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<https://doi.org/10.18297/etd/1942>

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UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

THE SAAR PROBLEM

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty

Of the Graduate School of the University of Louisville

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Of Master of Arts

Department of History

by

Georgia Wheeler

Year

1935

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The helpful assistance and valuable suggestions of Dr. W. C. Mallalieu, who directed this investigation, merit an expression of deepest gratitude. To have studied under the guidance of so thorough a scholar, who possesses and maintains the high ideals of accuracy and intellectual achievement, has been a rare privilege.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The Saar Territory is an interesting political oddity created from a Peace Conference Compromise. The Saar problem, as it exists since the war and prior to the plebiscite cannot be divorced from the events previous to it. The problem has its origin in the economic, cultural and political development of the area. The Saar is also a curious, if not unique, industrial center.

The Saar's significance in international politics is derived from its possession of valuable mineral resources and its location. This region is possessed of a highly developed and world renowned industry. Because of its economic position and development, it was highly coveted by two states, France and Germany.

Today, we find in the Saar Territory a population that is German in all respects. No one can doubt the Germanic nature of these people. Language, race, culture, tradition, all combine to make them, in the vicissitudes of history, fundamentally faithful to the German ideal. This fact gives to its consideration a particular acuteness.

A close examination of the Saar problem should be made by all those interested in world affairs. The destiny of the Saar is a question of vital importance. International relationships and possibly even the peace of Europe are closely bound with its solution. International events may again deal with this territory in a manner similar to 1919.

The government of the Saar Basin by a Commission of the

League of Nations is a very interesting experiment in international administration. It also affords a most interesting example of how the principles of self-determination were applied at the Peace Conference. The Saar Basin is the one and only instance in which the League of Nations has been entrusted with a mandate to govern, and it is explicitly provided that it is to govern as trustee. The League has accordingly accepted the obligation to govern a people and the territory in which they live, in accordance with the highest principles of truth, justice, and impartiality. The manner in which the League is performing this task is of the greatest interest to the whole world.

It is with the problem as brought to a crux in the treaty, the agreement, and under the plebiscite that this study will particularly deal. The fact that we are still so close to the events makes a fair judgment of the case a most difficult one. This difficulty is not diminished by the nature of the material available, which is of a propagandist nature on either side.

No other part of Europe suggests more vividly the intricate complexities of past and present political and national conflicts than does the area along the Franco-German frontier. This secular struggle has gone on in time of peace as well as in time of war. Its latest phase was the contest for the control of the Saar Territory which found its solution in the plebiscite of January 13, 1935. To understand the Saar problem it is necessary to take a physical and social survey of the terri-

tory which shall take account of its location, its economic character, the temper and affinities of its population and their economic as well as their political and cultural relations with the rest of the world.

CHAPTER I
THE PEACE CONFERENCE

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The Saar, as it existed prior to the plebiscite was a wholly artificial creation. The region which under French pressure was relinquished by Germany and designated as the Saar district, was neither a geographic nor an economic unity. On the contrary, the newly created Saar district was artificially separated by political boundaries from its neighboring and economically connected regions.¹ For the most part the Saar region was arbitrarily cut out from Prussian territory, to a lesser extent from the Bavarian Palatinate and its boundaries were so drawn as to give it, as far as possible, an economic unity.² Thus not only the Saar valley in large part but also a region extending north beyond St. Wendel and east to the town of Homburg was included.³ The tracing of the Saar frontiers was largely determined by the location of the coal mines, to which were attached the country inhabited by the miners and by the workers employed in the iron, steel and other industries.⁴ On the west and south the Saar is bounded by Lorraine, to the north it faces Rhenish Prussia, from

¹Bruning, R., "Die Natürlicher Landschafter Des Saargebietes," Social Science Abstract, Vol. II, (1929), p. 3564.

²Von Kuhlmann, "Future of the Saar," Foreign Affairs, (April 1934), p. 426.

³Russell, Frank M., The International Government of the Saar, (1926), p. 116.

⁴Kloevekorn, Fritz, "Fifteen Hundred Years of Saar History," Chicago Tribune, "Saar Supplement," No. 2, (June 13, 1934), p. 10.

which it was for the most part carved, and to the east lay the Bavarian Palatinate, a small portion of which was included in it.⁵ Its roughly elliptical area included 738 square miles. The Saar River, rising in Lorraine, flowing northwesterly close to the French frontier, and emptying into the Moselle to the north, gives the region its name and chief geographic character.⁶

One of the main natural pathways between France and Germany, it has been tramped across by invading armies of both France and Germany.⁷ Today two of the chief continental railway lines pass through it. Its largest city, Saarbrücken, is an important center in the network of Europe's automobile roads and air routes. It is regarded, therefore, as an area of immense strategic value, for offense or defense, to both Germany and France.⁸ The central forest and industrial territory consists of the coal mountain territory, the variegated sandstone belt, and the industrial zone in the Saar valley. These regions are surrounded by the open agricultural territories. All the different regions of the Saar are bound to Germany by the national and cultural unity of the German spirit.⁹

The Saar question had no significant existence prior to the Paris Peace Conference. It was the Treaty of Versailles that created a Saar question and gave to it its peculiar and unusual character. France, according to French authority, was economically

⁵Von Kuhlmann, loc. cit., p. 426.

⁶Bardoux, Jacques, "The Territory of the Saar," Chicago Tribune, "Saar Supplement," No. 1, (May 13, 1934), p. 7.

⁷Kloevekorn, Fritz, loc. cit., p. 11.

⁸Ibid., p. 10.

⁹Bruning, R., op. cit., p. 3564.

justified in claiming the entire Saar coal basin because of the destruction suffered by the coal mines in the north of France, and further she had a moral and historic claim of right to a large part of the territory because it is inhabited by a people who are French in race, traditions, and aspirations.¹⁰

This argument was reinforced by historical considerations. The Saar Basin of 738 square miles, containing one of the richest deposits of coal in all Europe, was long contended for by France and Germany.¹¹ Twice it was under French control, once under Louis XIV (1662 to 1697) and another section during the French Revolution in 1792, and later under Napoleon (1798 to 1815).¹² The fortifications of Saarlouis, now the sixth largest city in the territory, were built by Vauban, the French King's great military engineer.¹³ In 1697 the whole of the Saar Territory, with the exception of Saarlouis, was lost by France.¹⁴ The latter city remained under French rule until 1815.¹⁵ It was not until the French Revolution (1792), however, that the entire region of the Saar was added to France.¹⁶ For Napoleon's wide conquests the Saar furnished many soldiers and officers among them the famous Marshal Ney. In 1814 by the Treaty of Paris, France lost all but the cities of Saarbrücken and Saarlouis,

¹⁰Tardieu, Andre, The Truth About the Treaty, (1921), p.250.

¹¹Ibid., p. 252.

¹²Lanrezac, A.H., "The Saar In French History," Chicago Tribune, "Saar Supplement," No. 1, (May 13, 1934), p. 10.

¹³Haskins, Chas. H. & Lord, Robert H., Some Problems of the Peace Conference, (1920), p. 135.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 135.

¹⁵House, E. M. & Seymour, Chas., What Really Happened at Paris, (1921), p. 53.

¹⁶Haskins & Lord, op. cit., p. 134.

and certain territory on the right bank of the Saar River. She was forced to give up this in 1815 when the Saar Basin was incorporated in the States of Prussia and Bavaria.¹⁷ The French had hopes of recovering the country after the restoration and extending their boundary that much closer to the Rhine until the development of mines in the 1840's brought in such a wave of German workers as to make the country overwhelmingly German in character. So the question did not come up again until the close of the World War. It was maintained by the French delegation at Versailles that in spite of the relative brevity of the period during which the Territory had been under French rule, the region very largely preserved its French character and had distinct pro-French sympathies.¹⁸

A claim to the Saar formed no part of the publicly defined war aims of the French government, although it was the subject of a secret agreement between the French government and Czarist Russia (1917) by which the former was to be given the Saar coal basin.¹⁹ Studies made by French experts in preparation for the Peace Conference recommended that in taking back Alsace-Lorraine the coal supply necessary for the industries of these provinces should be assured by also annexing the Saar.²⁰ M. Andre Tardieu drew up a memorandum which demanded as a minimum the whole Saar Basin.²¹

¹⁷ Temperley, H.W.V., A History of the Peace Conference of Paris, Vol. I, Appendix II, (1920), p. 429.

¹⁸ Tardieu, op. cit., p. 250.

¹⁹ Baker, R.S., Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement, Vol. II, (1922), p. 58.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 18, Doc. 2 & 3.

²¹ House, op. cit., p. 72.

When it became clear that the whole of Alsace-Lorraine as annexed by Germany in 1871 would return to France, industrialists familiar with the conditions of iron and steel making in Alsace-Lorraine must have clearly perceived that the vast steel industry which German enterprise had built up there would be in a precarious position without the Saar Coal deposits, on which it had depended almost exclusively.²²

The iron and steel industry of the Saar district has been developed as a result of the close proximity of the Lorraine iron ore and the Saar coal. There is an abundance of coal in the Saar district but practically no iron ore. The coal, though extensively used, is not of the best coking variety. Most of the ore is brought from Lorraine Annexée, the railroad haul being about 50 kilometers. It has been estimated that the coal reserves of the Saar total 16,500,000,000 tons.²³

Before the war, France imported annually 23,000,000 tons of coal. With the added needs of Alsace and Lorraine, she would therefore without the Saar coal be obliged to import even after the re-establishment of her mines in the north, thirty million tons, and, until this re-establishment, fifty million out of a total consumption of seventy-five million. In other words, France would be economically tributary to Germany, who, through coal, would control the prices of all French steel and iron in the

²²

Von Kuhlmann, Richard, loc. cit., p. 426.

²³

Brooks, Alfred H., "Saare District," U. S. Geological Survey, Bull. 703, (1920), p. 73.

east and thus dominate French policies.²⁴

German manufacturers themselves had written in their memorandum to the Chancellor on May 20, 1915: "Coal is one of the most decisive of political factors. The neutral countries are dependent upon the belligerent who can supply them with coal." "Consequently if France were left without coal Germany's domination over her would be assured," stated Tardieu.²⁵

Strategically it was recognized that the district possessed a real defensive importance. The frontier at the north of Lorraine runs dangerously close to the Thionville and Briey iron-fields, and makes it possible for sudden coup to paralyze the French industrial system, as happened at the beginning of the World War.²⁶ Tiny Saar's strategical position on the map makes it politically important. Lying across a natural pathway between France and Germany, trade flows across the Saar in times of peace just as armies march over it in war time. The Roman armies, those of Louis XIV, of Napoleon, and of the World War, all passed this way.²⁷

The French tactics revealed considerable confusion when they began to explain to the allies why they believed they had a right to annex the Saar. But both the mining area and the frontiers to be drawn up at the discretion of the French government, so as to provide for the strategical needs

²⁴Tardieu, op. cit., p. 258

²⁵Ibid., p. 259

²⁶Temperley, H.W.V., op. cit., Vol. II, p. 177.

²⁷Simpson, Frederick, "What Is The Saar," The National Geographic Magazine, (Feb. 1935), vol. 67, p. 244.

and for the inclusion in French territory of the entire iron district of Lorraine and of the entire coal district of the Saar valley, had been included in the secret agreement with Russia in 1917.²⁸ The French desires, as formulated in a note of M. Briand, had been made known to the British Government in the course of the same year. Briand stated that "it seems advisable to form an autonomous state on the left bank of the Rhine." Alsace and Lorraine must, he said, be returned to France not diminished as under the Treaty of 1815 but with boundaries such as were constituted in 1792, which would include the entire Saar valley.²⁹ France would then, geographically, and industrially, possess the Saar Basin, which seems essential for French industry.³⁰

The first plan then was evidently to claim the Saar as being a sort of annex of Alsace-Lorraine if the boundaries were established on the lines of 1792. On January 9, 1918, President Wilson formulated a program in his Fourteen Points Address which was later accepted by the Allied Powers, with reservations, including France, as embodying their aims in the struggle with the central powers.³¹ The only reference to the eastern frontier of France was contained in the eighth point which called for the righting of "the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine."³² The French attitude at the Peace

²⁸Temperley, H.W.V., op. cit., Vol I, Appendix II, p. 430.

²⁹House, E. M., op. cit., p. 58.

³⁰Ibid., p. 58.

³¹Temperley, H.W.V., op. cit., Vol II, p. 246; Baker, op. cit., Vol I, p. 176.

³²Baker, R. S., op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 42-5.

Conference, however, was foreshadowed on December 29, 1918, in the Chamber of Deputies in the remarks of Franklin Bouillon, President of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Chamber. He said in substance "that Alsace-Lorraine in 1870 and the Saar constituted one question; that the taking of the Saar in 1815 by Prussia was a theft just as the taking of Alsace-Lorraine in 1870 was a theft; that the date was not important."³³

It was to be expected that Clemenceau and Tardieu, supported by their historical and economic experts would conduct a diplomatic campaign for the Saar when the Peace Conference met.

When the Peace Conference met, Tardieu prepared a memorandum based upon the studies of the question made by his colleagues of the Comite d'Etudes. This Memorandum was explained and interpreted to the Allies in numerous conferences during January and February. It offered a three-fold solution: restoration to French sovereignty of the territories south of the frontier of 1814; a special political administration for the territories of the mineral and industrial basin north of this frontier, full ownership of the mines in these two zones. This Memorandum was distributed in March to the heads of the delegations at the Conference.³⁴ This was followed shortly by a verbal presentation of the French case to the Council of Four.

March 17, three days after the return of President Wilson from the United States, Clemenceau sent to President Wilson, Lloyd George and Colonel House his statement of the French position on the

³³ Russel, Frank M., The International Government of the Saar, (1926), p. 124.

³⁴ Tardieu, Andre, op. cit., p. 262.

problem of the Rhine and French security. The note maintained the necessity of separating the left bank of the Rhine, in a political and economic sense, from the Reich, and establishing the military occupation of the Rhine by an interallied force. The French, however, would yield their demand for permanent occupation and agree to a date being set for evacuation (presumably after thirty years), provided (1) that the left bank be completely demilitarized as well as a zone fifty kilometres east of the river; provided also, (2) that the Allies through a permanent commission of inspection retain the right to supervise the execution of conditions by Germany, and (3) that France be given the right to occupy the Rhine in case of non-fulfillment; provided also, (4) that France be granted her claims in the Saar and provided finally, (5) that Great Britain and the United States agree to consider as an act of aggression any entry of the German army into the demilitarized zone and in such case to bring military aid.³⁵

Lloyd George and President Wilson were firm in their opposition to a thirty-year occupation of the Rhineland and the President refused to approve French annexation of the Saar.³⁶

On the morning of March 28, Tardieu and M. Loucheur presented the case verbally to the Council of Four. After the opening negotiations it became clear to the French that determined opposition would be encountered from President Wilson. Lloyd George seemed somewhat more compliant, although he insisted on

³⁵Seymour, Charles, op. cit., pp. 393-4.

³⁶Ibid., p. 395.

some kind of autonomy, accompanied by economic justice for France.³⁷

On March 28, 1919, after Wilson agreed to the Treaty of Guarantee with changes, the French delegates brought the question of annexation of the Saar in the Council of Four. Lloyd George resolutely opposed it. President Wilson was equally hostile urging that France had never advanced such a claim before.³⁸ He also reminded Clemenceau that France had already been given the rich mineral districts of German Lorraine and that the repair of the wrecked Nord and Pas de Calais mines was only a question of time and money, the latter to come out of German pockets. He was therefore willing that France should have the output of the Saar mines for a specified time, but of frontier changes and annexation he would not hear.³⁹

President Wilson asserted "that no one had ever heard of the Saar until after the Armistice," and Clemenceau rejoined with an intimation "that the President laid himself open to the charge of pro-Germanism and a hint that no French Prime Minister could sign a treaty which did not satisfy France's claim to the Saar."

"Then if France does not get what she wishes," said the President, "she will refuse to act with us. In that event do you wish me to return home?"

"I do not wish you to go home," said Clemenceau, "but I intend to do so myself," and left the house.⁴⁰

³⁷House, E. M., op. cit., p. 59.

³⁸Tardieu, Andre, op. cit., p. 263.

³⁹Harbutt, W., The Saar Territory, (1933), p. 10.

⁴⁰Seymour, Chas., op. cit., p. 396.

President Wilson was considering the fate of Fiume in connection with the future of the Saar.⁴¹ The issue was complicated. The Intelligence Section of the American Commission preparing material for the negotiations, favored the transfer of the major portion of the Saar to France.⁴² They admitted that the additional cession would transfer to France a German-speaking population of about 355,000 people, who had shown no desire for union with France, but held that the present desires of these people should not prevent a just disposition of this important coal deposit in favor of a country whose limited coal supplies had been reduced by unlicensed German exploitation and destruction in the war.⁴³

The American expert, Haskins, who took the chief part in these recommendations, held the view that "the control of key deposits of minerals by a small population which happens to live over them is not a necessary part of the principles of self-determination, particularly when this population forms part of a state which has been destroying the mines of others. The separation of mines from people may sometimes be governed by international considerations."⁴⁴

President Wilson was adamant in his opposition to the transfer of several hundred thousand Germans to France. He stated, "I am willing to give France any indemnity in kind to which she is

⁴¹Baker, R. S., op. cit., Vol 11, p. 59.

⁴²Ibid., p. 73.

⁴³House, E. M., op. cit., p. 56.

⁴⁴Haskins, op. cit., p. 141.

entitled--I have no right to hand over to her people who do not want to go to her, or to give them a special government, even if it is better for them if they do not want it." Seeing how his whole program of peace terms was at stake, he concluded, "You see, I have to be firm on these points in all places, or I cannot hold out against the exorbitant demands of the Italians."⁴⁵

March 28, House asked the President, "to bring his position on the French (Saar) boundary proposals into harmony with the British. The British and ourselves are practically in agreement, therefore it would be a tactical mistake to have the United States take a stand in which she was not supported by Great Britain. I advised yielding a little in order to secure harmony so that the accusation could not be made that we were unreasonable. He promised to do this."⁴⁶

President Wilson accepted the validity of French claims to coal from the Saar, and was early convinced that the ownership of the mines was the surest method of securing just compensation, but he did not admit the justice of political annexation. It was then pointed out on behalf of France there would be extreme difficulties if the mines, upon which at least one-third of the population depended, were in the hands of one authority while the government of the country was controlled by another.⁴⁷ Logically some kind of French sovereignty or

⁴⁵Baker, R. S. op. cit., Vol 11, p. 73.

⁴⁶Seymour, Chas., op. cit., Vol IV, p. 397.

⁴⁷House, E. M., op. cit., p. 58.

at least temporary authority should follow.

President Wilson proposed a commission of arbitration to settle disputes arising in the Saar within the German Reich. France refused, and proposed a scheme of economic and administrative union with France, allowing the people, district by district, the option to vote for French nationality at any time, and at the end of fifteen years, if any section of the people remained undecided, they would have a final opportunity of voting themselves in or out.⁴⁸ Differences continued and became more acute between the Americans and the French. "The problem of the Saar Basin," said a French delegate, "was one of those which the American delegates to the Peace Conference and the United States as a whole least understood."⁴⁹ M. Clemenceau said if they were not careful the Saar would become a European Morocco -- "a hotbed and forcing ground for continual Franco-German conflicts."⁵⁰

Lloyd George was willing to admit the principles of the transfer of the Saar mines to France as a compensation for the destruction of her own mines. But he strenuously opposed the annexation of territory which he believed to be thoroughly German. "Let us not renew the mistake committed by Germany in 1871 in the name of fictitious historical right. Do not let us create a new Alsace-Lorraine," he said.⁵¹

⁴⁸Tardieu, Andre, op. cit., p. 271.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 250.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 274.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 263.

In the discussions of the Saar question both the afore-mentioned statesmen made it clear that from a national viewpoint there was no Saar question.⁵² It was to meet this view that Clemenceau gave utterance to the myth that there were 150,000 Frenchmen residing in the Saar Territory.⁵³ After five years of French ownership of the mines and the introduction of numerous French officials and workmen, the French resident population was found to be only 12,000.⁵⁴

The French scheme for annexation was finally turned down at the meeting of the Big Three on March 28th, when the clash came between M. Clemenceau and President Wilson.⁵⁵ After the meeting Lloyd George invited the British Foreign Office to produce alternative schemes. Three proposals were made. One feature of all three was the ownership and control of the mines by France. Under two of the schemes, which varied slightly, France was to receive a mandate to administer the Territory under the League of Nations. The third scheme was to create an independent Saar Republic, with a customs union with France.⁵⁶ Tardieu was busy at the same time with another proposal. In the meantime Wickham Steed was at work on a formula for President Wilson, which was not submitted, however, until April 1st.⁵⁷

President Wilson began by rejecting the French claim in

⁵²Seymour, Chas. op. cit., Vol IV, p. 396.

⁵³Tardieu, Andre, op. cit., p. 265.

⁵⁴Schuman, Fred. L., International Politics (1933) p. 748.

⁵⁵Tardieu, op. cit., p. 265.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 271.

⁵⁷Donald, Sir Robert, A Dangerous Spot In Europe, (1925), p. 16.

toto. He was not won by any of these plans nor did he succumb to M. Clemenceau's touching appeals. He held his ground to the breaking point.

President Wilson insisted on the fact that the frontier demanded by the French in their earlier official pronouncements was reparation for the wrong which she suffered in 1871 and not in 1815. He saw in the new demand of Clemenceau, a violation of the principles expressed in his Fourteen Points, which were the accepted basis of the peace negotiations.⁵⁸ It seemed for a time that there could be no possible way to reconcile the conflicting views of the French and President Wilson. In the Course of discussion Clemenceau made, on March 28, his celebrated statement about the 150,000 Frenchmen living in the Saar who, in 1918, had sent addresses to President Poincaré. He demanded that their rights should be protected as well as those of the Germans.⁵⁹ For a time President Wilson refused to yield. The Peace Conference had then to pass through one of its gloomiest moments. M. Clemenceau stated that "President Wilson implores us not to make the peace of the world depend upon the Saar." M. Clemenceau replied, that "peace of the world demands, first of all, that justice be established among the allies."

