistung für sämtliche alliierten oder assoziierten Staaten in Geltung."

domestic dye industry of their own and only Belgium has to buy all her dyes from abroad; Belgium would have no difficulty in continuing to buy in the free market. What the German Delegation feared was that there would be a squabble over every single price; the allied countries were now accustomed to obtaining dyes at the cheapest price at which they were sold to anyone; even in fixing this great difficulties had arisen and it had been necessary to explain the matter and submit all their accounts to Mr. Norris² and to employ a staff of a hundred persons before the allied governments were satisfied that the lowest price was actually being asked. The new prices would be very much higher and Herr Weinberg feared that the allied governments would object to the new prices in every single case. Accordingly the German Delegation considered that dyestuffs should be erased from the list. The Agent General for Reparation Payments would have to make his plans for employing the German currency at his disposal in the purchase of German commodities and for this purpose he must be able to place long-term contracts, but in the case of dyestuffs it would not be possible to place contracts for long periods at a time. The German industry would be only too glad to sell dyestuffs on a commercial basis and was on the best of terms with its purchasers. He felt sure that it would be possible to sell dyes in the free[3] market; he had no objection in principle to getting into direct contact again with the purchasers but wanted to be free to deal with each of them on the open market.

Herr Weinberg stated that the above reasons (namely the difficulty of fixing prices and the smallest of the market) were the only reasons which led the German Delegation to refuse the inclusion of dyestuffs in the list.

It had already been explained to the German representatives that it would be impossible to enter into a discussion of technical details as the allied experts on dyestuffs could not be present.

2 Gemeint ist hier wahrscheinlich George W. Norris, Governor der Federal Reserve Bank in Philadelphia.