March 29, the French Prime Minister sent Tardieu to Colonel House, who asked Haskins to work out with Tardieu a solution of the Saar problem that would assure the French unhampered control

⁵⁸Baker, R. S., op. cit., Vol II, p. 72.

⁵⁹Tardieu, Andre, op. cit., p. 265.

of the coal mines as fair reparation for the damage done to the French mines, but would not transfer a large German population to French sovereignty. The President was slow to agree to the suggestion upon which Haskins, Tardieu, and Headlam Morley, representing the British, finally settled: that a special administrative and political regime must be applied to the district, so as not to interfere with French operation of the mines.⁶⁰

April 2, the President asked House if the solution proposed by the experts and which Clemenceau might be willing to take as to the Saar Valley was inconsistent with the Fourteen Points. House replied, "that there were many who thought otherwise."⁶¹

On April 5, Ray Stannard Baker, Chief of the Press Service, was particularly active in spreading pessimistic reports. He accused Clemenceau of "claiming annexation." President Wilson became discouraged. The hour was critical.⁶²

On April 7, it was rumored that President Wilson had ordered the "George Washington" to Brest. The action fell like a thunder bolt. It was so unexpected, so challenging, so final, that half the newspapers would not at first believe it. Our press bureau was directed to make the bare announcement without explanation. But no explanation was necessary; it was clear to everyone that the President had reached the extreme limit of his patience. The effect was astonishing after the first outburst.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 396.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 397.

⁶²Ibid., p. 272.

of agitated comment it produced a sudden hush in the world. For a time the criticism in Europe almost completely ceased.

On April 8 appeared one of those extraordinary little items in "Le Temps" which everyone recognized as a kind of final decision upon a great policy. It was headed: "France's Claims," and was as follows:

"Contrary to the assertions spread by the German press and taken up by other foreign newspapers, we believe that the French Government has no annexationist pretensions, openly or under cover, in regard to any territory inhabited by a German population. This remark applies particularly to the regions comprized between the frontier of 1871 and the frontier of 1814."⁶³

This latter region was the Saar Valley, and this statement symbolized a turning point in the Conference. There was an immediate toning down of the demands, and a new effort on every hand to get together. Above all, there was a marked change in the attitude of the Press toward President Wilson. His bold gesture had cleared the air, and from that moment forward the progress was much more rapid and decisive.⁶⁴

On the morning of April 8, Lloyd George suggested to the "Council of Four" that the Saar Valley should not be annexed to France, but should be formed into a neutral state, 'a kind of Luxemburg.... He would make this district bigger than the Saar Valley, enlarging it so as to bring in the industrial section upon which the Saar Valley depended.... He would make it an independent state in the customs union of France with its

⁶³Baker, R. S., What Wilson Did At Paris, (1920), p. 66.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 67.

own Parliament.⁶⁵

House was not greatly taken with this plan, although he agreed that if the suggested state were placed under the protection of the League and not economically united to France it should be considered. In the afternoon, President Wilson returned to the Council and refused absolutely any alienation of the Saar from Germany. He would concede the mines to France, and meet the difficulties certain to arise from German ownership of the soil and French ownership of the sub-soil, by the institution of a mixed Commission of arbitration.⁶⁶

On April 9 Clemenceau distributed another note to the heads of delegations in which they labored to show that an arbitration commission would not prevent conflicts from constantly arising between Germany and France and that it would usher in a "regime of perpetual lawsuits." They therefore insisted that German sovereignty must at least be suspended for a period of fifteen years, and a special political and administrative regime established.

Despite Lloyd George's approval of the French position, however, President Wilson found it unacceptable. In the afternoon of the same day he advanced an alternative plan for the government of the region for fifteen years by an international administrative commission.⁶⁷ On being assured that German sovereignty in the territory would be suspended during this period, that

⁶⁵ Seymour, Chas., op. cit., Vol IV, p. 405.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 405.

⁶⁷ Tardieu, Andre, op. cit., pp. 272-6.

the Commission would have full power, and that the inhabitants would no longer be represented in the German Reichstag the French accepted the plan in principle,⁶⁸ and agreed to leave the details to the committee of three, already mentioned.⁶⁹

The plan, finally accepted, was to hand over the coal-mines, which had been the property of the Prussian Government, to France as some compensation for losses in Northern France and to place the government of the Territory under the League of Nations.⁷⁰ The Council of Four accepted April 10 the draft of clauses made overnight by the committee of experts, which gave France at least a favorable prospect of obtaining what she wanted in the Saar Valley.

In accordance with their report, Wilson's proposed Commission of Arbitration was converted into a Commission of Administration under the League. The ultimate destiny of the territory, as a whole or by districts, was to be decided by the League in accordance with a plebiscite to be taken after fifteen years. The latter provision was the more willingly accepted by President Wilson because it gave the League of Nations something important and immediate to do.⁷¹

A treaty was drawn that gave full consideration to the chief French claims. The suggested basis for agreement was carried because all progress in the drafting of the Peace Treaty threatened to be stopped unless England and America gave way.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 276.

⁶⁹House & Seymour, op. cit., p. 59.

⁷⁰House, E. M., op. cit., p. 60.

⁷¹Tardieu, Andre, op. cit., p. 278.

The compromise was accepted, although it did not satisfy President Wilson. "The time has not come," said the President in confidence; "we cannot risk breaking up the Peace Conference yet." The League however was being fashioned. The Saar was to be its first charge. The future welfare of Europe was involved in the settlement.⁷² It was not foreseen at the time that the compromise left Europe with a new problem.

The drafting of the terms that determined the Saar settlement was placed in the hands of a committee which consisted of representatives of three countries only, namely, Andre Tardieu for France; Headlam Morley for England; Prof, Chas. H. Haskins for the United States. Tardieu presided with the resourcefulness and skill which he brought to all matters of the Conference, and the final draft of the treaty articles was the unanimous work of the committee. It was aided by specialists, such as geographers, mining experts, and legal advisers. On the American side the work of David Hunter Miller was all important at critical points in the negotiations, as regards not only the drafting of specific clauses, but also in all larger questions connected with the new form of government. The determination of certain questions of boundary was facilitated by a special visit to the district.⁷³

The starting point of the committee works was a statement formulated on March 29, by Headlam, Morley, and Haskins, with the assistance of Major Douglas W. Johnson and accepted by the

⁷²Baker, R. S., op. cit., Vol II, pp. 39-40.
⁷³House, E. M., op. cit., p. 59.

Council of Four.⁷⁴ By this it was agreed in principle that full ownership of the coal mines of the Saar Basin should pass to France to be credited on her claims against Germany for reparation and that the fullest economic facilities should be accorded for their exploitations, while the political and administrative arrangement necessary to secure these results should be the subject of further inquiry.⁷⁵ The draft submitted to the Council of Four, who accepted it, became Sec. 4, Part 3 of the Treaty.

There was another difficulty encountered when the Treaty was handed over to Germany to sign. One of the most powerful points of attack by the Germans was the Saar Valley settlement, both on the ground that it offended the principle of self-determination, and that its economic aspects were both unjust and unworkable. There was a provision in the draft treaty by which a final vote of the population of the Saar for Germany was to be effective only if she were able to redeem the coal mines from France with their value in gold. The German attack was effective and a new proposal, drawn by the American Expert, Haskins, was accepted on May 24.⁷⁶ It was practically the only change made in these sections of the Treaty. Germany was given the assurance that no obstacles would be interposed to prevent her repurchasing the Saar mines, should the inhabitants eventually decide for German sovereignty.⁷⁷

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 58.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 60.

⁷⁶Baker, R. S., op. cit., Vol II, p. 509.

⁷⁷Treaty of Versailles, Part III, Sec. IV, Annex 36.

In criticizing the Saar settlement from the point of view of reparation, the Germans argued, just as the American economic experts had done, against the bodily transfer of the Saar mines to France and proposed instead to make fixed deliveries of coal to France as a substitute.⁷⁸ The offer, however, was vague; and it did not, after all, meet the crucial French demand, which was more for security, both immediate and in the future, than for reparation.⁷⁹ As Haskins, the American Expert said, "A mine in hand is worth many contracts to deliver."⁸⁰ Accordingly it was agreed in principal, late in March 1919, that the full ownership of the coal mines of the Saar Basin should pass to France, to be credited on her claims against Germany for reparation.⁸¹

With full and unencumbered property in the mines the treaty gave the fullest economic facilities for their exploitation, including the acquisition of all subsidiaries and dependencies, freedom of transportation and sale, exemption from other than local taxes, and full nobility of labor.⁸² The mines were placed within the French customs union, and payment in connection with their operation might be made in French money.⁸³ At least this much reparation was assured to France and in a form absolutely essential for the revival of her wrecked industries.

The problem as far as the peace-makers were concerned, was

⁷⁸Baker, R. S., op. cit., Vol II, p. 509.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 510.

⁸⁰Haskins and Lord, op. cit., p. 143.

⁸¹Versailles Treaty, Article 45.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³Ibid., Par. 31.

solved in principle. The self-determinists did not like it, but they consoled themselves with the thought that, after all, the Saar would be better off under the contemplated rule than if it had become an occupied area, which would otherwise have been its fate, with French owning and working the coal mines. And as for the undemocratic character of the proposed government, it was, after all, only a temporary arrangement during which German sovereignty would be in suspense, the fate of the people being in their own hands after fifteen years.⁸⁴

⁸⁴Versailles Treaty, Article 49.

CHAPTER II
THE TREATY PROVISIONS

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The provisions governing the Saar Basin constitute a separate section of the Versailles Treaty, Section IV of part III, comprising Articles 45 to 50, together with an Annex which is subdivided into three chapters and forty paragraphs. For the totality of these provisions the name "Saar Statute" has been coined. Articles 45 to 50 of the Treaty contain the general principles of the Saar settlement, the objects of the latter and a description of the boundaries of the newly-created unit. The details are set forth in the annex. The three chapters of the annex deal with the cession and exploitation of the mining property, the government of the territory of the Saar Basin, and the plebiscite.

As compensation for the destruction of the coal mines in the north of France, Germany was forced to cede to France the full and absolute possession of the coal mines situated in the Saar Basin, unencumbered and free from all debts and charges.¹ As owner of the coal mines the French state was expressly recognized as having complete liberty not to work as well as to work them.² If it desired to transfer the right to work the mines to a third party the Treaty sanctioned it; if it wished to import workmen from outside the Territory for the mines

¹Treaty of Versailles, Part II, Sec. IV Art. 45.

²Ibid., Part III, Sec IV Annex Par. I.

and their accessories, it might do so;³ and it was to enjoy complete liberty to determine the distribution and price of the products of the mines and their accessories and subsidiaries.⁴ The right of ownership of the French State applied to all coal mines in the Saar, no matter whether concessions were granted for them or not, whether they were worked or not, and irrespective of their previous owners. It also extended to all the accessories of the mines, from the extracting machinery to hospitals and schools, and to all outstanding claims.⁵ The value of all this property was to be determined by the Reparation Commission and was to be credited to Germany as part of her reparation debt.⁶ A number of provisions were inserted with a view to giving the French State a maximum of liberty in working the property; while others were designed to grant France certain privileges as against the Government set up by the League. Thus, the French State was given the right of establishing primary or technical schools for its employees and their children,⁷ obviously relating to the French miners who would settle in the Saar. Schools in which French was the language of instruction were naturally lacking in the Saar. On the other hand, the French State was to contribute to the local budget of the Saar Basin and to the municipal rates and charges, with due regard to the ratio of the value of the mines to the total taxable wealth of the district.⁸

³ Ibid., Annex, Par. 12.

⁴ Ibid., Annex, Par. 15.

⁵ Ibid., Annex, Par. 2.

⁶ Ibid., Annex, Par. 5.

⁷ Ibid., Annex, Par. 14.

⁸ Ibid., Annex, Par. 13.

"In order to assure the rights and welfare of the population and to guarantee to France complete freedom in working the mines,"⁹ Germany had to transfer the government of the Saar Basin to the League of Nations acting as trustee.¹⁰ The League complied with this provision by appointing a Governing Commission of the Saar Basin, consisting of five members,¹¹ whose domicile was at Saarbrücken. Its members were nominated by the League Council for a term of one year, but could be re-appointed. Membership had to include one Frenchman and one native inhabitant of the Saar not being a citizen of France, while the remaining members had to belong to three countries other than France and Germany.¹² Thus Germany was not represented at all on the Commission. The chairman of the latter was appointed from among its members by the Council of the League for one year and was likewise subject to re-appointment. He acted as the executive of the Commission, whose decisions were taken by a majority.¹³

Within the Saar Basin the Governing Commission exercised all the powers of government previously vested in the German Empire, Prussia and Bavaria.¹⁴ It had the full right of user of all the property situated in the Saar Basin formerly belonging to the Government of Germany or that of any German federal state, except the mines.¹⁵ On the executive and administrative side it also had full power to appoint and dismiss officials, to administer and operate railways, canals, and the different public services,¹⁶

⁹ Ibid., Art. 46.

¹⁰ Ibid., Art. 49.

¹¹ Ibid., Annex, Par. 17.

¹² Ibid., Annex, Par. 19.

¹³ Ibid., Annex, Par. 18.

¹⁴ Ibid., Annex, Par. 19.

¹⁵ Ibid., Annex, Par. 22.

¹⁶ Ibid., Annex, Par. 19.

and the power and duty of providing for the protection abroad of the interests of the inhabitants.¹⁷

The legislative powers of the Commission included: the creation of administrative and representative bodies at discretion;¹⁸ the power to modify mining legislation in force in the Territory after consultation with the French State; the power to effect modifications in the laws and regulations in force on November 11, 1918, in the Territory, after consulting the elected representative of the inhabitants; the power to fix the conditions and hours of labor of men, women and children;¹⁹ and the sole power of levying taxes and dues.²⁰

The judicial functions were left to the existing civil and criminal courts. A supreme court acting as a court of appeals was added to them and this court had original jurisdiction in matters "for which these existing courts are not competent."²¹

The nationality of the inhabitants of the Saar Basin was in no way affected by the stipulations laid down in the Saar Statute.²² The inhabitants of the Saar Territory might belong to different nationalities. Par. 27, of the Annex states "that no hindrance shall be placed in the way of those who wish to acquire a different nationality."²³ There is no doubt that the idea of "inhabitant of the Saar Territory" should be extended to all those persons, without distinction of nationality, who inhabited this Ter-

¹⁷ Ibid., Annex, Par. 21.
¹⁸ Ibid., Annex, Par. 19.
¹⁹ Ibid., Annex, Par. 23.
²⁰ Ibid., Annex, Par. 26.
²¹ Ibid., Annex, Par. 25.
²² Ibid., Annex, Par. 27.
²³ Ibid.

ritory. However it was necessary to fix precise rules laying down upon what conditions and by means of what formalities a person can be admitted to the enjoyment of the status of "inhabitants of the Saar Territory."

The decree defining the term "inhabitant of the Territory of the Saar Basin," recognized persons born in the Territory and those resident in the Territory on November 11, 1918, as inhabitants "by right." Other persons might acquire the status by residing in the Territory for a period of three years. This period of residence was reduced to one year, however, in case of public officials and others who could prove that they held a "position which requires that their main residence be in the Territory of the Saar Basin."²⁴ Any person residing in the Territory but not enjoying the status of "inhabitant" was henceforth to be considered a foreigner.

The Governing Commission stated it had in mind the assurance of equal rights to all the inhabitants of the Saar; that those of German nationality had enjoyed "considerable privileges in comparison with the nationals of other states;" and that it considered it necessary, therefore, to provide that nationality should no longer be a hindrance to the inhabitants of the Saar Territory, and that the legislative provisions in force which conflicted with this principle should be withdrawn. That German nationals who did not possess the status of inhabitants of the Saar should be considered as aliens within its boundaries was only an inevitable consequence of the provisions of the Treaty

²⁴ Ibid., p. 842.

of Peace.²⁵ Under the control of the Governing Commission the inhabitants were to retain their local assemblies, their religious liberties, their schools, and their language.²⁶ Military service, whether compulsory or voluntary, was prohibited throughout the district; and only a local gendarmerie for the maintenance of law and order could be established.²⁷

The fiscal system existing on November 18, 1918, was to be maintained, and no new tax except customs duties might be imposed without previously consulting the elected representatives of the inhabitants.²⁸ Customs duties were excepted because the Saar Basin had been incorporated with the French Customs system.²⁹ Until November 11, 1918, the Saar Territory, Alsace-Lorraine, and Luxemburg were under the German customs administration. The mines and metal working establishments of the Territory exported the greater portion of their products within this same customs zone. The Armistice Convention however, in the first place, and the Treaty of Peace of Versailles, placed Alsace-Lorraine, Luxemburg and the Saar Basin outside the German customs union. There was therefore no customs barrier between the Saar Basin and Lorraine from which it obtained its iron ore; nor between itself and its former customers in Alsace-Lorraine.³⁰

Because of the inexpediency of an immediate and complete

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., Annex, Par. 28.

²⁷ Ibid., Annex, Par. 30.

²⁸ Ibid., Annex, Par. 26.

²⁹ Ibid., Annex, Par. 31.

³⁰ Ibid.

economic severance of the Saar from Germany or even the erection of unaccustomed economic barriers between the two special provisions regarding customs were to be in force during a transitory period of five years, (1920 to 1925).³¹ During that period no export tax might be imposed on coal and metallurgical products exported from the Saar to Germany, and likewise German imports for the use of the industries of the Saar were not subject to an import tax.³² Natural or manufactured products originating in the Saar were not subject to customs duties in transit over German territory and products coming from Germany were not to be subject to transit charges over the Saar.³³ No prohibition or restriction was to be imposed upon the circulation of French money in the Saar Basin.³⁴

The Governing Commission was the legal authority for the protection of persons and property in the Saar Basin,³⁵ and likewise the protection abroad of the interests of the inhabitants of the Saar.³⁶ Any of the inhabitants of the Saar who desired to leave the territory had full liberty to leave behind their immovable property or to sell it at fair prices, and to remove their movable property free of any charges.³⁷ The Governing Commission was obligated, through the local railway administration, to provide equipment and personnel necessary for the transportation of the products of the mines and their accessories and the

³¹Ibid., Annex, Par. 31.

³²Ibid., Annex, Par. 31.

³³Ibid., Annex, Par. 31.

³⁴Ibid., Annex, Par. 32.

³⁵Ibid., Annex, Par. 30.

³⁶Ibid., Annex, Par. 21.

³⁷Ibid., Annex, Par. 29.

employees and workmen of the French State,³⁸ and, likewise, no obstacles were to be placed in the way of the improvement of any of the railways or waterways if deemed necessary for the transportation of the products of the mines.³⁹ The employees and workmen of French nationality were to have the right to belong to French labor unions.⁴⁰ Finally, the Commission was to have power to decide all questions arising from the interpretation of the second chapter of the Saar Statute, including those concerning differences of opinion between Germany and France.⁴¹

At the termination of a period of fifteen years from the coming into force of the Treaty, (January 10, 1935) the population was to be called upon to indicate its desires regarding future status.⁴² For this purpose a plebiscite was to be taken by communes or by districts on the three following alternatives: maintenance of the regime established by the Saar Statute; union with France; or union with Germany.⁴³

All persons more than twenty years old at the date of the voting, resident in the territory at the date of the signature of the Treaty (June 28, 1919) were to have the right to vote. The other conditions and particulars were to be fixed by the Council of the League of Nations in such a way as to secure the freedom, secrecy and trustworthiness of the voting.⁴⁴ The League was then to make a definite decision concerning the territory, taking into account the wishes of the inhabitants as expressed

³⁸Ibid., Annex, Par. 7.
³⁹Ibid., Annex, Par. 8.
⁴⁰Ibid., Annex, Par. 11.
⁴¹Ibid., Annex, Par. 33.

⁴²Ibid., Annex, Par. 34.
⁴³Ibid., Annex, Par. 34.
⁴⁴Ibid., Annex, Par. 34.

by the voting.⁴⁵ If, in conformity with the plebiscite, the Saar was reunited with Germany, Germany would have to repurchase from France the coal mines at a price payable in gold to be determined by a committee consisting of three members,⁴⁶ and France would be entitled to purchase as much Saar coal after such reunion as she might require.⁴⁷ It was expressly provided that Germany and France might come to a different understanding concerning the mines and that they might modify the provisions relative to the repurchase of the mines and the subsequent sales of Saar coal to France.⁴⁸

⁴⁵Ibid., Annex, Par. 35.

⁴⁶Ibid., Annex, Par. 36.

⁴⁷Ibid., Annex, Par. 37.

⁴⁸Ibid., Annex, Par. 38.

CHAPTER III
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Nations have quarreled about economic matters from time immemorial, but it is only in comparatively recent years that mineral resources have become an important cause of war. The reason for this is simple. The world is just beginning the intensive use of these resources. The curves of production indicate that a greater volume of mineral resources has been used since 1900 than in all the preceding recorded history of the world.¹ Within this short time the question of the possession of these resources has changed from one of incidental concern to nations to one of vital import to their prosperity and even to their existence. It is becoming clear that the nation without control of certain essential minerals, such as coal, oil, and iron, can look forward to a position of inferiority, both in war and in peace.²

Whether it is right or wrong that economic considerations of this kind should play a dominating part in international affairs is another question; their influence is here merely recorded as a fact. It may be safely assumed that the international importance of mineral resources will grow rather than

¹Tower, W. S., "The Coal Question," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 2, (Sept. 15, 1923), p. 100.

²Simonds, Frank H. and Emery, Brooks, The Great Powers In World Politics, (1935), p. 67.

dwindle.³ Economic power in the twentieth century is as important a factor in war as in man-power, if not more important.⁴ Therefore, economic strength was one objective of French policy. German superiority in this respect would be as great a menace as her superiority in population. France must here, therefore, pursue the same policy as in her military, diplomatic and political plans, add to her own economic strength and reduce that of Germany.⁵

There are three main geographic units of the iron and steel industry. By "unit" is meant the whole network of iron mines, coal mines, transportation lines, water and rail, blast furnaces, steel plants, finishing plants, factories using iron and steel products, which goes to make up each of the principal geographic groups in the iron and steel business. The first unit is in the United States; the second in England. The third group includes Germany, France, Belgium, Luxemburg. The great iron ore supply of Continental Europe is centered in North Eastern France, including Lorraine, and overlaps into Luxemburg. The coal beds which furnish the coke for the smelting of this lie mainly in Westphalia, in western Germany, with extensions into Belgium and Northern France. The detached Saar Basin furnishes an inferior and relatively small supply of coke. The iron and steel industry based on these raw materials is localized principally in the region of the German coal fields, with

³ Emery, and Brooks, The Strategy of Raw Materials, (1934), p. 73.

⁴ Eckel, E. C. Coal, Iron and War, (1930), p. 67.

⁵ Baker, Ray. S., Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement, Vol. II, (1922), p. 16.

subordinate centers in Belgium, Northern and North-Eastern France, and in the Saar Region. The valleys of the Rhine and its tributaries connect the coal and iron ore fields. The industry is to be regarded as a single great unit, regardless of national boundaries.⁶

The considerable economic importance of the Saar is due to its extensive industrial activities. Among the coal-mining districts of Germany it holds the third and among the iron producing and iron-working centers it holds the second position. After the Ruhr, the Saar Basin, contains more extensive coal deposits than any other single district in Western Continental Europe. The Saar consists essentially of a coal basin from which before the World War, Germany obtained 9% of her total coal supply, or more than 17,400,000 metric tons.⁷ The technical importance of the Saar coal is attributable to the fact that it is very suitable for use as gas coal, boiler coal and manufacturing coal. On the other hand, it is less suited for coking coal, although recent technical innovations make it possible to utilize it for this purpose as well.⁸

The Saar territory is also an integral part of the Ruhr-Lorraine System.⁹ The dependence of the Lorraine iron industry on the Ruhr for its coke supply was specifically recognized in the Treaty of Versailles. Among the most important

⁶Leith, C. K., "World Iron and Steel Situations," Foreign Affairs, Vol. I, No. 4, (June, 1923), p. 199.

⁷Bowman, Isaiah, The New World, (1928), 4 ed., p. 172.

⁸Guy, Green, The Ruhr-Lorraine Industrial Problem, (1925), p.22; Walter Cartelliers, Germany and You, No. 4,

⁹Green, Guy, op. cit., p. 60. (1934), p. 12.

provisions of that treaty was the stipulation that of the coal deliveries to be made to France for a period of ten years,¹⁰ a certain proportion, to be specified by the Reparations Commission, was to be in the form of metallurgical coke, in the ratio of three tons of coke to four tons of coal.¹¹ This stipulation was the result of a carefully considered plan on the part of the peace conference to insure the continuity of the Ruhr-Lorraine system.¹² The Ruhr was the very heart of German industry, producing as it did eighty per cent of the country's coal, iron and steel, and being responsible for seventy per cent of its commercial railway traffic.¹³

The significance of the Lorraine iron to France and Germany before the war may be indicated briefly by a few figures. In 1913, of 28½ million tons of iron ore extracted from German soil, over 21 million tons came from annexed Lorraine. In the same year Germany imported in addition 14 million tons of iron ore from foreign countries, this figure being the annual production of the Briey fields.¹⁴ In 1913, on the other hand, France produced 22 million tons of iron ore, but owing to the deficiency of the country in coal nearly half of this was exported. Nine-tenths of the total ore of the country were raised in French Lorraine.¹⁵ New iron has both an industrial importance and a

¹⁰Verailles Treaty, Part VIII, Sec. 1, Annex, 5, Par. 2.

¹¹Ibid., Par. 7.

¹²Green, Guy, op. cit., p. 95.

¹³Langsam, Walter C., The World Since 1914, (1933), p. 165.

¹⁴Newbigen, Marion, Aftermath, A Geographical Study of the Peace Terms, (1920), p. 21.

¹⁵Ibid.

military one. The iron industry of any country is usually taken as a convenient index of its industrial development, for all industries involve its use. Again, its importance in war does not need emphasis. The possession of the iron fields of Lorraine is thus not purely an industrial question, either for France or for Germany. In the hands of a military power they are of infinitely greater importance than any strategic frontier. This adds a new complication, beds of iron ore are of little use without coal.¹⁶

France as a whole is poor in coal, a fact which hindered her full development of the iron fields of French Lorraine, and necessitated the export of a large amount of ore, much of which was smelted on the Westphalian coalfield. The destruction wrought by Germany in her northern coalfield diminished her output for five years after the war. This is the reason given in the Treaty for the cession of the Saar coalfield, as we have seen. But, most of the coals of the Saar area are not suitable for coke production, and coke is largely required in the smelting industry. Thus her possession of these fields does not solve her iron problem.¹⁷

Although the Saar has practically no iron ore it is only about thirty miles from the iron mines of Lorraine and as a result of the short haul to the coal district of the Saar, cokeries have been established and great iron and steel works

¹⁶Ibid., p. 22.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 23.

have grown up.¹⁸ These metal works and other large factories employ about 60,000 people, making a total of about 130,000 persons employed in the mines and in industries closely connected with and to a great extent dependent upon them.¹⁹ The iron-producing industry is represented by the metallurgical works at Burbach, Dillingen, Halberg, Neunkirchen and Volklingen. About 90% of the iron treated by them consists of "minette" ore from Lorraine. There are other industries of considerable importance. The glass industry ranks next to metallurgy, employing in 1913 five thousand workers. It confines itself almost entirely to the manufacture of table glass, hollow glass and pressed glass. The making of table glass is mainly in the hands of two large glass works situated at St. Ingbert. The ceramic industry pottery, porcelain, terra-cotta, mosaic articles, etc. takes third place, employing about 3,000 workers. The ceramic industry is chiefly represented by the works of the world-renowned firm of Villeroy & Boch, the most important establishment of its kind in Europe. Other minor industries, employing altogether several thousand persons are the chemical industry, explosive factories and paper mills.²⁰

Among the minor industries of the Saar particular mention must be made of the industry of foodstuffs, beverages, tobacco,

¹⁸ Brooks, A.H., "Saar District," U.S. Geol. Survey, Bull. 703, (1920), p. 73.

¹⁹ "Sixth Rept. Gov. Com.," L.N.O.J., 2nd yr., No. 2, (Mar. Apr. 1921), p. 200.

²⁰ J. Priou, Le Territoire de la Sarre, No. 2, p. 200, ed. 2, (1923).

wood, leather, and the manufacture of furniture, shoes, textiles, soaps, and perfumes, all of which are concentrating primarily to supply domestic demands. With the customs separation from the Reich a number of new industrial enterprises have likewise developed, specializing in various kinds of merchandise manufactured in German quality and taste. One of the most interesting features of the economic activity of the Saar is its handicrafts. There is also a comprehensive banking business. A close net work of railways deals with a traffic comprising 60,000,000 passengers and 20,000,000 tons of freight annually, and approximately 10,000 motorized vehicles speed over the highways of the country.²¹

The iron working industry is represented by a large number of works turning out machinery, iron structures, cableways, hoisting and extracting plants, steel constructions above ground, steel bridges, screws, steam boilers, fittings and pumps. All the works named except Halberg are of the mixed type; they produce pig iron, raw steel and rolling-mill products. Among the works specializing in various iron products mention should be made of the following: Halberg, (cast iron pipes and tubes); the Roehling refined--steel works at Volklingen (refined steel); the Mannesmann tube works at Bous, (steel tubes); the Homburg iron works which are affiliated to Neunkirchen, (steel tubes and permanent-way screws); and the St. Ingbert iron works, (band iron, wire and wire products). Altogether, thirty blast furnaces were used for the purposes of the iron-producing industry,

²¹Cartelliere, Walter, Chicago Tribune, Saar Supplement, No. 2, (June 13, 1934), p. 9.

nineteen of which were in operation in 1933.²²

At Burbach the principal concern is called "Arbed," a Luxemburg company employing 8,000 workmen. Before the war the production of the blast furnaces at Burbach was 400,000 tons, while in 1928 it amounted to 550,000 tons. With the dismantling of three furnaces and the modernization of the other five belonging to this company, the production capacity will remain at about the 1928 figure, but costs will be considerably reduced. Accessory equipment at Burbach has also been improved. The recuperative coke ovens, numbering three-hundred sixty, with a monthly capacity of 58,000 tons, were increased by forty during 1931. Six thousand tons of ammonium sulphate, 8,000 tons of benzol, and 25,000 tons of tar are produced annually as by-products when the plant is operating at capacity.²³

All services connected with the works have been reorganized. All of the blast-furnace gas is now utilized whether in the preheaters, to drive the blowing engines or otherwise. The coke-oven gas is sold to a public utility. Rolling mills and ware-houses have been rearranged so as to permit a continuity of service, which is accomplished almost entirely by electric traction. Two high-pressure electric generators were installed in 1928 and a third added in 1931. The plant has been completely modernized.²⁴

The principal steel works at Neunkirchen is that of the

²² Butts, Thos., "The French Iron & Steel Industry & Trade," Chap. "The Saar," Trade Information Bulletin, No. 800, (1932), p. 58.

²³ Ibid., p. 59.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 59.

"Neunkircher Eisenwerk" formally Stumm Bros., which employs about 6,000. As at Burbach, the blast furnaces have been modernized, the capacity of the blowing machines increased, automatic chargers installed and pulverizers erected. Through these improvements the pig-iron capacity of this plant will be 50,000 tons monthly, the increase in the production of pig iron making additional coke ovens necessary. Twenty were put into service in 1928 and another battery of twenty in February, 1930, thus assuring, with those previously in operation, a monthly output of 60,000 tons of coke. Much attention is given to the recovery of the by-products of coke manufactured at Neunkirchen, and installations have been made for the distillation of tar. Through the concentration and co-ordination of labor at this plant the number of employees has been reduced while capacity has been increased.²⁵

At Halberg the old-type blast furnaces have been retained, innovations being limited to the erection of one new furnace. This additional unit necessitated the installation of a new and larger coal washer and the construction of another battery of coke ovens. A pipe and fittings foundry and a two-hundred-ton capacity cement mill were added in 1930.²⁶

The Dillinger Company employs between 6,000 and 6,500 men. This company has made its policy to manufacture a product which would find a ready market. Previous to and during the war it specialized in armor plates, with the production of bars as a

²⁵Ibid., p. 59.

²⁶Ibid., p. 60.

secondary feature. When a change in policy became necessary, the management decided upon the production of galvanized sheets and plates, paying particular attention to boiler plate.²⁷

The principal concern at Volklingen is Roechling, employing about 7,000 workers. In the effort to adjust itself to post-war conditions the company made a complete renovation of its plant. The coke oven plant was transformed, not to produce more but rather better coke, the cinder content, it is claimed, being reduced from twelve to eight per cent.

Here as at the other plants in the Saar, increasing attention is paid to the recovery of blast-furnace and coke-oven by-products, while new uses are being sought for the furnace residues. One development has been the erection of a cement mill, and promising experiments have been made in making slag paving blocks. Excess gas production is sold to public utilities. The electric plant of the works, formerly operated by coal, is now gas operated.²⁸

In 1913 there were about 17 coking plants in the district, a large number of which were by-product plants. These coking plants included 2,240 ovens. Ten of these belonged to the Prussian Government, one to a French Company, and the others to German companies.

Had the Saar coal not been in close competition with the better fuel from Westphalia, the field would undoubtedly have been more extensively developed. In this competitive trade

²⁷ Ibid., p. 60.
²⁸ Ibid., p. 60.

the Saar coal finds its best use for steam, gas, and domestic purposes.

In 1913 twenty-nine blast furnaces having a total daily capacity of about 4,370 tons were operated in the Saar district. In the same year nine steel plants were operated, and these consumed not only practically all the pig iron produced in the district but also some 500,000 tons imported from French Lorraine. The steel plants were equipped with 21 Bessemer Converters of an average capacity of 21 tons and 31 Martin furnaces with an average capacity of 21 tons. There were also six electric furnaces, at least seven rolling mills, four foundaries, 10 puddling furnaces, one tube mill, and one armor-plate plant in the district. These furnaces and plants produced 1,375,000 tons of pig iron and 2,080,000 tons of raw steel. No accurate statistics regarding the output of finished and semi-finished products are available, but these products in 1913 probably aggregated about 1,000,000 tons.²⁹ Since the war the production of pig iron has steadily increased (to 1,912,000 tons in 1930), although steel production decreased slightly from 2,080,000 tons in 1913 to 1,936,000 tons in 1930, dropping to 1,515,000 tons in 1931.

Statistics of the production of the Saar in recent years contrasted with 1913 follow.³⁰

²⁹ Brooks, A. H., op. cit., p. 77.

³⁰ Butts, Thos., op. cit., pp. 58-9.

**Coal, Iron, and Steel Production in the Saar, Pre-war and
1928-1931 (In thousands of metric tons)**

Products	1913	1928	1929	1930	1931
Coal	13,216	13,107	13,579	13,236	11,364
Pig Iron total ¹	1,371	2,105	2,209	1,936	1,515
Basic Bessemer	1,223	1,728	1,898	1,691	1,351
Foundry Pig	148	209	207	223	164
Raw steel, total	2,080	2,072	2,208	1,936	1,538
Ingots--					
Basic Bessemer	1,719	1,561	1,642	1,456	1,116
Open hearth &	356	492	544	456	407
electric Castings	5	19	22	24	15
Semi-finished products	156	174	157	168	135

¹only principal grades shown

**Production of Principal Finished Products, Pre-war and 1928-1931³¹
(In thousands of metric tons)**

Products	1913	1928	1929	1930	1931
Rails, Frogs, Fish-plates, Switches	332	211	230	205	152
Beams	303	283	252	198	147
Wire rods	116	169	157	145	133
Sheets	38	122	120	99	76
Pipe	75	86	84	53	42
Plates, thin	93	94	97	95	93
Plates, heavy	55	89	161	165	109
Merchant Shapes	482	483	497	447	354
Total	1,494	1,537	1,598	1,407	1,106

³¹Ibid., p. 59.

It is of fundamental importance in the study of Germany's position in relation to her neighbors to look at the geographical distribution of her heavy industries, her agricultural population, and her centers of coal production. If France claims that her industries, her canals, and her large cities lie dangerously close to the German frontier, so also may Germany point to a similar concentration, both east and west: Silesia no less than the Saar and the Ruhr are dangerously near an international boundary.³² Frontiers in Europe gained new economic significance. The Rhine region is of particular interest because the new boundary between France and Germany divides Lorraine iron from Ruhr coal. Before 1919 they were united by a highly efficient railway system that largely cancelled the 150 miles of distance that lay between. The Ruhr basin has the largest reserves of coal and the highest level of production in all Europe and its coking coal is without rival.

About 76 per cent of Lorraine coal requirements were supplied from the Ruhr and Rhineland and Lorraine sent to the latter about 28 per cent of its ore. Nearly the whole export of iron and steel from Germany, France and Belgium originated in the Ruhr-Lorraine System. These two regions became united by capital combinations and formed the greatest industrial center in the world.

It is arguable that the closer the union between industrial France and Germany the less danger there is of future war. France

³²Bowman, Isaiah, The New World, (1928), p. 261.

holding the iron and Germany the coking coal is different from Germany holding both as in 1914.

The most important single industrial region is that of the Ruhr. Its western end is marked by a great transportation portal (Ruhrort and Duisburg) through which are sent coal and coke and iron in various forms, and where grain, wood, and iron are received.³³

The result of the division of the industry along present national boundaries leaves France nearly all the iron ore, but insufficient coking coal. Germany has most of the coking coal and no iron ore. Economic influence of the Franco-German coal, iron and steel unit can hardly be over-estimated. Nearly all remaining industrial activity of Western Europe is dependent upon it in one way or another for its driving power, raw materials, semi-finished and finished iron and steel products. The remaining steel capacity of Europe is only one third as large and scattered in many units.³⁴

The iron and steel industries of the Ruhr form the core of a single economic unit which overlaps into France, Belgium and Luxemburg. The bulk of the pig iron and steel production is in the Ruhr territory, near the coal; the remaining production in Belgium, France, and Luxemburg is from subordinate and tributary units. In addition to blast furnaces and steel mills, there are many plants which put the steel and iron into fin-

³³ Ibid., p. 261.

³⁴ Ibid.

ished and semi-finished forms; these, likewise, are centered in the Ruhr.³⁵

The economic influence of the Franco-German coal, iron and steel unit can hardly be over-estimated, for nearly all of the remaining industrial activity of western Europe is dependent upon it in one way or another for its driving power and for its raw, semi-finished, and finished iron and steel products. The remaining steel capacity of Europe is only a third as large and is scattered in many small units.³⁶

The preponderant position of the Franco-German unit is of comparatively recent origin. The real use of the Lorraine-Briey-Luxemburg iron ores began only with the invention of certain metallurgical processes in 1880 and the production has reached large volume only in the last two decades.³⁷ In the early periods of small production of iron and steel many scattered small units could supply local needs, but in its new gigantic proportions the sphere of influence of the Franco-German industry cannot be so divided. Future settlements of European boundary questions have this new condition to deal with.³⁸

The political control of this great industrial weapon means political supremacy both in war and peace. The history of the increasing bitter struggle between France and Germany for control of the industry indicates a growing recognition of this

³⁵Leith, C. K., op. cit., p. 143.

³⁶Ibid., p. 144.

³⁷Ibid., p. 145.

³⁸Ibid., p. 145.

fact.

The Lorraine ore deposits are by far the most valuable in Europe, because

- (1) they contain the largest reserves occurring in one field;
- (2) they are readily accessible and within easy communication of large coal fields;
- (3) they are of suitable composition for the basic process; and
- (4) they are mined at comparatively low cost.

The total reserves of iron ore in the Lorraine field are estimated to be 5,000,000,000 tons. This estimate, because of the comparative regularity of the deposits, is probably more nearly accurate than those made for most iron-ore districts. The distribution of the iron lands and reserves by countries and districts is as follows:³⁹

Area and ore reserves of Lorraine iron field, 1913.			
	area (hectares)	Tons	Iron-ore reserves Per cent of total
French Lorraine	67,610	3,000,000,000	58.80
Lorraine Annexe	35,860	1,830,000,000	35.90
Luxemburg	3,670	270,000,000	5.29
Belgium	400	525,000	.01

A valuable characteristic of the Lorraine iron deposits is that they contain both calcareous and siliceous ores, making it pos-

³⁹Brooks, A. H., op. cit., p. 18.

sible to obtain the proper mixture for blast furnaces.⁴⁰

The regularity of the Lorraine ores, which occur in beds, and other favorable conditions tend toward low mining costs. In 1913 the cost of mining was from 3 to 4 francs a ton. This is lower than cost of mining in most other European iron fields. With the restoration of the Lorraine Annexes to France she has more or less of a monopoly of the available iron ores of continental Europe.⁴¹

There are six coal fields within 250 kilometers of the Lorraine iron districts which have a total known reserve of about 86,000,000,000 tons of coal, of which at least 40 per cent is suitable for coking. Under present metallurgic practice it will require a total of about 2,500,000,000 tons of coking coal to smelt the entire iron reserves of Lorraine. Therefore, there is much more coking coal in these fields than is needed for all the known Lorraine ores. About 74 per cent of this coking coal is in the Westphalian field of Germany.⁴² The Westphalian coal field of Germany is in the lower Rhine Basin, chiefly east of the river. Being close to tidewater, it is favorably situated for export trade. What is more important to this discussion, it is connected by railway as well as by rivers and canals with the centers of iron and steel manufacturing of Lorraine and of Belgium. This field contains 56 per cent of Germany's pre-war bituminous coal reserves. Without the Saar coal field, the West-

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 19.
⁴¹ Ibid., p. 20.
⁴² Ibid., p. 20.

phalian field contains about 70 per cent of the coal reserves of the German republic.⁴³ The Westphalian coking coal is among the best in Europe. This fact, coupled with its geographic location with reference to the Lorraine iron ore on one hand and to tide-water on the other, has made Westphalia not only the greatest coal producing center of Germany, but also the scene of the most extensive manufacture of iron and steel.⁴⁴ In 1913 some 4,500,000 tons of Lorraine iron ore were smelted in the Westphalian district. In addition about 2,240,000 tons of pig iron made from Lorraine ore were refined in Westphalia.

The iron mines of Lorraine Annexee in 1913 produced 75 per cent of the iron-ore output of the German Empire, and their reserves then constituted 47 per cent of Germany's total. In capacity the Lorraine furnaces and steel plants are second only to those of Westphalia. The iron ores of Lorraine Annexee can be shipped by water grade down the Moselle Valley to the Rhine and to the Westphalian coal fields, and they are in easy communication with the Saar coal field. It is this geographic position that gave them under the pre-war conditions an even far greater importance than the above stated percentages of reserves would seem to indicate.⁴⁵

The efficiency of Saar coal in blast furnace practice is about 67 per cent of that of the Westphalian coal. The Saar coke can be effectively used in blast furnaces only by mixing

⁴³ Ibid., p. 24.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 24.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 50-1.

it with at least 20 per cent of Westphalian or equally good coke. The Saar field has extensive undeveloped reserves.⁴⁶

The boundaries of the Saar coal field are fairly well known on the north, south and east. On the west the coal beds plunge under a heavy cover of younger strata and the limits will be determined by the depth of profitable mining. The coal formation has been traced westward to the old boundary between French Lorraine and Lorraine Annexe, but it is here undeveloped. It is also known to occur in French Lorraine north and northeast of Nancy, where coal beds have been found by boring at depths of 800 to 1,500 meters. Most of the developed field lies in the Saar district of the Rheinland, but there is some of it in the Bavarian Palatinate, and in Lorraine Annexe there is a very large area in which more or less coal has been found by boring. It is impossible, therefore, to give exact figures on either the area or the tonnage of the field. The following table summarizes the available information on the area of the entire field. Of the output in 1913, 78 per cent was taken from the mines in the Saar district proper (Rheinland).⁴⁷

Area of the Saar Coal Field, in square kilometers.

	Area of known coal lands.	Area of possible coal lands.
Rheinland (Saar district)....	100,000	
Bavarian Palatinate.....	5,000	40,000
Lorraine Annexe.....	30,000	60,000
	<u>135,000</u>	<u>100,000</u>

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 25.
⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 73.

The best information available indicates that the Saar coal field contains from 27 to 32 workable coal beds, aggregating 38 to 43 meters in thickness. Many of the coal beds are separated into a number of benches by seams of bone and shale.⁴⁸

The coal beds of the Saar field are commonly tilted at rather low angles but are broken by faults. The altitude of the beds favors cheaper mining than can be done in the coal fields of Westphalia, Northern France or Belgium. As the coal beds are for the most part under a thick cover of barren strata (75 to 1,000 meters), the mining is done by shafts. So far as known the deepest shafts are 800 meters deep, but the average depth of mining is probably less than half of this.⁴⁹

In 1913 fourteen Government mines producing 13,000,000 tons of coal and seven private mines producing 4,000,000 tons were operated in the Saar region. About 70,000 men were employed in the coal mines. The size of the mining operations in the Saar field is indicated by the annual coal output per mine, which is about 800,000 tons.⁵⁰

The total coal reserves of the Saar Basin to a depth of 2,000 meters have been estimated at 16,548,000,000 tons. Of this total 9,769,000,000 tons occur in beds lying within 1,200 meters of the surface. The total coking coal to a depth of 2,000 meters is estimated at 8,299,000,000 tons, of which 4,086,000,000 tons lie within 1,200 meters of the surface. Only about

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 73.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 75.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 76.

4,500,000,000 to 5,000,000,000 tons of the total coal reserve lie in the developed part of the field. The rest of the coal (about 75 per cent) is in such areas or at such a depth that it is known only by drilling. ⁵¹

The coking coal of the Saar field is of an inferior grade to that of the French, Belgian, and Westphalian fields, with which it comes into competition. Its most direct competitor is the Westphalian coal, which yields about 78 per cent of coke, as compared to about 50 per cent for the Saar coal. Even in the Saar district itself, as is shown below, most Westphalian coal, as well as some coke, is used. Moreover, the Saar coke is not strong enough for blast-furnace use. The best coking practice in the Saar field provides for an admixture of 20 per cent of Westphalian coal in the coke ovens. For furnace charges 150 tons of Westphalian coke is considered the equal of 180 tons of Saar coke. Reducing these factors indicates that the value of the Saar coking coal for furnace use is 62 per cent of the value of the Westphalian coal. In blast-furnace practice it is customary when conditions permit to make the charge of equal quantities of Saar and Westphalian coke. ⁵²

Before the war the coal fields lying in the Saar district (Rheinland), was owner and exploited by the Royal Prussian Government. The Bavarian Government also owned coal land and operated two mines in the Palatinate part of the field. In addition to the Government-owned land a few concessions had been

⁵¹Ibid., p. 74.

⁵²Ibid., p. 74.

made in both the Saar and the Palatinate to private corporations. The following table gives the approximate areas of the coal lands in Government ownership and in private ownership.⁵³

Coal land in Government and private ownership in Saar field, 1913
in hectares

	Rheinland	Bavarian Palatinate	Lorraine An- nexes	Total
Government	110,000	4,370		114,370
Private	112	630	42,570	43,312
	110,112	5,000	42,570	157,682

The details in regard to the German ownership of coal mines and lands and coking plants are summarized in the following table.⁵⁴

Estimated value of German holdings in the Saar district, 1913
in francs.

	Private	Government
Iron and Steel Plants	425,000,000	
Coal mines, coal lands, and coke plants	100,000,000	311,000,000
	525,000,000	311,000,000
Grand Total	836,000,000	

The Saar Territory, small as it is, involves one of the stirring, even acute questions of the civilized world today. In a measure, something appreciable in the future of Europe--Europe's peace, security, goodwill and reconciliation is bound up with the fate of this nugget of industrialism, this "dimin-

⁵³Ibid., p. 74.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 80.

utive mass of precious metal." It is one of those intense matters on which a crisis, in some sense, depends; in which every word and every action matters; in which almost every gesture is fraught with possible consequences of far reaching good or ill.

The Treaty of Versailles added the final touch in the process of making coal a first rate political issue. It was perhaps only natural that the first great economic war should be followed by a treaty in which economic consequences were provided for on a scale never dreamed of before. Reparations in the form of specified deliveries of coal and coke to France, Belgium and Italy, were a logical provision, first because of planned injury done by German armies to French mines, and second because coal represented the one great exportable commodity which the allied nations readily could take from Germany without undesirable effects on their own industries.⁵⁵

Provision for "sanctions" or "productive guarantees" in the event of the non-fulfillment of treaty obligations not unnaturally opened the way for the possible occupation of the Ruhr district, partly because it was a convenient and desirable industrial center to seize, and partly because the output of the Westphalian coal field was vital not only to the reparations coal deliveries but also to the whole economic organization of industrial Germany.⁵⁶

The transfer of coal fields by the treaty, as in the cases of Silesia, Teschen, and the Saar Basin has magnified the im-

⁵⁵Treaty of Versailles, Part VIII, Annex V, Par. 1-10.
⁵⁶Langsam, W. C., op. cit., p. 154.

portance of the political control of these resources. Under former conditions a certain degree of balance between the coal output and the dependent industries had been established as a result of long processes of economic adjustment. That balance of interrelations has been disturbed by the shift of boundaries.

The ostensible reason for the seizure of the Ruhr district was to force Germany to pay her reparations. This invasion aroused an outburst of rage, revolt and hatred among the German Nationalists. The Germans felt, however, that it was not beyond doubt that France's real intentions were to seize the wealth of the Ruhr, in order to get a monopoly of the coal, just as she had gained the monopoly of the iron by annexing the Lorraine mining basin.⁵⁷

The real causes of the occupation of the Ruhr are rooted in the situation created by the Treaty of Versailles. It will be remembered that during the Peace Conference two fundamental problems demanded solution: The problem of French and allied security, economic and military, and the problem of repairing the damages caused by the war.⁵⁸

As far as the Ruhr-Lorraine industrial problem is concerned, the occupation had this negative value: It has demonstrated the difficulty, not to say the impossibility of solving a problem which is essentially economic by the application of political and military force.⁵⁹

⁵⁷Leith, C. K., op. cit., p. 199.

⁵⁸Tardieu, Andre, The Truth About The Treaty, (1921), p.261.

⁵⁹Langsam, W. C., op. cit., p. 164.

It would be absurd to ignore the possible future consequences of interfering with European coal supplies. Europe must be thought of as a vastly complex industrial organization in which coal is the indispensable factor. In the contest for control of this cheap and convenient source of mechanical energy there is room for much trouble and future conflict.

It must be admitted that the question of coal supplies has ceased to be a purely economic matter of local interest. The coal question as it is developing in Europe is an international issue of major importance; and as Europe stands in relationship to the rest of the world today there are few nations which are not concerned in the answer.

CHAPTER IV
THE OCCUPATION (1920-1935)

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On February 13, 1920, the Council drew up for the Governing Commission instructions which embody a statement of principles and rules of procedure based on the Treaty provisions. It laid down as a fundamental principle that the Commission's sole interest should be the welfare of the inhabitants of the Territory and that the Commission was responsible to the League for the execution of its mandate. It was instructed to keep the League regularly informed of all questions of interest to it.¹

The Commission accordingly submitted official quarterly reports, which were circulated to all Members of the League and printed in the Official Journal of the League. It sent special reports on matters of particular interest. The Commission was required by the Versailles Treaty to secure the views of elected representatives of the inhabitants before any change in the laws could be made, or any new tax imposed. Until 1922, it considered for this purpose the Municipal and District Councils.²

Four of the five members of the Governing Commission were appointed at this session of the Council, to hold office for a period of one year from date. They were M. Rault, State Coun-

¹Eric Drummond, Ten Years of World Co-operation, (League of Nations) Geneva, (1930), p. 380.

²Ibid., p. 381.

cillor of France; Alfred Von Boch, Landrath of Saarlouis; Major Lambert of Belgium; and Count de Moltke Huitfeldt, a Danish national. The fifth member was to be R. D. Waugh, of Canada, although his name was not announced at the time as his acceptance had not been received.³

The four members of the Governing Commission were prepared to assume office immediately and, in view of the desirability of relieving the population of the Saar of the military régime to which it had been subjected since the armistice, they decided to proceed without delay.⁴

The Governing Commission arrived at Saarbrücken on February 21. Even before its official entry into the city it held several meetings in Council, at which it examined and decided some important questions. The first task of the Governing Commission was to decide on its own internal organization.

A tentative distribution of duties was therefore one of the first matters to be decided. The administrative work was distributed among the members, each having charge of several departments. The chairman, M. Rault, assumed the control of the departments of Agriculture, Public Health and Social Insurance; Major Lambert, the departments of Public Works, Railways, and the Postal and Telegraph services; Count de Moltke-Huitfeldt, the departments of Education, Religion and Justice; Mr. Waugh, the departments of Finance and Food Control.⁵

The choice of the seat of government was another task, and

³ League of Nations Official Journal No. 2, (1920), p. 49.

⁴ "First Rept. Gov. Com.," L.N.O.J., No. 3, (March-April-May 1920), pp. 100-1.

⁵ "Second Rept. Gov. Com.," ibid., (June 1920), p. 192.

this constituted a problem at the outset. Both Saarbrücken and Saarlouis desired to be chosen. A petition from inhabitants of Saarlouis had been sent to the Secretary General of the League asking that the Saarlouis be designated, and the Mayor of the city was active in behalf of its selection. The Commission decided, however, that, "in spite of the historical claims of Saarlouis," the more populous industrial center--Saarbrücken--should be chosen. Saarlouis was consoled, however by the decision of the Commission to establish the Civil and Criminal Court of Appeal there.⁶ These preliminary measures were merely an introduction to the stupendous task the new government had to face. It involved the creation of an entirely independent administration which was to provide for all the activities of a modern industrial state.

On February 25, the day before the Commission assumed power, it posted and had printed in the newspapers of the Saar a proclamation to the inhabitants designed, doubtless, not only to inform them of its general policies but also to anticipate opposition to its authority.⁷

The proclamation went on to assure the inhabitants that the Commission would enforce respect for their rights and well-being, that it would endeavor to restore the prosperity of the Territory, that it would pay particular attention to the development of industry and to the improvement of the conditions of the workers, and that in the exercise of its authority and in its administra-

⁶"First Rept. Gov. Com.," op. cit., (March 25, 1920), p. 102.
⁷Ibid., p. 107.

tion, it would be "inspired by the principles which directed the establishment of the League of Nations."⁸

The régime of the Saar had remained practically unchanged since the Armistice. The coming into force of the Peace Treaty had not softened it in any way; notwithstanding the ability and tact of General Wirbel, the Supreme Administrator of the Saar, to whom the President of the Commission made a point of paying a public tribute on February 26, the military occupation and the dictatorial powers implied by it weighed heavily on the population. Since November 11, 1918, the Saar had been living under a provisional régime without any legal basis; none of the numerous and serious questions arising since that date had been settled. The Commission, instead of devoting all its strength and time to organizing its government and carrying into effect the Treaty of Versailles was consequently obliged, immediately after its installation, to deal with urgent and complicated problems.⁹

From the first, the economic position of the Saar seemed to the Commission to be critical. The mines, which are the great wealth of the Territory, had been given to France for the purposes of credit on Reparation, the country thus being deprived of its principal resource. Moreover, the Treaty stipulates that the Saar Basin shall be included in the French customs régime. The taking over the mines and the customs by French agents, consequent upon the coming into force of the Treaty,

⁸ Ibid., p. 108.

⁹ Ibid., p. 100.

could not be arranged without disturbing the normal course of business and damaging many interests. Further, the supplies of the country, hitherto assured by Germany, seemed to be more and more endangered.¹⁰ The situation was rendered still more difficult by the proximity of the French frontier, which emphasized the difference, at the rate of exchange then existing between the franc and mark. Goods bought in France (in francs) reached extremely high figures (in marks) when they were sold in the Saar. Wages had to be continually increased. Persons living on fixed incomes and those on the retired list were especially affected by the depreciation of the mark. The crisis became still more acute when the French state mines, availing themselves of a right conferred on them by the Treaty, paid their workmen, and compelled them to make their purchases and sales, in francs. The absence of all political life, the economic difficulties, and the constraint of a prolonged military regime, had undeniably provoked unrest among the inhabitants.¹¹ Their discontent had been aggravated and exploited by those, who, within the Saar as well as elsewhere, had not accepted the Treaty of Versailles and were preparing either to tear it up or to evade its stipulations. The Commission had proofs that the population had been worked upon by agents whose objects were altogether removed from the interests and welfare of the inhabitants of the Saar. When the Commission entered on its duties, these agents attempted to profit by the occasion to promote disorder in the country; certain of them delivered inflammatory speeches at public meetings.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 102.
¹¹Ibid., p. 102.

The agitation coincided with the attempt made at Berlin to establish a military dictatorship. It was inspired by the same ideas, and the same hopes, and doubtless, by the same men.¹²

Confronted with this situation, the Governing Commission refused to take any severe measures; no public meeting was prohibited, no newspaper was suspended, and not a single individual was expelled. The president simply called together the leaders of the political parties and explained to them the line of conduct that the Governing Commission had chosen, stating that it was resolved to maintain order in the Territory. The Commission had the satisfaction of noting that its advice was respected. Contrary to the statements of certain foreign newspapers, there had been no disturbance within the entire Territory of the Saar. Only one manifestation, on the part of a few hundred persons and lasting not over an hour, took place in the streets of Saarbrücken. It was without incident, save for the singing of patriotic songs, and a patrol of fifteen men was sufficient to disperse it. The few strikes that took place all originated in the demands of workmen for higher wages. They were of short duration and were settled without the least difficulty.¹³

The foregoing general remarks on the political and economic situation in the Territory of the Saar were necessary in order to explain the difficulties with which the Commission had to deal and the precautions that it had to take in organizing a new régime.

¹² Ibid., p. 102.

¹³ Ibid., p. 102.

Its first concern was to substitute a civil administration for the military administration. To this end it retained the greater number of the officials appointed by the Prussian and Bavarian Governments. As to choice of new men it was very difficult to find immediately among the native inhabitants of the Saar, a country almost exclusively industrial, men sufficiently trained for public office.¹⁴

The military administration proper completely disappeared; its representatives in the Districts (Kreise) had been relieved of their offices. The Commission endeavored to organize its services in the shortest possible time. Immediately after its arrival in Saarbrücken it established a Secretariat-General, whose principal duties were to prepare the meetings of the Commission, to draft the minutes and to keep the Archives, and finally, under the direction of the president, to maintain relations with the League of Nations. It has organized a Department of Public Safety, without which it would not have been possible to dispense with the French Military police, and a service for the Inspection of Mines. Without the latter it would not have been able to guarantee to France the free exploitation of the mines which was conferred on her by the Treaty.¹⁵

There is no question but that the Governing Commission of 1920 was strongly pro-French in its make-up. M. Rault was a French Counseiller d'Etat. He spoke no German, a language of which Mr. Waugh also was ignorant. Major Lambert was a Belgian.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 102

¹⁵Ibid., p. 102.

Count Von Moltke-Huitfeldt, although a Dane by birth, was a resident of Paris. For thirty-five years his father had been the Danish Minister to France.¹⁶ As the decisions of the Governing Commission were to be made by a majority vote, the preponderance of the French point of view was assured.¹⁷

The majority of the original members of the Governing Commission were all known to be French in their sympathies at the time they were appointed. Indeed at least two of them were proposed by France. When the Saar member, Von Boch, resigned in August, 1920, Dr. Hector, who had recommended himself to the French as early as July, 1919, when he was mayor of Saarlouis, by his expressions of loyalty to France,¹⁸ was chosen by the Council, on the recommendation of M. Caclamanos, as Von Boch's successor.¹⁹

Dr. Hector did not at all represent the wishes of the great majority of the Saar inhabitants. He was regarded as a tool in the hands of President Fault, and eventually he had to resign when he was virtually convicted of perjury in connection with a pro-French letter he had written to Clemenceau during the Peace Conference.²⁰

France therefore enjoyed from 1920 to 1923 almost as much power in matters pertaining to the Saar as she would have possessed had the protectorate demanded by her in 1919 been granted.

¹⁶L.N.O.J., 4th yr. No. 8, (Aug. 1923), p. 911.

¹⁷Drummond, Sir Eric, *op. cit.*, p. 379.

¹⁸Tardieu, Andre, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

¹⁹L.N.O.J., No. 7, (Oct. 1920), pp. 401-4.

²⁰Fay, Sidney B., "The Fate of the Saar," Current History, (Jan. 1935), p. 403.

The means of securing a political and administrative regime in the Saar favorable to French interests lay in the control of a majority of the members of the Governing Commission and in having the chairmanship of the Commission in friendly hands. The chairmanship, and, as a consequence, the executive power of the Commission, was given to the French member at the time the Council set up the Commission.²¹

When Dr. Hector was forced to resign his post, he suggested as his substitute M. Julius Land. When the question of choosing a successor to Dr. Hector came before the Council, M. Hanotaux, the vigilant French representative, proposed the name of M. Land and the latter was then elected.²² Thus the French virtually controlled four of the five members of the Commission.

With these facts in mind there was no occasion for surprise at the attitude taken and the policies adopted by the Governing Commission. Furthermore it was not strange that M. Morize, a Frenchman, was appointed Secretary-General of the Commission to assist the French President, that the majority of the foreign officials brought into the Territory by the Governing Commission were Frenchmen, and finally that the French representative on the Council of the League of Nations was the one who rose to a vigorous defense of the Governing Commission when it was seriously attacked.²³

In accordance with the Treaty of Versailles, the Saar Ter-

²¹L.N.O.J., No. 2, (March 1920), p. 46.

²²L.N.O.J., 4th yr. Book No. 6, (June 1923), p. 598.

²³Ibid., No. 8, (1923), pp. 859-861.

ritory was to retain its Civil and Criminal Courts.²⁴ However under paragraph twenty-five of the Annex, to Section IV of the Treaty of Versailles a Supreme Court was to be established in order to hear appeals against decisions rendered by the local tribunals. This was necessary to eliminate from the Saar the jurisdiction of any tribunals constituted beyond its frontiers. Cases which formerly went upon appeal to courts sitting at Leipzig, Berlin, Munich, Cologne and Zweibrücken were to be heard by the new Court. This court was duly organized in June, 1920. In setting up this court the Commission decided that the judges should be selected from countries members of the League. Of its eleven judges two were Saarlanders, two French, from Alsace and Lorraine, three were Swiss, one Belgian, one Hollander, one Czecho-Slovak, and one Luxemburger. Professor A. Nippold of Berne was appointed president of the Court.²⁵

The power of the Commission over the public officials of the Territory was carefully provided for in the Treaty.²⁶ The Governing Commission inherited from its predecessors, the states of Prussia and Bavaria about 30,000 officials of all grades in the Saar.²⁷ The creation of a civil service drawn entirely from the ranks of the natives of the Saar, which was legally within the powers of the Commission proved to be a practical impossibility

²⁴"Third Rept. Gov. Com.," op. cit., (1922), p. 138.

²⁵"Sixth Rept. Gov. Com.," op. cit., 2nd yr. No. 2, (Mar. Apr. 1921), p. 205.

²⁶Versailles Treaty Part III, Sec IV, Annex Par. 19.

²⁷Frion, Jean, op. cit., p. 39.

due to the lack of sufficient number of trained men and in view of their reluctance to take the place of their dismissed colleagues, natives of the other parts of the Reich. Considerable friction developed between the Governing Commission and the permanent officials regarding the conditions of service under which these officials should be taken over. The matter came to a head as a result of the publication of the Civil Servants Statute in August, 1920, which led to the strike of all state employees and a sympathetic strike of employees in the public service.

The strike was accompanied by the proclamation of a "state of siege" and the surrender of police powers to the officer commanding the French garrison, requisitioned the services of the railway employees, and obtained from the French Army of the Rhine a Field Railway Company, in order to insure uninterrupted train service through the Saar. At the same time, in order to prevent the strike from spreading to the mines and metal workers, President Rault undertook the task of enlightening the unions, "as to the true cause of the strike."²⁸ All efforts on the part of the Strike Commission to induce the miners and metal-workers to make common cause with the officials proved fruitless. A number of expulsions were ordered. Public meetings were prohibited, censorship of the press was established, and two newspapers were suspended for having published articles without the permission of General Brissaud-Desmaillet, Commander of the troops in the Saar.²⁹ The strike ended on August 14; the of-

²⁸"Confidential Report of August 18, 1920 from Pres. Rault to League," Council Document AO₂ (Aug. 18, 1920).

²⁹"Fifth Rept. Gov. Com.," L.N.O.J. (Nov. Dec. 1920) p. 70.

ficials published a manifesto at the same time that their act was not to be interpreted as an acceptance of the Governing Commission's position. The general twenty-four hour strike that took place at the last was an expression of sympathy for the officials on the part of the workers of the Territory, and as a protest against the action of the Governing Commission. The Commission congratulated itself, however, on the success of its resolute policy.

The authority of the Governing Commission had thus been strengthened as a result of the crisis. If the Commission had not adopted such a firm attitude disorders would have resulted; the Commission would have lost all prestige with the population; and its success would have been irretrievably compromised.³⁰

The strike, however, proved unsuccessful and the Civil Servants Statute continued in operation. It released the Prussian and Bavarian employees from their former allegiance to the Reich and made compulsory the taking of an oath to the Governing Commission.³¹ The rights of civil employees as to pension, seniority, and promotions were safeguarded. After the termination of the strike most of the employees were reappointed and a number of sentences imposed by the courts martial were commuted.³² The Governing Commission, reserving its previous decision on account of the high cost of living authorized payment to be made to the

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³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

³² "Sixth Rept. Gov. Com.," *op. cit.*, (Nov. Dec. 1920), p. 71.

³² "Fifth Rept. Gov. Com.," *op. cit.*, (Nov. Dec. 1920), p. 70.

official workers in the public services for the days during which they were on strike.

One of the consequence of the controversy over the civil servants was the resignation of Herr von Boch as the Saar member of the Commission.³³

The decision of the Governing Commission to intrust the protection abroad of the interests of the inhabitants of the Saar to the French diplomatic representatives provoked considerable protest on the part of the Germans.³⁴ The German Government refused to recognize this decision on the ground that the treaty stipulated that the "existing nationality of the inhabitants" which is German, would not be affected.³⁵ The representation of Saar interests abroad by France and the definition of "inhabitants" by the Commission were two steps toward creating a Saar Nationality.

The Ordinance of June 25, 1921, which defined the status of inhabitants of the Saar Territory provoked much apprehension in Germany.³⁶ It was complicated by the provision of the Peace Treaty which declared that the "existing nationality of the inhabitants"³⁷ remained unaffected, and this provision was reproduced in Article I of the Ordinance of June 25. M. Rault stated in his report to the League of Nations that "the status of 'inhabitant of the Saar Territory' constitutes a new kind of position

³³Ibid., p. 66.

³⁴Ibid., p. 67.

³⁵N.O.J., 4th yr. No. 4, (1923), p. 412.

³⁶Ibid., 3rd yr. No. 2, (Feb. 1922), p. 126.

³⁷Treaty, Sec. IV, Annex, Par. 24.

before the law." Article 5 of the Decree lays down that no inhabitant of the Saar can be expelled. Any person, therefore, who can legitimately claim this qualification has free access to the Territory of the Saar, even if previously expelled. The decree was necessary to assure the equality of the rights of the inhabitants, whether Germans or not.³⁸ In virtue of this legislation the Governing Commission proceeded to issue Saar passports. The status of "inhabitant" was not limited to persons actually born in the Territory or who lived there before November 11, 1918. It could be acquired by any person irrespective of nationality and sex, who shall have had his legal residence in the territory of the Saar Basin for a period of at least three years, during which period he shall have been subject to direct taxation.³⁹ The period of three years might be shortened to one year, in the case of persons appointed to public office or occupying positions which required that the Territory should be their main residence. The status of inhabitant for the latter group could be lost by a transfer to residence outside the Territory after the expiration of one year.⁴⁰

The Treaty had stipulated that the Saar was to be an "autonomous country independent of Germany." Accordingly, the Commission abolished the German flag and designed a new one of black, white and blue, for the Territory. The Imperial seal was superseded by one incorporating the coats-of-arms of the

³⁸L.N.O.J., 2nd yr. No. 8, (Nov. Dec. 1921), p. 842.

³⁹L.N.O.J., 3rd yr. No. 2, (Feb. 1922), pp. 126-7.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 127.

four principal Saar towns. German postage stamps were replaced by those more becoming to an autonomous province. They joined the Universal Postal Union and the Universal Telegraphic Convention. The new flag, seal and stamps caused no end of opposition.⁴¹

The treaty provisions for the incorporation of the Saar in the French tariff system and the right of the French to use the French franc instead of the German mark⁴² were used, so the inhabitants felt, to break the economic bonds with Germany and tie them more closely to France. The German Government argued that the introduction of the franc into the public services was a violation of the Treaty. The Governing Commission however presented a legal case based on the provisions of the Treaty in justifying what it had done.⁴³ The Governing Commission adopted the use of the franc in the postal and railway services on May 1, 1921, and for the payment of its employees on August 1, 1921.⁴⁴ On June 1, 1923, the franc was proclaimed the sole legal means of payment in the Saar Basin.⁴⁵ The Saar profited by being under the régime of the franc rather than the mark--the franc having suffered less from inflation. Of their gains the Saarlanders have said little.

Several more questions arose to increase the antagonism between the Governing Commission and the Saar inhabitants. The

⁴¹"Fifth Rept. Gov. Com.," op. cit., (Oct. 25, 1920), pp. 66-7.

⁴²Op. cit., Saar Annex Par. 32.

⁴³L.N.O.J., 2nd yr. No. 7, (Oct. 1920), pp. 688-9.

⁴⁴"Seventh Rept. Gov. Com.," L.N.O.J., 2nd yr. Nos. 5-6, (July, Aug. 1921), pp. 625-7.

⁴⁵"Fourteenth Rept. Gov. Com.," ibid., 4th yr. No. 7, (July 1923), pp. 741-2.

latter wanted the French troops withdrawn and replaced by a locally recruited Saar gendarmerie, as contemplated by Section 30 of the Saar Statute.⁴⁶ The army of occupation was steadily diminished after February, 1920, but never completely withdrawn. Those who remained were called "railroad police." Fault, as chairman, maintained that it would be impossible to find four thousand loyal Saarlanders to serve as officers; furthermore, the Territory could not afford the cost. The Governing Commission retained the French troops until it could organize the local gendarmerie, but stated that they would have the status of garrison troops and not that of troops of occupation.⁴⁷ The local gendarmerie was constituted by a decree of the Governing Commission July 7, 1920, but the French troops were still retained and court-martial proceedings and deportation order by the military authorities were sanctioned by the Governing Commission.⁴⁸ The Governing Commission defended its decision to retain the French troops on the ground that it was required to provide in all cases for the protection of persons and property in the Saar Basin.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the retention of French troops gave substance to the Saarlander's complaints. The League Council approved the Commission's retention of the French troops as a temporary means to the protection of life and property. German propagandists made the most of it. The German Government addressed to the League of Nations a series of protests against it.⁵⁰ The Govern-

⁴⁶Treaty, Part III Sec. IV Annex Par. 30.

⁴⁷"First Rept. Gov. Com.," *op. cit.*, No. 2, (Mar. 1920), p. 104.

⁴⁸*Op. cit.*, 2nd yr. No. 7, (1920), p. 684.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p. 684.

⁵⁰*L.N.O.J.*, 4th yr. No. 3, (1923), p. 362.

ing Commission in its observations on the German note reiterated the impossibility of recruiting an adequate gendarmerie on account of the young men being attracted into industry and because of the expense it would involve.⁵¹ The local gendarmerie would be increased as the financial situation might allow but the Commission was convinced of the necessity in any case of retaining the garrison force of 4500 men in the Territory.⁵²

Sir Austen Chamberlain, British Foreign Secretary, proposed at the League Council Meeting March, 1925 that when the Saar police reached the strength of 1,000 men the French troops should be withdrawn from the Saar, but retained near the frontier, and that the Saar Governing Commission should be given authority, in the event of serious disorder, to call in those troops. Saargemund and Forbach were only ten kilometers from Saarbrücken and therefore the French troops could be stationed within quick recall.⁵³

In answer to Sir Austen Chamberlain's proposal the Council in March 1925 resolved:

"The Council of the League of Nations, after having heard the Italian representative's report, the observations of the representative of Great Britain and the explanations of the president of the Governing Commission:

(1) Approves the Governing Commission's proposal to increase the local police by 250 men during the financial year 1925-1926.

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⁵²Ibid., p. 363.

⁵³Ibid., p. 363.

⁵³Ibid., 5th yr. No. 4, (1924), p. 82.

(2) Requests the Governing Commission to submit to it for consideration a report on the manner in which it would be possible, in the absence of troops, to carry into effect subparagraph three of paragraph 30 of the Saar Annex to the Treaty of Versailles, which lays down that it will be the duty of the Governing Commission to provide in all cases for the protection of persons and property in the Saar Basin. In preparing its report, the Governing Commission should take into account the possibility of obtaining the assistance of troops stationed outside the Saar Territory.

(3) Requests the Secretary-General to communicate a copy of this resolution to the German Government, in reply to its note of February 19, 1925.⁵⁴

The Governing Commission's report of January, 1926, emphasized the serious nature of the responsibility imposed upon it by the Treaty of protecting life and property in all circumstances; stating that such responsibility could not be met without a police force of at least 3,000 men; objecting that the financial resources of the Saar territory were not equal to the provision of so big a force. It quoted the decision of the Council of the League of Nations of February 13, 1920, whereby the Council was empowered to demand the maintenance or the recall of the French troops, in whole or in part, to preserve order in the Saar, pending the Constitution of the police force prescribed by paragraph 30 of the Saar Annex; stated that the police force had now reached the limit in strength imposed by the financial conditions,

⁵⁴ Ibid., 7th yr. No. 4, (April 1926), p. 527.

but that it was inadequate to meet the full implications of the responsibilities imposed upon the Commission of safeguarding persons and property "in all cases," and therefore submitted that the Commission should be entitled at any time and immediately to call upon troops stationed outside the territory, but near to it.⁵⁵

In the same report the Commission went on to quote paragraph 33 of the Saar Annex: "The Governing Commission shall have power to decide all questions arising from the interpretation of the preceding provisions....." It stated, as its own interpretation of that paragraph, that in case of need it was entitled in an emergency, on its own responsibility, and immediately to call upon troops stationed outside the Saar Territory to protect persons and property within the territory, and particularly to protect the mining installations and the railway system, the use of which, in the Commission's view, ought to be safeguarded in any contingency and by all available and appropriate means. It therefore formulated as its considered view that only the power to call in troops from without the territory could enable the Commission to discharge one of the most important obligations conferred upon it by the treaty. The report ended with a statement that the Commission had asked the French Government to withdraw from the Saar territory a battalion stationed at Saarbrücken so that the garrison would be reduced to one regiment of infantry and one of cavalry.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 528.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 528.

On March 18, 1926, the League Council considered that report. The rapporteur announced that the French Government had confirmed the information given by the Saar Commission about the French troops in the Saar, and had also declared that the withdrawal of the troops that remained in the territory would be effected step by step. He ended with a suggestion that pending the completion of the French withdrawal the Governing Commission should be reminded of its duty to safeguard in all cases the freedom of transit and transport over the railways of the Saar territory, and that the Commission itself be invited to submit proposals in that sense in time for the next meeting of the Council.⁵⁷ The Council thereupon passed a resolution "noting" the Governing Commission's report and approving the suggestions made by the rapporteur.⁵⁸ The proposals thus invited from the Governing Commission were made available to the Council March 12, 1927. They were embodied in a new report dated February 18, 1927, to which the Saar member of the Governing Commission had refused to agree.⁵⁹ It proposed:

- (1) that there should be placed at the Commission's disposal a special Railway Commission whose activities must be limited to the protection of railways, telephones, and telegraphs, and a special Defence Force of 800 men whose exclusive purpose it would be to safeguard transit and transport through the Saar territory;
- (2) that in the event of any danger arising to the Saar rail-

⁵⁷ L.N.O.J., 8th yr. No. 2, (Feb. 1927), p. 163.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 156.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 8th yr. No. 4, (April 1927), p. 404.

ways, the railway commission should have at its direct disposal not only the special Defence Force now proposed, but also two battalions of French troops to be stationed outside the territory at Saareguemines and Forbach, the particular duty of those battalions to be the protection of certain specified sectors of the Saar railway lines.⁶⁰

The League Council at that meeting passed a resolution which promised that the proposed Railway Commission and Railway Defence Force should be constituted within a maximum delay of three months, and therefore "the troops stationed in the Saar will be withdrawn within that period."⁶¹ The particular need for a special force to defend the railways arose from the circumstances that the lines of communication of the French Army of Occupation in the Rhineland passed through the Saar territory.

The Saar Railway Commission and Railway Defence Force were duly constituted according to the Council's resolution. The Defence Force was composed of contingents from the French, British and Belgian Armies of Occupation. It arrived at Saarbrücken near the end of June, 1927, by which time the remnants of the French troops had been withdrawn from the territory.⁶² At the end of 1929, the British Army of Occupation left the Rhineland, and the Railway Defence Force thereafter was composed only of French and Belgian troops.⁶³

Then December 12, 1930, following the evacuation of the Rhine Provinces in June, the Railway Commission and the Railway

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 404.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 417.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 8th yr. No. 9, (Sept. 1927), p. 1045.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 11th yr. No. 3, (March 1930), p. 274.

Defence Force left the Saar Territory. The maintenance of peace and order in the Saar Basin was thus left entirely in the hands of the Governing Commission, the local police and the gendarmerie. In case of emergency the Commission could call for help from French troops within easy reach from Saarbrücken.⁶⁴

At the League Council meeting of September, 1934, the late M. Barthou, then Foreign Minister of France, declared that France "had no intention of repudiating or evading her obligation if an appeal be made to her."⁶⁵ The relevant facts were that the French troops were posted ready for action; that the Saar Governing Commission regarded itself as entitled as of its own right and independently of the League of Nations to call upon them in case of need. That right was not disputed by any party except Germany.

From the beginning there was hostility between the Governing Commission and the people over whom they were appointed to rule. Protests by Saar inhabitants to the Council of the League at Geneva eventually brought some relief. March 24, 1922 the Council granted the requests of the Saarlanders for the creation of a Saar Parliament or Advisory Council (Landesrat) of thirty representatives elected by inhabitants of the Territory for a three year term; and to grant the right to vote for members of this advisory council to all persons more than twenty years of age who could claim the status of "inhabitants of the Saar."⁶⁶

⁶⁴Ibid., 12th yr. No. 1, (Jan. 1931), p. 9; ibid., No. 3,

⁶⁵Ibid., 15th yr. No. 11, Part I "Minutes of the Council," (March 1931), p. 559.

⁶⁶Ibid., 3rd yr. No. 5, (May 1922), pp. 413-15. (Nov. 1934), p. 1462.

The qualifications for a seat on the Advisory Council were: Persons must be more than twenty-five years of age, and must be native inhabitants of the Territory "who do not fill any elective or public post outside the Saar Territory..." The Chairman was to be appointed by the Governing Commission from among the inhabitants of the Territory.⁶⁷ The Advisory Council was to be convened by the Chairman of the Governing Commission, was to meet at least every three months, and was to be presented at the time of its convocation by the Chairman of the Governing Commission, with agenda to which it must confine itself.⁶⁸ The jurisdiction of this body was limited to changes in existing laws and matters of taxation. It was denied the right of initiative or interpellation. Any discussions on other subjects was to be considered null and void. "In particular, all discussions, motions, or resolutions tending either directly or indirectly to affect the legal situation created in the Saar Territory by the Treaty of Versailles or by the subsequent decrees of the Governing Commission shall be null and void."⁶⁹

The election of members to the Advisory Council was fought on German party lines, resulting in the choice of 16 Centre (Roman Catholic), 5 Social Democratic, 4 Peoples Party, 2 Communists and 3 other members.⁷⁰

The Commission also created a Technical Committee, consist-

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 415.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 413.

⁶⁹L.N.O.J., 3rd yr. No. 5, (May 1922), p. 416.

⁷⁰Ray, Sidney, "The Fate of the Saar," Current History, (Jan. 1935), p. 405.

ing of eight members appointed by the Commission for one year.⁷¹
 Its members were to be native inhabitants of the Saar, and it was
 to advise the Commission on all legislative matters which the
 latter might see fit to refer to it.⁷²

The newspapers and political parties in the Territory bitterly attacked the decree establishing the Advisory Council and Technical Committee.⁷³ There was a demand that the Advisory Council be given the right to put questions, to present grievances, and to participate in the drawing up of the agenda for its meetings. Other demands were for the right of initiative, and parliamentary immunity. They also objected to the appointment of the Chairman of the Advisory Council by the Governing Commission. They objected to the establishment of a Technical Committee as being "an anti-democratic institution--the object of which was to discount in the eyes of the world the wishes expressed by the elected representatives of the Advisory Council."⁷⁴ The occasion was used also for the purpose of drawing attention to old grievances which had not been remedied.

EDUCATION

No other issue, probably provoked more bitterness and animosity than the question of the French schools. "Under the control of the Governing Commission the inhabitants will retain their local assemblies, their religious liberties, their schools and

⁷¹Op. cit., 3rd yr. No. 5, (May 1922), p. 416.

⁷²"Eleventh Rept. Gov. Com.," L.N.O.J., 3rd yr. No. 5, (1930), p. 461.

⁷³"Twelfth Rept. Gov. Com.," ibid., 3rd yr. No. 8, Part 1 (1931), p. 768.

⁷⁴Ibid., No. 9, pp. 1046-52.

their language."⁷⁵

"The French State shall always have the right of establishing and maintaining, as incidental to the mines, primary or technical schools for its employees and their children, and of causing instruction therein to be given in the French language, in accordance with such curriculum and by such teachers as it may select."⁷⁶

An acute controversy has raged around these two articles in the Saar Annex to the Treaty. They were not intended to be incompatible, but the action of the French Government and the interpretation put on the Articles by the Governing Commission produced a great deal of trouble for the League. The Saarlanders complained that the French used political and economic pressure to induce the inhabitants to send their children to French schools at the mines where they might be weaned away from their natural loyalty to Germany. Pictures were circulated showing how the French provided buses to transport children to their schools while those who attended the German schools had to walk. According to the Germans they have tried to attract the children of the native German population by all kinds of privileges such as the national schools cannot offer, for instance free school outfits, clothes, less severe discipline, great laxity in case of non-attendance, promise of rewards to individual children if they induced other children to attend the French schools. This means, according to the Germans, that the very foundations of the Saar

⁷⁵Versailles Treaty, Saar Annex, Par. 28.

⁷⁶Ibid., Par. 14.

Territory settlement as laid down in the Treaty was shaken and that one of the most important clauses of the Treaty was actually voided.⁷⁷

In October 1920, the Governing Commission appointed a committee of resident professors and teachers to draw up a scheme for the reform of public education which would take into account the wishes of the inhabitants who were anxious for a uniform system.⁷⁸ A priest of the Saar Territory was placed in charge of the Department of Education.⁷⁹ July 10, 1920, two decrees were issued by the Governing Commission.⁸⁰ The first decree permitted children of employees of the Mines Administration, regardless of nationality to satisfy the compulsory education requirement by attendance at the schools of the Mining Administration. The second one allowed children of persons not employed in the mines to fulfill the educational obligations prescribed by law by attendance at these schools.⁸¹ The Commission stated that this step was taken in response to numerous requests from parents of German nationality to allow their children to attend the schools set up by the Mines Administration.⁸²

In 1922 to meet the needs of pupils who desired before leaving the primary schools, to prepare themselves for going to secondary schools in which French is a compulsory subject, special classes in French were organized in addition to the regular

⁷⁷L.N.O.J., 4th yr. No. 4, (April 1923), p. 415.

⁷⁸"Seventh Rept. Gov. Com.," L.N.O.J., (July 1921), p. 630.

⁷⁹"Sixth Rept. Gov. Com.," ibid., p. 205.

⁸⁰Op. cit., 4th yr. No. 4, (April 1923), pp. 417-20.

⁸¹ibid., p. 415.

⁸²"Seventh Rept. Gov. Com.," L.N.O.J., (Aug. 1921), p. 630.

"Eighth Rept. Gov. Com.," ibid., (Oct. 1921), p. 845.

courses in French.⁸³ To train the staff required for these courses forty teachers were sent to the vacation courses in France at Boulogne-Sur-Mer and Nancy to improve their knowledge of French. The selection was made from those, who as a result of a written and oral examination were singled out as the best qualified. These persons were all volunteers. In addition, a certain number of special courses were instituted for less-advanced teachers who might desire to teach French.⁸⁴

As a matter of fact, events proved that the number of parents desiring to have their children educated at the schools maintained by the French mines was by no means negligible. On January 15, 1923, the total number of children on the registers of these schools which are only twenty in number was 4,408; of these, 3,798 were of German nationality including 2,126 children of employees of the mines.

These figures also show that the existence of the national schools in the Territory were in no way endangered by the growth of the schools maintained by the Mines Administration. The total of 4,400 pupils must be compared with the number of pupils attending the national schools, amounting to 123,000.⁸⁵

A higher technical school was also established so the people of the Saar Territory might be able to complete their professional education in their own country.⁸⁶

The Governing Commission paid considerable attention to ed-

⁸³"Eighth Rept. Gov. Com.," ibid., (Oct. 1921), p. 845.

⁸⁴ibid., p. 845.

⁸⁵N.O.J., 4th yr. No. 4, op. cit., (Apr. 1923), p. 420.

⁸⁶"Seventh Rept. Gov. Com.," 3rd yr. op. cit., p. 631.

uation. Its reports to the Council give copious information on the education reform and the development of vocational training. During the year 1926 the Saar authorities sent a number of teachers to the Rhine Provinces in order to acquaint themselves with new German methods.

The Department of Education studied the propagation of the League ideals. It edited a pamphlet on the history and principles of the League and on suitable methods of instruction on the subject in public education. This pamphlet was sent to all teachers with a circular recommending that children should receive instruction in the existence and aims of the League. The Department of Education also sent a certain number of teachers and professors to the international courses organized at Geneva.⁸⁷

In April 1930, the Centre group of the Saar Advisory Council submitted to the Governing Commission a complaint concerning certain cases of pressure exercised in connection with the enrollment of pupils in the primary schools of the French State mines in the Saar. It was asserted that certain miners had been urged by teachers or officials of the mines to send their children to the mines school, under more or less explicit threats of unpleasant consequences if they failed to do so.⁸⁸ These accusations are hardly substantiated by the smallness of the number of German children in the schools, more than half of whom, too, are not children of miners.

The Governing Commission also had before it a dossier sub-

⁸⁷ Ann. O. J., 8th yr. No. 3, (March 1927), p. 303.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 4th yr. No. 4, (April 1923), p. 416-17; ibid., 12th yr. No. 6, (June 1931), p. 992.

mitted by the Mines Administration, making similar complaints against certain teachers, members of the clergy and municipal administrations, who were accused of having brought pressure to bear by various means on the parents of children attending the mines schools. It is impossible to decide to what extent these allegations are well founded.⁸⁹

The Governing Commission ordered an inquiry to be carried out as a result of which it found; That, as regards the Centre group's complaint, the inquiry had not proved that direct or indirect pressure had been exercised upon the miners to induce them to send their children to the mines school; that the Administration had faithfully observed the Governing Commission's declaration of February 6, 1925; that, at the most, a few subordinate officials or masters of the mines school may have acted contrary to this declaration; that, as regards the complaint of the Mines Administration, the charges were in most cases not proved, but it is found that certain activities were contrary to the Governing Commission's declaration of February 6, 1925.

The Commission also noted the propaganda carried on for or against the mines school, but was of the opinion that it had neither the right nor the power to forbid propaganda, provided no unlawful means were used. It asked the persons concerned to refrain from any acts or words which might appear to involve compulsion, and to avoid even any appearance of such compulsion. It added that the matter was solely one for the free decision of the

⁸⁹ Ibid., 4th yr. No. 4, (April 1923), p. 416.

parents, and that this decision must be universally respected.⁹⁰

In 1934 the Education Department, in its anxiety to prevent the political campaign, started in view of the plebiscite, from invading the schools, was compelled to take various steps. These included the prohibition of leave of absence for political excursions of pupils either in the Saar or outside the territory; stricter instructions regarding the prohibition to introduce school text-books without the previous approval of the supervisory authority; prohibition to stop instruction or to decorate the schools on the occasion of political festivals; prohibition for the school-children to sing political songs when walking out under the supervision of their teachers; instructions to the teaching staff and to the children regarding their relations with Jewish children; prohibition to distribute tracts in the schools without the special approval of the Education Department; prohibition for the teaching staff and the pupils to bring political uniforms or badges into the school; prohibition of political propaganda within the school and at school festivals organized by the school outside the school establishments.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Ibid., (1930-31), p. 195-6.

⁹¹ "58th Rept. Gov. Com.," L.N.O.J., 15th yr. No. 9, (1934), p. 1135.

CHAPTER V
THE POLITICAL SITUATION

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On all important issues that have arisen in the Saar the leaders of the principal political parties and the most influential newspapers of the Territory have made common cause with the German government against the Governing Commission. The German Government has sent notes, the political parties have dispatched petitions, memorials, and protesting delegations to Geneva; and the local press, as well as the German press outside the Saar, has constantly attacked the Governing Commission and its policies.

On November 25, 1923, certain political parties represented on the Advisory Council sent a petition to the League complaining of preponderant French influence in the government of the Territory, and criticized the economic and financial policy of the government as well as its handling of the housing situation.¹

The newspapers and political parties bitterly attacked the decree establishing the Advisory Council and Technical Committee. The political parties represented at the first meeting of the Advisory Council grasped the opportunity to review their grievances against the Governing Commission. The Centre Party stated that the Advisory Council "limits our political rights much more

¹"Rept. Gov. Com.," L.N.O.J., 5th yr. No. 9, (Sept. 1924), p. 1186.

strictly than does the Treaty of Versailles."² Their chief complaints were to secure "the withdrawal of the French troops; the abrogation of the decree defining the status of a Saar inhabitant; the abolition of the French schools in their present form; the withdrawal of the foreign officials in the service of the Saar administration; in short a complete reversal of the Frenchifying policy which has been followed hitherto."³ The condition upon which the Centre Party would cooperate with the Governing Commission was the fulfillment by the latter, "in a spirit of strict neutrality the mission entrusted to it by the League of Nations; to have no duty and no interest other than the welfare of the Saar Territory."

The Democratic party held the opinion that "no cooperation can serve any useful purpose unless the Governing Commission completely changes the policy which it has hitherto pursued. This policy, the sole aim of which was to separate the Saar Territory from its mother country, has produced a deep sense of disappointment in the people of the Saar."

The Social Democratic party protested also "against the establishment of a Technical Committee--an anti-democratic institution--the object of which is to discount in the eyes of the world the wishes expressed by the elected representatives of the Landesrat" (Advisory Council).⁴ The Social Democratic party laid down the following condition:

"The indispensable condition for the co-operation of the

²"Rept. Gov. Com." ibid., 3rd yr. No. 9, (Sept. 1922), pp. 1046-52.

³Ibid., p. 1046.

⁴Ibid., p. 1048.

Social Democratic Party is that the Governing Commission should cease to follow the French annexationist policy, which leads it openly to propose to transform the Saar Territory, in fifteen years, into a country politically and intellectually ripe for annexation to France." The spokesmen of the other parties expressed similar sentiments.⁵

Since 1920 the political history of the Saar has been a long series of protests from political parties, labor organizations and public bodies, against what they have considered attempts to deprive them of their national institutions, and to force them under the political, cultural and economic influence of France. The Council of the League of Nations was buried under an unceasing stream of petitions and objections, coming from both the Saar and the Reich.

These activities greatly increased after the advent to power of the National Socialist party and the approach of the plebiscite.

The Radical-Socialist party believed that the elimination of political controversy over the future of the Saar would make possible an economic agreement with Germany. This point of view was much in evidence during the Franco-German rapprochement in 1926-1929. In 1929 the radical "Ligue des Droits de l'Homme" made a study of the Saar question and in its findings advocated the abandonment of the plebiscite. It wished to see the return of the Saar to German sovereignty, and an economic agreement between Germany and France that would safeguard French interest. September 27, 1929, Aristide Briand opened with the German Government

⁵ Ibid., p. 1048.

official negotiations which had been prepared by a long preliminary exchange of views between Stresemann and himself. These negotiations proved futile. Stresemann died October 22, 1929; the Briand Government was overthrown and the premiership passed to Tardieu.

The establishment of a National Socialist government in Germany affected the attitude of the French radicals. Many of those who were unreservedly in favor of an immediate return of the Saar to Germany advocated the maintenance of the status quo on the ground that it would mean defeat to the Hitler rule.

In July, 1933 the Deutsche Front came into existence as a combination of the non-socialist parties. In the autumn of 1933, all parties in the Saar, with the exception of the Social Democrats and the Communists, dissolved, merged themselves in the Deutsche Front. It numbered about 450,000 persons, claiming that it represented 93 per cent of the future plebiscite voters, and controlled the policy of most of the Saar newspapers.⁶ The Deutsche Front was extremely well organized and had ramifications all over the Territory.⁷ Each member was formally registered, had a membership card, and paid monthly dues of one franc. The unemployed paid ten centimes. This organization professed to be above party and to have no object but the restoration of the Saar to Germany.⁸ The two most obvious characteristics of the Saarlanders are that

⁶ Fay, Sidney B., "The Fate of the Saar," Current History, (Jan. 1935), p. 405.

⁷ L.N.O.J., 15th yr. No. 12, Part 1, (Dec. 1934), p. 1647.

⁸ Ibid., p. 1647.

most of them are Catholics, and that an even larger majority consists of industrial workers. When the relations between Nazis and Catholics within the Reich were strained, the Saar Catholics became increasingly uneasy. In March 1934, therefore, through the influence of Papen, then Reich Commissioner of the Saar, and Reehling, the great iron magnate of Völklingen, the Deutsche Front was reorganized on a less specifically Nazi basis; its anti-clerical leader Spaniol, was replaced by Pirro.⁹ Pirro demanded the maintenance of the strictest discipline and the avoidance of any breaches of the law, an attitude which was moreover essentially in the tradition of the Saar people.¹⁰ The Deutsche Front worked with a number of advantages. In the first place the Saarlanders are obviously Germans by race, language, and habits, they naturally resented the presence of French troops, they resented French officials in the League administration and in the mines which were, according to the Peace Treaty taken over from Germany by the French State. The League Commission which is not only international, but also authoritarian, aroused inevitable indignation. The second advantage of the Deutsche Front may be described as the practice of Nazi technique. Germany placed unlimited funds at the disposal of the Nazis of the Saar. The German wireless declared that the Saar was impoverished by its separation from the Reich and would be ruined if it was not returned.¹¹ Without doubt many joined the Deutsche Front simply because they

⁹Florinsky, Michael T., "The Saar Struggle," (1934), p. 133.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 136.

¹¹Wiskemann, Elizabeth, "In the Saar This Summer," The Contemporary Review, (Sept. 1934), pp. 317-18.

foresaw unpleasantness after January 1935.¹² The treatment which the enemies of the Nazis in Germany received at the hands of the Government was not without its effects.

Of the three large morning papers which call themselves "organs of the Deutsche Front" only one, the "Deutsche Front" is definitely Nazi. The other two, the "Saarbrücken Zeitung" and the "Landes-Zeitung," were much more reserved; the "Landes-Zeitung," an organ of Roman Catholics, often spoke sternly of the conflict between Hitler and the Vatican. The Deutsche Front therefore made its fight for reunion with Germany not because it endorsed the whole of the Hitler policy, but because its members believed that the Saar is German and must go back to Germany. The leaders of the opposition parties and the editors of the opposition newspapers complained of receiving menacing letters, but they continued nevertheless to go about unmolested and very much as they pleased.¹³

There was no organization or campaign for the union of the Saar with France. Those who opposed reunion were made up of several elements united by their common refusal to be incorporated in Germany under Hitler. The Deutsche Front called them "separatists". They were supporters of the status quo. The only pro-French element in the opposition was an organization in the city of Saarlouis, organized by Dr. Hecter. It claimed to have a membership of 10,000 and many more followers. The political

¹² L.N.O.J., 15th yr. No. 12, (Sept. 1934), p. 1648.
¹³ Ibid., (Dec. 1934), pp. 1647-48.

significance of Dr. Hector and his Union was negligible.¹⁴

A loose organization of the Socialists and Communists known as the *Freiheitsfront* or anti-Fascist front was far more important. Its recognized leaders were Max Braun, of the German Social Democratic party, and Fritz Pfordt, a Communist. Max Braun was a staunch supporter of the German cause before the rise of Hitler. He maintained that the Saar was German and that it wanted to go back to Germany, but not to Hitler's Germany. The Braun program comprised three points. He demanded a democratic system, perhaps with a League Commissioner at the head of it, to replace the Governing Commission; the insertion in the Saar's new constitution of a provision for a new plebiscite, to take place within a given number of years; and lastly, the joint ownership of the mines by the French and the Saar Governments. Similar views were expressed by Fritz Pfordt, leader of the Communist party. Both believed that the Saar was German and must go back to Germany, but to a free Germany.¹⁵

The third element in the opposition was a section of Catholic opinion. This group published the "Neuve Saar-Post", a newspaper that began to appear in the spring of 1934. Like the Socialist and the Communists the "Neuve Saar-Post" declared itself in favor of union with Germany but against Hitler. For them, too, the status quo was merely a temporary expedient.

The last years of the Saar interlude were characterized by an intense propagandizing activity. This time the initiative was

¹⁴Florinsky, Michael, op. cit., p. 140.
¹⁵Ibid., p. 139.

taken by Germany. An underground campaign beginning after the abortive rapprochement of 1929-30, bore its fruit in the municipal elections of November, 1932. Of the 4,301 municipal councillors elected that month, only seven were for a continuation of the status quo. If the Saar plebiscite had been held that autumn (Hitler had not yet come to power) it would probably have shown a 95 to 5 per cent, perhaps a 98 to 2 percent, desire for return to Germany.¹⁶

The rise of Adolph Hitler had immeasurably complicated the situation. His first acts were to expel many Jews, to diminish the power of the Catholic Centre party and persecute the Socialists. Many Jews fled to the Saar and began a counter-campaign. Saar newspapers representing Centre and Socialist parties at first opposed Hitler. But they too quickly succumbed to the idea of a greater Germany. Concrete manifestation of the strength of the German Front came in August, 1933, when 80,000 Saarlanders at Niederwald demonstrated their loyalty to the Reich. By October 1934 impartial observers estimated that 80 per cent of the qualified voters were members of the United Front.¹⁷

The rise of Hitler also greatly complicated the position of the Governing Commission. Since April 1932, Geoffrey G. Knox, a member of the British diplomatic service, had been the Commission's Chairman. The other members of the Commission in 1932-34, were Dr. D'Ehrnrooth, Finland; Herr Kossman, Sarr; M.

¹⁶Dean, Edgar Packard, "The Saar and Human Nature," Harpers Magazine, (Jan. 1935), p. 233.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 232.

Morize, France; and Dr. Zoricic, Yugoslavia. Mr. Knox's predecessor, Sir Ernest Wilton, had been very unpopular and the change of chairman was most welcome.¹⁸ For a while things seemed to be very satisfactory but this did not last long. The atmosphere became heated and tense by the sharp protests from the political parties and the measures taken by the Governing Commission. The growth of the National Socialist party caused the first serious trouble for Mr. Knox. As head of the Department of the Interior he was directly responsible for police measures, although the more important decisions were submitted to the Commission. In the summer of 1932 the Governing Commission prohibited marches and night drilling, and put severe restrictions on the manufacture, possession and storing of explosives. In November it ordered the immediate dissolution of all the National Socialist organizations, especially of the storm troops and defense troops with all their auxiliary services, including the closing of their barracks. In March 1933 the Governing Commission prohibited, provisionally, all political meetings and issued an ordinance which renewed the ban on wearing uniforms and decorations, a ban first declared in an ordinance of 1928. This measure was specifically directed against the National Socialist party. All gatherings of this party, including informal evening discussions were to cease until further orders.¹⁹ On May 20, 1933, the Governing Commission issued three ordinances which greatly extended its police powers. The Decree laid down

¹⁸ "Fifteenth Rept. Gov. Com.," L.N.O.J., 13th yr. No. 9, (Sept. 1932), p. 1558.

¹⁹ Ibid., 14th yr. No. 6, Part 1, (June 1933), p. 719.

stricter regulations with regard to political meetings and demonstrations; it empowered the authorities to prohibit meetings and processions in certain cases, or to break them up.²⁰

The Deutsche Front was quick to capitalize upon the unpopular moves of the Commission, even though they were designed solely to safeguard the rights of the people. They dubbed the League's administration as "Negerregierung" or "Nigger Government" with a Kolonial system--colonies system of rule.

When the open air political gatherings were stopped--to prevent clashes between the Communists and Brownshirts--the Nazis promptly rented every available hall in the territory for six months--or until the plebiscite was held. They thought to prevent legal assemblage of the Opposition.²¹ From across the Saar's frontiers--from Frankfurt, Cologne, Mannheim--Nazi radio stations nightly saturated the air with denunciations of the League, its Commission, France and even the Plebiscite Committee.²²

The machine of propaganda, coercion, and terrorism began to function. The Nazis intensified their Saar propaganda. There is no doubt that Nazi clubs in Saarbrücken, Saarlouis, and other towns were inspired by Berlin.

Knox reported to the League that he found unimpeachable evidence that Nazi clubs in the Saar corresponded with official Nazi organization in Germany; that the latter had taxed each of the three and one half million members of the German Workers Front

²⁰ibid., 14th yr. No. 10, Part 1, (Oct. 1933), p. 1126.

²¹Johnson, Albin E., "Quandary in the Saar," New Outlook (Nov. 1934), p. 22.

²²L.N.O.J., 15th yr. No. 12, (Dec. 1934), p. 1648; ibid., 15th yr. No. 10, p. 1221.

ten cents a month for campaign funds in the Saar. Thousands of dollars crossed the frontiers to buy Saar papers, bribe the doubtful, and strengthen the zealots. Many young men went from the Saar to Germany to receive training in Nazi military camps.²³ To insure complete success in the elections, the Nazis communicated with Saarlanders living abroad and offered them trips to the homeland with all expenses paid. The Nazis own practically all the newspapers. Some were so vitriolic in their criticism that Knox was obliged to censor them; others coming from Germany were prohibited.²⁴

A police detachment, said to have been led by police commissioner Machts and acting under the authority of Mr. Knox, made a search of the premises of the German Front in Saarbrücken on July 20, carried off a quantity of documents, turned off the gas and water, and closed and sealed the doors. The German Front demanded back its papers. A Saar Court of law, after examining them, ordered their restitution, but Mr. Knox cited a clause in an old Prussian law as justification for retaining them, thus bringing himself into direct conflict with the Saar courts.²⁵

In a letter to the League of Nations, made public on September 1, and giving extracts from the seized papers, Mr. Knox declared that they contained evidence that the German Front was maintaining constant relations with the Nazi authorities in the Reich; was engaged in espionage; that some 16,000 young Saarland-

²³ *Ibid.*, 15th yr. No. 12, Part 1, (Dec. 1934), p. 1658.
²⁴ Dean, Edgar P., *op. cit.*, (Jan. 1935), p. 234.
²⁵ Fay, Sidney B., *op. cit.*, (Jan. 1935), p. 406.

ers had been serving in the German Labor Camps; and that he feared they were getting a military training and might try to use force at the time of the plebiscite. The German Front and the German government published statements aiming to show that his suspicions and fears were without foundations.²⁶ Moreover, French troops close to the frontier were prepared to intervene if the Nazis had attempted any kind of a putsch on January 13.

A dozen different threads weave in and out of the tangled skein which goes to make up the economic, political, and cultural fabric that is the Saar today, all or any of which could have hopelessly snarled the best laid plans of plebiscite campaigners. Aside from sentimentalism and emotionalism, that indefinable affection for the land of one's birth, the tongue of one's ancestors, which alone would have been sufficient in pre-Hitler days to raise 98 per cent of the voices in the Saar for Germany, the religious element was unquestionably the most potent factor immediately before the plebiscite. In estimating the role the church could have played in the determination of the future status of the Saar one must take into consideration the fact that the inhabitants of the territory are about 73 per cent Roman Catholics.

The assassinations of Eric Klausener, political chief of Catholic Action, and of Adelbert Probst, head of the Catholic Youth Movement, the outlawry of the Centre Party of ex-Chancellor Brüning, the persistent persecution of Cardinal Faulhaber and other religious leaders in Bavaria, the Rhineland,

²⁶ L.N.O.J., 15th yr. No. 10, Part 1, (Oct. 1934), p. 1188.

the Saar and the Palatinate, kindled a resentment which will smolder for years.²⁷ The extreme importance of the Catholic question in its bearing on the issue of the plebiscite was recognized both in the Saar and in Berlin.

Torn by conflicting political passions, crushed between economic millstones, dominated by deep-rooted religious convictions, the Saarlander had but one common anchor, their racial homogeneity with Germany. According to G. C. Knox, Chairman, of the Governing Board, 2,000 additional police, recruited from neutral regions, were needed to maintain peace and order. "Without them the 'free, secret and trustworthy' plebiscite prescribed by the Peace Treaties guaranteed by the League Council and 'promised' by Berlin will be a farce," Knox said. His long-standing plea for additional police was granted when an international army of 3,300 troops were recruited from England, Italy, Sweden, and Holland, to keep peace between France and Germany during the Saar Territory Plebiscite.

²⁷ Johnson, Albin E., op. cit., (Nov. 1934), p. 19.

CHAPTER VI
LABOR AND SOCIAL RELATIONS

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Social conditions in the Saar are largely determined by the character of the district, which is that of a highly developed and densely populated industrial region. Agriculture is of minor importance, the Saar being capable of producing only part of its domestic requirements. Three-fourths of the population are engaged in trade, industry, commerce and railway work. The miners and their families alone constitute a third of the total population,

One third of the miners own their homes, many of them possessing land and cattle, whereby they are enabled to alleviate the hardships of critical times. There is a strong inclination, unequalled anywhere else, on the part of the working population to settle permanently in the Saar Territory.

The density of the population (431 inhabitants per square kilometer), due to the conglomeration of big masses in a comparatively small area, is three times as high as that of the rest of Germany (139), and even higher than that of England (264) and Belgium (266).¹ In the wide Saar Valley, as well as in the Sulzbach and Fishbach valleys, between Saarbrücken and Neunkirchen, the center of the coal mining industry, an unin-

¹Cartellieri, Dr. Walter, The Territory of the Saar, Chicago Tribune Saar Supplement, No. 2, (June 12, 1934), p. 8.

interrupted succession of settlements and villages is to be found everywhere stretching for many kilometers along the highways. And yet the land of the Saar has preserved its manifold scenic charms, particularly in the lower Saar Valley, along the River Blies and in the Warndt region. The visitor, prepared for the banal aspects of an industrial center full of noise and smoke, cannot fail to be pleasantly surprised by the harmony between industry and the rural landscape. One third of the country is still densely covered with forests. Prince Wilhelm-Heinrich von Nassau-Saarbrücken, one of the former rulers of the land, introduced, in the middle of the eighteenth century, the use of coal and charcoal for combustion, in order to save the rich woods from destruction. The mining district proper borders to the north and south on the agricultural regions of the country, the population of which supplies the industrial centers with a considerable contingent of workers.²

Nearly 100 years ago the Prussian mining administration aided the miners in acquiring land and homes. Often this aid was extended through a miners' society called the "Knappschaft," which dates from the middle of the eighteenth century. This organization has behind it a tradition of accomplishment and progress. Members of this Knappschaft, as in certain lodges of America, wear distinctive uniform on gala days--a black velvet coat, a hat with badge and feathers, a miner's lamp and a cane. For more than 150 years all Saar miners who have been in every

² Ibid.

way men of good repute have been eligible to join the Knappschaft. It grants pensions to men past 50, and aids members in buying homes.³

In this way thousands of dwelling houses passed into the ownership of the workers, many of whom also kept live stock on surrounding pastureland. About two-thirds of the married workmen belonged to this class of small holders before the war. The French administration of the mines discontinued the social policy pursued by the Prussian Government. Instead of providing the workers with homes of their own, they built large tenement houses for them where numerous workmen and their families live close together. In other respects, the social status of the Saar workers deteriorated in consequence of the post-war changes. If it were not for the contributions received from Germany, the social insurance system of the Saar would have discontinued.

Less than ten percent of the Saar population earn their living from the farm. Some ninety per cent spend all or most of their working hours in mine, mill, trade, transportation, or allied pursuits. Before industry absorbed so many, Saar workmen used to tramp all over middle Europe as peddlers, tinkers, and doers of odd jobs.⁴

M. P. Waelbroeck who made for the International Labor Office a most interesting investigation of industrial relations in the French mines of the Saar, writes: "In this mining country, whe

³ Simpich, Frederick, "What Is The Saar," The National Geographic Magazine, (Feb. 1935), p. 247.

⁴ Ibid., p. 248.

coal has been used for industrial purposes for over a century, a real mining population has come into existence whose occupation is honored above all others so that a young man, as a rule, has no ambition other than to follow his father down into the pit as soon as he has reached the proper age. Many workers employed in other industries, even those in which they are better paid, such as the building industry, would be happy to go down into the mines, if only they could gain admission." In the Saar mines employment has almost a hereditary character, passing from father to son.⁵

Saar mining offers certain advantages which one does not always find in other industries. The most important is the security of employment. Once admitted, the miner is reasonably sure that he will continue to work until the age of retirement, which is about fifty, when he begins to draw a pension. In recent years however the situation has changed to his disadvantage. The French Administration carried on a work of re-organization which deeply affected the miners in their work. The administration achieved considerable success in increasing the per capita production of the mines. This was done by applying to the mines the principle of efficiency. It was not accompanied by an increase in total production and had the social consequence of intensifying unemployment.⁶ Draastic changes were dictated by the depression in the coal market and the accumulation of coal. They were also accompanied, beginning in 1927, by a mass dismissal of workers. The first to go were miners residing outside the territory of

⁵Florinsky, Michael T., The Saar Struggle, (1934), pp. 91-2.
⁶Ibid., p. 57.

the Saar. The other groups to lose their jobs included men who were eligible for a pension and those who had a better chance of finding other employment.⁷ Mining also offers opportunities for advancement and higher earnings. The standard wage of a full-fledged miner is not reached until a man has worked under ground for six years, his rate of pay increasing in the meantime every two years. Higher rewards are paid for professional skill. In the computation of monthly wages there is kept open a variable which reflects the average productivity of the worker in the course of the month. Finally he has the opportunity of obtaining the position of "overman" by studying in the special classes maintained by the mining administration.⁸

To see how thoroughly German the region is, in speech and sentiment, one has only to mingle with any holiday crowds and listen to the songs, the speeches, and the music, or read the papers, or see what crowds listen to radio broadcasts from Frankfurt and Stuttgart.

On any anniversary of the battles of 1870, some of which were fought hereabouts, one sees men in old style Prince Alberts and top hats making speeches, bands playing familiar German airs, and crowds flocking out to lay wreathes on the war monuments about Saarbrücken.⁹

From the economic point of view, the situation in the Saar Territory, during the year October, 1926 to October, 1927, pre-

⁷Ibid., p. 96.

⁸Ibid., p. 94-5.

⁹Simpich, Frederick, op. cit., pp. 245-46.

sented certain difficulties owing to rapid appreciation of the franc, which caused some disproportion between the economic conditions and the export requirements of the Territory. The main effort of the Governing Commission bore accordingly on the economic adjustment of the Territory to the new monetary conditions. The principal measures taken were the reduction of the price of coal and railway tariffs, the establishment of special tariffs for the export of Saar products to Germany and via Antwerp, and a reduction of the income taxes. They were accompanied by a fall in wages and a civil service salary reform.

On November 10, 1926, the French and German Governments concluded an arrangement for the purpose of adjusting the Saar customs regime to conditions resulting from the creation of the Steel Trust. This arrangement gave the Saar finishing industry certain export facilities as regards Germany and enabled the latter to export duty-free to the Saar certain products and machines. The measures resulted in an improvement of the situation, more particularly as regarded the cost of living and the labor market. Nevertheless, the difficulties experienced by the coal mines in marketing their products did not disappear.¹⁰

The conclusion of the Franco-German Commercial Treaty of August 17, 1927, was an event of considerable importance for the Territory. The German and French Governments agreed to begin negotiations in October with a view of adjusting the Franco-German agreement on the commercial operations of the Territory

¹⁰ The League of Nations from Year to Year, "The Saar," (Oct. 1926-27), p. 134.

to the situation created by the new commercial treaty.¹¹ The work of the Commission was not limited to ensuring the economic prosperity of the Territory, or to measures against unemployment. Dwellings were built to cope with the housing crisis; a general road improvement program was executed; the number of telephone lines between the Saar and Germany, and the Saar and France was increased; officials were appointed to study methods of intensive cultivation; a food inspection office was created; hospitals were enlarged and improved; and relief was provided for war-disabled and war victims.

In the economic field, the most important event during 1927-1928 was the signature of the Franco-German agreement on commerce between the Saar and Germany. This agreement extended the German markets for the Saar heavy industries and the finishing, porcelain, glass, chemical and tobacco industries and provided fresh markets for the furnishing and paper industries and the agricultural products of the northern part of the Territory. It replaced various provisional arrangements, and regulated the entire trade between the Saar and Germany. The Commission stated in one of its reports that it was "a guarantee for the stability and the development of the economic life of the Territory."¹²

The European coal crisis made it difficult for Saar coal to find a market and the State Mining Administration was obliged to introduce compulsory days of unemployment and to discharge a certain number of workmen. Between October 1st and December

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

¹² *Ibid.*, (Oct. 1927, to Nov. 30, 1928), p. 209.

31, 1928, approximately 3,800 workers were dismissed, 2,000 of whom were inhabitants of the Territory.

In spite of these discharges, the effectives of the Saar mines remained higher than the 1920 figure. Towards the middle of June, the number unemployed only amounted to 2,805 as with 4,125 in April of the same year. To assist the discharged workmen, the Governing Commission decided, in March 1928, to employ them on Government or subsidised work.

It began negotiations with the French government for the revision of the 1924 Regulations concerning the contribution of the mines to the Saar budget. The Governing Commission came to an agreement with the French Government based on the maintenance of the status quo as regards the contribution of the mines to the budget of the Territory. In subscribing to this arrangement, the Governing Commission bore in mind that the depression in the coal market would make it difficult to increase the burden of the mines, and that any new taxes would result in a rise in coal prices in districts where there was no competition, more particularly in the Saar Basin itself.¹³

The number of unemployed rose from 12,900 in December 1930 to 14,800 in May 1931. These figures are twice as high as those for the corresponding months of 1930. The appropriations for unemployment relief, however, had been based on the 1930 figures. The Governing Commission was therefore faced with a deficit, which was increased still further by the falling off in railway traffic.¹⁴

¹³ Ibid., p. 210.

¹⁴ L.N.O.J., 15th yr. No. 4, (April 1934), p. 399.

As from July 1st, 1931, and provisionally until April 1st, 1932, the basic salaries and allowances of officials were reduced by six per cent. Although their salaries were fixed by the League Council, the members of the Governing Commission spontaneously decided to give back six per cent of their salaries to the Saar Territory. In the heavy-metal industry and in the Saar mines, the collective wage contracts were denounced and wages were reduced by approximately six and one-half per cent.¹⁵

The general budget adopted for the financial year April 1st, 1931 to March 30, 1932, showed a total expenditure of 521 million francs with a credit balance of approximately 1,400,000 francs. In order to balance the budget, a sum of about 35 million francs was transferred from the surplus for the financial year 1927.¹⁶

The assets of the Governing Commission amounted, on March 10th, 1931 to 180,000,000 francs derived from the surplus of previous financial years. The capital expenditure for purposes of general utility amounted to some 74,000,000 francs. The financial situation made it necessary for the Commission to exercise even greater care than hitherto as regards the liquidation of its assets.

The Governing Commission stated that only the reserves built up in prosperous years with a view to meeting emergencies enabled it to avoid or postpone recourse to further taxation.¹⁷

In the opinion of M. Waelbroeck, the trade unions were large-

¹⁵ The League of Nations From Year to Year, "The Saar," (1930-31), p. 194.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 195.

¹⁷ L.N.O.J., 15th yr. No. 5, (May 1934), p. 440.

ly instrumental in making labor accept without a protest both the drastic methods of "efficiency" which so many resented, and simultaneous dismissal of thousands of workers. It was hoped at the time that these changes would make unnecessary any further dismissals, and thus restore to the remaining workers that security of employment which they so deeply needed. These expectations failed to materialize. In 1919 the Saar mines employed 61,000 men. In 1924 the record figure of 75,000 was reached, but a continuous decline set in during the following years. In 1930 the mines employed 57,000 men; in 1932, 46,000; in 1933, 45,000. In June 1934 the total number employed was 44,714, at the end of December 1934, 45,029.¹⁸ This does not compare favorably with the 57,000 employed in 1913, especially if one takes into consideration the growth of the mining population in the preceding twenty years. No wonder the trade union leaders and the men themselves speak today with considerable bitterness of the efficiency policy of the French Administration.¹⁹

The active membership of the Knappschaft has been reduced by 38 per cent with the falling off in the number of miners employed, and its pension list has increased by 68 per cent. In 1934 some 45,000 active members were supporting more than 26,000 pensioners. In spite of the assistance given to the Knappschaft by the Governing Commission (3.5 million francs in 1932-1933),

¹⁸ Ibid., No. 9, (Sept. 1934), p. 1127.

¹⁹ Florinsky, Michael T., op. cit., p. 98.

pensions were reduced. These figures, which were quoted by Kiefer, were widely used in the plebiscite campaign and they were much nearer to the heart of the miner than elaborate arguments about international exchanges.²⁰ The introduction of the seven and a half hour day for underground workers, an achievement of which the French Administration is rightly proud, would have been more appreciated by the men if it had not been followed by unemployment and the reduction of wages.

According to information obtained by the Department of Labor, the grants made by the Governing Commission for repairs to dwellings provided a considerable amount of work. At a conservative estimate they procured 73,012 working days. For the financial year 1934, the Governing Commission voted a grant of 1,400,000 francs.²¹

TRADE UNIONS

The trade unions in the Territory of the Saar were, from the time of their founding, members of the central trade union organizations in Germany. When the Saar on January 10, 1920, was removed from the administrative sovereignty of Germany, that fact did not in the least change their relations with the central organizations in Germany. They remained a part of the German trade union movement. The headquarters of all trade unions in the Saar were in the German Reich. The central administrations of the various trade unions in Germany were the final authority

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²¹ Ibid., p. 99.

²¹ L.N.O.J., 15th yr. No. 5, (May 1934), p. 450.

for the member organizations in the Saar. This arrangement of trade union conditions met the wishes of the workers in the Saar, who refused with the greatest determination every effort to separate them from the central organizations in Germany. The Saar Government Commission had to take account of this determination.²²

The worker's movement in the Saar took as many directions as it did in the Reich. The workers of Christian-Nationalist tendency belonged to the "Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund." Those whose politics were Social Democratic belonged to the "Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund" and Liberal Democratic workers in the Saar to the "Deutscher Gewerkschaftsring." In the Saar, the "Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund" had the most members and the "Deutscher Gewerkschaftsring" the fewest.

This line-up of unions ceased after June, 1933. May 1, 1933 the whole German trade union in the Reich was united in the "Deutsche Arbeitsfront." That put an end to the varying tendencies of the trade union movement. But the trade unions in the Saar Territory could not transfer to the "Deutsche Arbeitsfront." The special economic and social conditions in the Saar as well as the Territory's legislation and administration compelled the various trade unions to remain independent organizations. Furthermore, changes in the Saar legislation covering organizations in the Reich made impossible the incorporation

²²Kiefer, Peter, "The Saar Workers' Central Organization," Chicago Tribune, Saar Supplement, No. 2 (1934) p. 16.

of the trade unions of the Saar Territory in the "Deutsche Arbeitsfront."²³ The Saar trade unions, now independent, no longer had central organizations in Germany. It became desirable to establish a new central organization to serve in the best way possible the economic, social, and general interests of the workers. The aim was to unite all existing organizations in one great German trade union organization. On October 11, 1933 the members of most of the trade unions met and founded the "Deutsche Gewerkschaftsfront Saar" (German Trade Unions Front in the Saar). It was joined from the very beginning by thirteen trade unions representing all the local industries, seven associations of employees working in private enterprises, and three unions of government employees. It represented 73,000 workers of all political colorings, except the Socialists. This organization was not identical with the "Deutsche Arbeitsfront," but had friendly relations with it. Peter Kiefer, the well-known miner leader became its leader. The aim of the new organization was the safeguarding of the workers interests. It also aimed to educate its members in the professions and trades, and further their intellectual well-being. It not only resisted with the greatest determination any effort to separate the Saar from Germany, but worked for the reincorporation of the Saar in the German Reich.²⁴

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

CHAPTER VII
THE PLEBISCITE

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There was something grimly humorous about the situation in the Saar Territory. On Sunday, January 13, 1935, nearly 500,000 inhabitants of the Saar region went to the polls for one of the most interesting elections of the twentieth century. They were to decide whether the Saar Basin was to be returned to Germany, handed over to France, or remain under the control of the League of Nations. As the Saar is rich in coal, and was taken from Germany as a war indemnity move to help France, both countries looked forward to the election with deep interest. The vote itself was not to decide the disposition of the region. After the plebiscite, according to the Treaty, "the League shall decide on the sovereignty under which the territory (or any part of it) is to be placed, taking into account the wishes of the inhabitants as expressed by the voting."¹ It is seen from this that great power and responsibility rest with the League.

German concern over the outcome of the January plebiscite found expression in a gigantic open-air demonstration at Coblenz, on August 26, 1934, in favor of the return of the alienated territory to Germany. The event was staged with spectacular flourishes. The city was bedecked with flags, the streets resounded to the march of parading feet, pigeons were released, and mes-

¹Versailles Treaty, Section IV, Annex Par. 35.

sages of good-will arrived by relay runners from points scattered all over Germany. The high spot of the occasion was a speech by Adolf Hitler in which he urged his auditors, many of whom had travelled from the Saar itself to hear him, to vote for the return of the sector to the fatherland. He made a bid for the support of religious organizations in the Saar by declaring that he stood for the freedom of the church, provided it did not meddle in politics. Even French assistance was called for, on the grounds that a "redemption" of the coal district would remove one of the major obstacles now standing in the way of Franco-German friendship.²

Chancellor Hitler made it no secret that he was anxious to regain the Saar as soon as possible. He did not wish to wait until the election and proposed that the French reach an agreement with Germany which would turn the Saar over to that country immediately.³ The French, naturally, refused, saying that the matter rested with the League of Nations and that the procedure decided upon after the war would have to be carried out.⁴

When the Council of the League met, its most important task was to set in motion preparations for the holding of the plebiscite. And it was then that the gravity of the situation came to light. Petitions were filed with the League by Saar residents requesting that action be taken to prevent the Nazis

²Hitler, Adolf, "The Saar," New York Times, Aug. 27, 1934.

³Hitler, Adolf, "Germany and France," Volkerbund, p. 1. No. 87, Feb. 2, 1934, p. 12.

⁴Editorial Correspondence, "Peace in the Saar," The Christian Century, Vol. LII, No. 1, (Jan. 2, 1935), p.8.

from intimidating the people of the district.⁵ It was charged that Germany was exerting such "intolerable pressure upon the population....that there can no longer be any question of freedom of opinion." The Nazis, it was said, threatened to treat those who voted against union with Germany as they have treated Jews, Communists and other enemies of the Hitler government in Germany. The words "after 1935" became a source of terror to many Saar residents.⁶

The Hitlerites did everything they could to assure a result favorable to them. They accused the French and the League Governing Commission of discriminating against them. They said that the majority of the people in the Saar wanted to be reunited with Germany, and that other powers were doing everything they could to keep this from happening. In justice to themselves the Nazis insisted that they must give battle to those forces which seek to deprive them of what is rightfully theirs.⁷

It is obvious that when the Council of the League of Nations met in January 1934, to consider preparations for the plebiscite, it was faced with an exceedingly difficult task. On the one side there was a strong sentiment for the placing of an international police force in the Saar area during the time of the plebiscite. Coupled with this was a desire that Germany be restrained from intimidating the Saar inhabitants. On the other was Germany's refusal to cooperate with the League and her al-

⁵ L.N.O.J., "Petition Sent To Secretary-General," (Dec. 1934), p. 1121.

⁶ Ibid., "Petition Sent To Council of League of Nations," (Dec. 1934), pp. 1624-25.

⁷ Ibid., "Petition To Council of League of Nations," (Oct. 1934), p. 1219.

ready expressed wish that the Saar be turned over to her before 1935. And on a third side was a desire on the part of many Saar residents that the plebiscite be postponed for several years, or at least until a fair vote could be assured.⁸

It was up to the League to compromise these conflicting views. The French were anxious that strong action be taken, but the British and Italians were unwilling to offend Germany. Accordingly the Council did the usual thing under such conditions. It drew up resolutions turning the whole matter of studying preparations for the Saar plebiscite over to a special commission. This commission, consisting of representatives of Italy, Spain, and Argentina, was set up to supervise the work of ensuring a regular electoral procedure, to prevent undue pressure and intimidation of voters, and to consider suggestions from the Governing Commission of the Saar on the maintenance of order during election time.⁹ The Committee held several sessions and, with the assistance of various experts, laid down the regulation for the plebiscite on June 4. It took note of the Franco-German agreement of June 2, whereby both countries undertook to abstain from pressure on voters or imposing reprisals on them, to take steps to prevent similar acts by other parties, to permit an appeal of either side to the Permanent Court of International Justice, and to allow the Supreme Plebiscite Court to examine cases of complaint against intimidation and pressure for a year

⁸ L.N.O.J., "Petition to the Council of the League of Nations," (Jan. 1935), p. 5.
⁹ The League From Year to Year, "the Saar Territory," (1934), p. 67.

after the plebiscite.¹⁰

A Plebiscite Commission was set up by the Council for the actual organization of the plebiscite. This Commission consisted of three members and an expert, who may act as deputy member.

The following were appointed members of the Commission: M. Daniel de Jough (Dutch), M. Victor Henry (Swiss), and M. Alan Rohde (Swedish), with Miss Sarah Wambaugh (U.S.A.), as technical adviser.

The chairmanship of the Commission was held in turn by members; the Commission took its decisions by a majority vote of the members present. It had the power to appoint and dismiss the staff, local or foreign, necessary for the performance of its duties. The Commission began work on July 1, 1934, and set up a bureau of officials in each of the eighty-three voting areas.¹¹

Regulations for the plebiscite related to the following points: the right to vote, the status of resident, the voting divisions, the local bodies to be established in connection with the plebiscite, the compilation of the voting lists, the presentation of claims in connection with the voting list, voting procedure and the treatment of persons committing offences under the regulations.

It was at the same time laid down that, in the provision that "a vote will take place by communes or districts." The results of the voting to be determined by union of communes or,

¹⁰Ibid., p. 68.

¹¹Ibid., p. 69.

in the case of communes not forming part of any union, by communes. Each union of communes and each commune which did not form part of a union constituted a voting area. In each of the areas thus formed, the voting was calculated separately.¹²

There were eight District Bureaux consisting of one or more officials appointed by the Plebiscite Commission with the concurrence of the Committee of the Council (Baron Aloisi's Committee). These officials were not natives of the Saar, Germany or France. A delegate of the District Bureau acted as chairman of the Communal Committee set up in every voting district. This committee was responsible for compiling the registers of persons entitled to vote. The members of the Committee were appointed by the Plebiscite Committee.¹³

For the voting itself, a large number of voting offices were established. In each of these, there were two official tellers and two assistants, with a chairman not belonging to the Saar, Germany or France.¹⁴

There was also a Plebiscite Tribunal consisting of a Supreme Plebiscite Court and eight District Tribunals with jurisdiction in disputes concerning: the entries in the registers of persons entitled to vote and the validity of the voting; offences covered by the Plebiscite regulations and

¹² L.N.O.J., "The Saar Territory," Part II, (June 1934), p. 669.

¹³ Ibid., "First Rept. of Plebiscite Commission," 15th yr. No. 9, (Sept. 1934), p. 1148.

¹⁴ Ibid., "Regulations for the Plebiscite," Annex 2, Art. II, 15th yr. NO. 9, (Sept. 1934), p. 1152.

breaches of ordinary criminal law, in so far as they are connected with the purpose of the plebiscite, committed before, during and after the plebiscite proceedings.¹⁵

The President of the Supreme Court is M. Binde Galli (Italian), and Vice President Mr. James Creed Meredith (Irish);¹⁶ there are six other judges and an Examining Magistrate, a public Prosecutor, two assistants and the registrars. All of these, together with the judges of the District Tribunals, were appointed by the President of the Council, after consulting his colleagues and on the proposal of the Council's Committee. The judges of all these courts know German, are not natives of the Saar, Germany or France.¹⁷

The Supreme Court and the eight District Tribunals began their duties on September 15. The Supreme Plebiscite Tribunal will remain in office during a transitional period of one year from the date of the definitive régime.

The costs of the plebiscite were defrayed from a special fund to which France and Germany advanced five million francs each and the Governing Commission one million. As this amount proved insufficient, the Council asked for further advances from the two Governments.¹⁸ A plebiscite is an expensive affair and even at the September session of the Council of the League the

¹⁵ Ibid., "Decree Setting Up Supreme Plebiscite Court and District Tribunals," 15th yr. No. 12, (Part I) (Dec. 1914), pp. 1667-70.

¹⁶ The League From Year to Year, "The Saar Territory," (1934), p. 70.

¹⁷ L.N.O.J., op. cit., (Dec. 1914), Annex Article 9.

¹⁸ The League From Year to Year, "op. cit.", (1934) p. 71.

matter of the necessity of increasing the funds available for this purpose was brought up. The right to vote belonged without distinction of sex or nationality to all persons who were more than twenty years old at the date of the voting and who possessed the status of resident in the Territory of June 28, 1919.¹⁹

At its September meeting the Council referred to its Committee the problem of the position of Saar officials after the plebiscite; the definition of the character of the régime to be undertaken if the plebiscite resulted in a verdict for the return to the status quo; the problem of the transfer of the mines and of the French currency in circulation in the Saar. The Committee prepared a report which was unanimously accepted by the Council on December 5. It stated that if there was a return to the status quo, the League would be entitled to confer sovereignty on the Saarlanders and increase their self-government. That the inhabitants would have the right of opting for the German or French nationality since a new nationality status for the Saar would have to be established.²⁰ According to the June agreement protection from reprisals was to be extended to all inhabitants, and no discrimination in race, language or nationality was to be made for one year to Germany.²¹

Two important agreements were reached on December 3 between

¹⁹L.N.O.J., op. cit., (Sept. 1934), Annex 2, Article 19, p. 1153.

²⁰The League From Year to Year," op. cit., p. 72.

²¹Ibid., p. 73.

France and Germany which made a peaceful plebiscite almost certain. The first related to Germany's repurchase of the Saar mines, which belonged to the French government.²² The Versailles Treaty provided that, if the plebiscite went in favor of Germany, she was to buy back the mines at a price fixed by experts, paying for them in gold within a year.²³ This had been regarded as a thorny problem because of the difficulty of arriving at a price that would be regarded as just by both parties and because of Germany's lack of funds for payments abroad.

An agreement was reached at Rome on December 3, between Count de Chambrun for France and Ambassador Von Hassel for Germany, in consultation with Baron Aloisi, the Italian chairman of the League of Nation's Special Commission on the Saar problem. If the plebiscite went in favor of Germany she agreed to pay France 900,000,000 French francs (\$59,400,000), as a settlement for the mines, railways, customs stations and all other French credits in the Saar. The French agreed to accept 11,000,000 tons of coal during the next five years as part payment. Part of the rest of the payment will be made by German acceptance of the French francs now circulating among Saarlanders. German marks will be exchanged for those francs, which will then be used to pay France.²⁴

²²Ibid., p. 74.

²³Versailles Treaty, Sec. IV, Annex. Par. 36.

²⁴The League From Year to Year, op. cit., (1934), pp. 74-5.

Germany also agreed to extend to the non-voting population of the Saar the same guarantees promised to the voting population at Geneva on June 4; to respect all rights acquired by Saarlanders in regard to social insurance and state aid; and to extend to the whole Saar population, regardless of race, religion, or political belief, full guarantees against persecutions or reprisals of any sort for one year. This guarantee is to be supervised by the Supreme Plebiscite Tribunal.²⁵

The second important agreement was Great Britain's announcement at Geneva on December 5 that, contrary to her previous policy, she was willing to send a military force to aid in preserving order during and immediately after the plebiscite.²⁶ Great Britain's offer to aid in policing the Saar was a notable shift from her settled policy of keeping out of continental affairs. She advises but rarely acts. In this instance, she evidently believed preventive measures, however distasteful, were infinitely more desirable than the risk of a Franco-German rupture. The British contingent was augmented by contingents from Italy, Netherlands, and Sweden. The strength of the contingent was fixed as follows:²⁷

United Kingdom.....	1,500
Italy.....	1,300
Netherlands.....	250
Sweden.....	250

²⁵Ibid., pp. 72-3.

²⁶Ibid., p. 76.

²⁷Ibid., p. 77.

On December 11, it was decided that the force should be put at the disposal of the Governing Commission, the cost to be borne by the Plebiscite Fund.²⁸

The contingents reached the Saar by December 22 and were placed under the command of Major-General Brind (United Kingdom).²⁹

In spite of all these precautions, a great number of petitions were sent from the Saar to the Secretary-General of the League protesting against the increasing Nazi intimidation and against the falsifying of voting lists.³⁰

About 55,000 of those eligible to vote in the Saar plebiscite no longer lived in the Saarland. In order to poll as large a German majority as possible, Germany induced many of them to return to their former homeland and cast their vote. The cost of the journey was borne by the German Government. It was estimated that they represented ten per cent of the total vote. They came from Germany, France, Asia, Africa and North and South America--former Saarlanders qualified to participate in the Plebiscite because they lived in the Saar Territory on June 28, 1919, the day the Treaty of Versailles became effective. France sent a contingent of 5,000 according to the Associated Press, among whom were a dozen Foreign Legionnaires from African outposts. More than 600 checked in from the United States.³¹

²⁸Ibid., p. 76.

²⁹Ibid., p. 77.

³⁰L.N.O.J., "Petition to the Council of the League," 15th yr. No. 12, (Part I), (Dec. 1934), p. 1621.

³¹Foreign Comment, "Plebiscite Day in the Saar Territory," The Literary Digest, Vol. 119, (Jan. 19, 1935), p.13.

As the time set for the plebiscite approached, tension increased visibly between France and Germany. The Germans were accused of terrorizing the residents of the Saar, of browbeating them into voting for union with Germany. In return, the French were charged with attempting to turn the tide of sentiment against Germany. The League of Nations was trying to pacify all elements of discord, and to prepare for an honest, unbiased vote. The difficulties of this task, in view of the aggravated state of affairs, was apparent.

Thus we approached the crucial day. What was the general situation preceding the event? For weeks Nazis and anti-Nazis had held meetings and staged demonstrations. Violent clashes occurred from time to time. All Germany seemed excited at the prospective return of a land that not only contained rich coal mines, but was of value from a strategic point of view, since it faced industrial France. It is clear that the day was being looked forward to with as much interest in other European countries as in those immediately involved.

The day of voting arrived. If conditions were bad before it, certainly one would expect them to reach their apex that day. Contrary to all the fearful expectations, the voting in the Saar region on Sunday, January 13, was completed without any breach of the peace. It was a model election, coming off in the most perfect calm. By a majority of 477,119 to 48,637 the inhabitants of the region indicated that they preferred to return to their former homeland. The final results of the balloting, as announced by the League Plebiscite Commission,

were:³²

Registered voters.....	539,541
Final vote.....	528,005
For German rule.....	477,119
For League rule.....	46,513
For French rule.....	2, 124
Invalid.....	2,249

The percentage of votes cast for German rule was almost equally overwhelming in every district of the Saar, it was revealed by the complete tabulation.

The Saar plebiscite was an extremely costly affair. In addition to the heavy expense of transporting and paying for a special international army of 3,300 men, there was a heavy election bill. About 1,000 neutral polls officials were paid \$65 each and living expenses. Besides that, Germany paid the traveling costs of 48,000 voters who had moved to Germany, and 5,000 who had emigrated overseas, in order that they might return to the Saar and record their preferences.³³

Four days after 90 per cent of the Saarlanders had declared in the Saar Plebiscite of January 13 their desire for the return of the territory to Germany, the League of Nations Council awarded the whole Saar Basin to Germany "under the conditions resulting from" the Versailles Treaty. Also it fixed March 1 as the date "for reestablishment of Germany in the Government of the Saar region."

³² Foreign Comment, "League Awards Saar to Germany," *ibid.*, Vol. 119, (Jan. 20, 1935), p. 15.

³³ Around The World, "Saar," *The American Observer*, Vol. IV, (Jan. 21, 1935), p. 3.

It was required that Germany first should assure France that the Nazi Government would fulfil certain conditions. If Germany did not come to an agreement by February 15, the Council announced that it would meet in extraordinary session to take necessary steps."

The first condition imposed upon Germany was demilitarization of the Saar by the League's Governing Commission before March 1. Germany was required also to negotiate, under the supervision of the Special Saar Committee, headed by Baron Pompeo Aloisi of Italy, an agreement with France on guarantees for the Saar population, the payment of pensions to public employees, the transfer of mines and similar problems.

Pierre Laval, French Foreign Minister, indicated at Geneva an additional condition before the Council should hand the Saar over to Germany. He told the Council that France desired peace, "but history has shown her that she must live in security," and he urged that Germany should enter into an "Easter Locarno pact and agreements guaranteeing Austria's integrity."³⁴

At Berlin, Wilhelm Frick, German Minister of the Interior, stated that a month would be more than was needed to accomplish the technical and administrative tasks involving the reincorporation of the Saar into the Reich. Joseph Buerckel, Chancellor Adolf Hitler's plenipotentiary for the Saar before the Plebiscite, was appointed by the Chancellor to be governor

³⁴Foreign Comment, loc. cit., (Jan. 26, 1935), p. 15.

of that territory.³⁵

There was tremendous excitement in the Saar region on March 1, for on that day this little coal-mining region was officially restored to the fatherland, Germany. Cafes were crowded, parades marched, and Nazi swastika flags were in evidence everywhere. A general amnesty for certain classes of Saarland prisoners was proclaimed by Chancellor Hitler on the eve of nation-wide ceremonies marking the territory's return to Germany. A communique stated:³⁶

"The separation of the Saar from Germany penetrated so deeply into all conditions of life that offenses for which many were punished can now be understood."

The amnesty freed all persons serving terms of not more than a year, provided there are no previous convictions against them. Sentences of less than three months were repealed, regardless of former records.

Chancellor Hitler and some of his deputies visited their new soil, and delivered speeches in the city of Saarbrücken. The chancellor took the opportunity to declare, "By this act of equality and justice the way finally has been cleared for improving our relations with France. This is a happy day not only for Germany, but for all Europe."³⁷

In the name of the League of Nations, which administered the productive area from the day the Treaty of Versailles became effective, Baron Pompeo Aloisi of Italy had formally trans-

³⁵Foreign Comment, *ibid.*, (Feb. 16, 1935), p. 35.

³⁶The Herald-Post, "Nazis Rejoice as Rich Valley is Turned Over," (March 1, 1935), p. 1, column 8.

³⁷The Louisville Times, "Hitler Says Saar Return Peace Aid," (March 1, 1935), p. 1, column 8.

ferred the territory to German sovereignty.

Wilhelm Frick, Nazi Minister of the Interior, accepted control over the Saar for the Reich and the mandate of the January 13 plebiscite was fulfilled.

The brief ceremony took place in the Government building along the Saar River. Simultaneously with the transfer, seven columns of storm troopers, each 1,000 strong, crossed the obliterated frontier which had separated the basin from its homeland.³⁸

While the plebiscite method commends itself to the idealistic self determinationist, it is fraught with numerous dangers and difficulties. Even when adequate neutral policing is provided and satisfactory suffrage qualifications and electoral procedures are devised, the referendum itself embitters national feeling, creates temptations of bribery, coercion, and terrorism on both sides, and offers no assurance that the voters will record their permanent national preferences, rather than their fears, prejudices, and economic interests at the moment. Whenever the outcome fails to correspond to the demands of the peoples themselves, local dissatisfaction, international tension, and controversies between neighboring states invariably ensue.

In February 1918, President Wilson in an address to Congress, asserted:

"Peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty, as if they were mere chattels and pawns in the game. Peoples may now be dominated and governed only by their own consent. Self-determination is not a mere phrase. It is an imperative principle of action, which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril."

³⁸ Ibid., p. 2, column 5.

C O N C L U S I O N

CONCLUSION

In making a study of such a particular problem as the Saar, one often gets a wrong perspective in regard to the place of the problem in world affairs. Perhaps this study has given the reader directly or indirectly an exaggerated idea of the importance of this problem in the relations of the two peoples of the two governments and possibly even in world events. The controversial nature of the literature makes any evaluation of the proper importance of this problem a difficult one.

It may be a matter of first political importance whether the Franco-German boundary line runs south or north of the Saar River; but, when viewed in the light of geographical relations, the political issue loses some of its acridity. Ultimately the true boundaries of a borderland area such as the Saar Territory are controlled by wise industrial planning rather than by shrewd political bargaining. The "formidable bloc de Charbon" from which the Saar population will draw its livelihood in the future as it has done in the past, is not only geographically a keystone between French and German lands; it is also destined to play a keystone rôle in the future economic relations between the two great rivals on either side of the Saar.

The League of Nations harvested considerable prestige from its experiment in international government. On the whole the League Administration has been commendable, except during the early post-war years when the Governing Commission was dominated

by the patriotic M. Victor Rault, who thought it was his duty to act, not as an impartial ruler, but as an agent of the French republic. True enough, many Saarlanders protested bitterly against being "ruled like a negro tribe" and complained that the suggestions of their advisory parliament were usually ignored. Yet the Nazis themselves admit that under the last three Commissions Chairmen--G. W. Stephens of Canada, Sir Ernest Wilton of England, and Godfrey G. Knox--the territory has been governed cheaply and well.

It is true that the League Government was undemocratic, authority being entrusted to an international commission of five, of whom one was French and one a Saarlander. It was at the Peace Conference that the Saar had acquired its singular status--that of a district whose population is German, whose economic régime was French, and whose government was international.

G. G. Knox, the president of the Commission, an Englishman, had struggled for more than a year to prevent the Saar population from being intimidated by the highly organized Nazi propaganda and pressure designed to insure a clean sweep in the plebiscite. Knox accused the Nazis of trying to set up a de facto government in the Saar.

If not democratic, the Saar Commission has at least done its best to safeguard the democratic freedom of the plebiscite, and it had ruled through Saar German officials and (since 1930) with a Saar German police force and gendarmerie. Only when this force became subject to Nazi pressure did the Commission ask

for an international contingent of troops.

The fifteen-year League régime in the Saar has made the district an administrative unit for the first time in its history, has provided good government and brought the Saar through the economic crisis with less hardship than Germany has endured. It has performed a difficult administrative task remarkably well and supplied an admirable example of international government.

The story of the Saar as an international ward, whose guardianship has ended, may be summed up by citing the observation by one of the chief Nazi agents in the Saar:

"Our troops destroyed coal mines in the North of France. That was a great stupidity. The Saar has paid for it by being separated from Germany for fifteen years."

The Saar has incurred no debts, its budget was habitually balanced, and its taxes compared with those of the bordering states, were low. Before the depression, the Commission was even able to build up a surplus sufficient to permit a remission of taxes in 1929, and to carry a good part of the unemployment burden ever since. Relief and health service was admirable, and finally, in spite of the dictatorial form of government, freedom of speech and press were greater than in almost any other continental country.

The Saar is dependent upon France for the iron ore used in its steel mills, practically all of it coming from Lorraine. The Saar, Lorraine and Alsace have been within the same customs area since 1870. Before the World War, all three were German, and since then all three have been in the French customs area.

Since the Saar has become German again, it is separated from its two partner provinces by a tariff for the first time in sixty-five years. The Saar's coal and Lorraine's ore must cross an economic and political frontier if the natural and logical economic collaboration of the two areas, which is so necessary to the Saar, is to continue.

The Nazis consider the result of the Saar plebiscite to be a great triumph for the doctrine of German national unity. This doctrine has become a veritable religion among large numbers of the German people. The doctrine of German national unity includes the belief that all minority groups of Germans living outside the boundaries of Germany should be brought into the fatherland. This idea was recently expressed by Dr. Wilhelm Frick, minister of the interior, who said:

"In these plebiscite days our national duty is to remember that beyond the frontiers there are still many millions of Germans, just as loyal Germans as the Saarlanders, but who, despite an alleged victory of the right of self-determination at the end of the war, without being asked have been isolated or placed under foreign rule."

It is largely this belief that aroused Germany to such intense excitement over the return of the Saar. Now German newspapers are organizing a movement for the return of other areas that were once a part of Germany. They feel that the districts of Eupen and Malmedy, which were taken from Germany and handed over to Belgium in 1919, ought to be returned. Nazi agitators in these districts have been staging parades and demonstrations and the Belgian police have made a number of arrests.

The return of the Saar to Germany, after the 80 per cent

vote in the plebiscite, encouraged many Germans to agitate for Austro-German union, Memel, where the German population has been oppressed by the Lithuanians, and the Free City of Danzig, whose foreign relations are under Polish control.

An international army, responsible for maintaining the peace of the world, has been the hope and dream of the peace-loving people for generations. Pacifists, statesmen, and public leaders, have urged the creation of a neutral force, armed and authorized to impose tranquillity on quarrelling nations and to prevent nationalistic rivalries from breaking into war. Until this year, when a corps of 3,300 troops recruited from England, Italy, Sweden and Holland kept peace between France and Germany during the Saar Territory Plebiscite, no such body had ever existed. A situation exactly parallel to the Saar Plebiscite had not risen before. Everyone in Europe wanted peace. The success of the Saar force has shown one way to help in its preservation. A precedent for international neutral action to prevent war has been set. The first experiment has been a success. The precedent may grow.

A P P E N D I X

APPENDIX
VERSAILLES TREATY
PART III, SECTION IV
SAAR BASIN

ARTICLE 45

As compensation for the destruction of the coal mines in the north of France and as part payment towards the total reparation due from Germany for the damage resulting from the war, Germany cedes to France in full and absolute possession, with exclusive rights of exploitation, unencumbered and free from all debts and charges of any kind, the coal-mines situated in the Saar Basin as defined in Article 48.

ARTICLE 46.

In order to assure the rights and welfare of the population and to guarantee to France complete freedom in working the mines, Germany agrees to the provisions of Chapters I and II of the Annex hereto.

ARTICLE 47.

In order to make in due time permanent provision for the government of the Saar Basin in accordance with the wishes of the populations, France and Germany agree to the provisions of Chapter III of the Annex hereto.

ARTICLE 48.

The boundaries of the territory of the Saar Basin, as dealt with in the present stipulations, will be fixed as follows:

On the south and south-west: by the frontier of France as fixed by the present Treaty.

On the north-west and north: by a line following the northern administrative boundary of the Kreis of Merzig from the point where it leaves the French frontier to the point where it meets the administrative boundary separating the commune of Saarholzbach from the commune of Britten; following this communal boundary southwards and reaching the administrative boundary of the canton of Merzig so as to include in the territory of the Saar Basin the canton of Mettlach, with the exception of the commune of Britten; following successively the northern administrative boundaries of the cantons of Merzig and Haustadt, which are incorporated in the aforesaid Saar Basin, then successively the administrative boundaries separating the Kreise of Saarlouis, Ottweiler and Saint-Wendel from the Kreise of Merzig, Treves (Trier) and the Principality of the Birkenfeld as far as a point situated about 500 metres north of the village of Furschweiler (viz., the highest point of the Metzelberg).

On the north-east and east: from the last point defined above to a point about $3\frac{1}{2}$ kilometres east-north-east of Saint-Wendel: a line to be fixed on the grounds passing east of Furschwiler, west of Roschberg, east of points 418, 329 (south of Roschberg), west of Leitersweiler, north-east of point 464, and following the line of the crest southwards to its junction with the administrative boundary of the Kreis of Kusel;

thence in a southerly direction the boundary of the Kreis of Kusel, then the boundary of the Kreis of Homburg towards the south-south-east to a point situated about 1000 metres west of Dunsweiler;

thence to a point about 1 kilometre south of Hornbach:

A line to be fixed on the ground passing through point 424 (about 1000 metres south-east of Dunzweiler), point 363 (Fuchs-Berg), point 322 (south-west of Waldmohr), then east of Jagersburg and Erbach, then encircling Homburg, passing through the points 361 (about $2\frac{1}{2}$ kilometres north-east by east of that town), 342 (about 2 kilometres south-east of that town), 347 (Schreiners-Berg), 356, 350 (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ kilometres south-east of Schwarzenbach), then passing east of Einod, south east of points 322 and 333, about 2 kilometres east of Nebenheim, about 2 kilometres east of Mimbach, passing east of the plateau which is traversed by the road from Mimbach to Bockweiler (so as to include this road in the territory of the Saar Basin), passing immediately north of the junction of the roads from Bockweiler and Altheim situated about 2 kilometres north of Altheim, then passing south of Ringweilerhof and north of point 322, rejoining the frontier of France at the angle which it makes about 1 kilometre south of Hornbach (see Map No. 2 scale 1/100,000 annexed to the present Treaty).

A Commission composed of five members, one appointed by France, one by Germany, and three by the Council of the League of Nations, which will select nationals of other Powers, will be constituted within fifteen days from the coming into force of the present Treaty, to trace on the spot the frontier line described above.

In those parts of the preceding line which do not coincide with administrative boundaries, the Commission will endeavour to

keep to the line indicated, while taking into consideration, so far as is possible, local economic interests and existing communal boundaries.

The decisions of this Commission will be taken by a majority, and will be binding on the parties concerned.

ARTICLE 49.

Germany renounces in favour of the League of Nations, in the capacity of trustee, the government of the territory defined above.

At the end of fifteen years from the coming into force of the present Treaty the inhabitants of the said territory shall be called upon to indicate the sovereignty under which they desire to be placed.

ARTICLE 50.

The stipulations under which the cession of the mines in the Saar Basin shall be carried out, together with the measures intended to guarantee the rights and the well-being of the inhabitants and the government of the territory, as well as the conditions in accordance with which the plebiscite hereinbefore provided for is to be made, are laid down in the Annex hereto. This Annex shall be considered as an integral part of the present Treaty, and Germany declares her adherence to it.

ANNEX

In accordance with the provisions of Articles 45 to 50 of the present Treaty, the stipulations under which the cession by Germany to France of the mines of the Saar Basin will be effected, as well as the measures intended to ensure respect for the rights

and well-being of the population and the government of the territory, and the conditions in which the inhabitants will be called upon to indicate the sovereignty under which they may wish to be placed, have been laid down as follows:

CHAPTER I.

CESSION AND EXPLOITATION OF MINING PROPERTY.

1.

From the date of the coming into force of the present Treaty, all the deposits of coal situated within the Saar Basin as defined in Article 48 of the said Treaty, become the complete and absolute property of the French State.

The French State will have the right of working or not working the said mines, or of transferring to a third party the right of working them, without having to obtain any previous authorisation or to fulfil any formalities.

The French State may always require that the German mining laws and regulations referred to below shall be applied in order to ensure the determination of its rights.

2.

The right of ownership of the French State will apply not only to the deposits which are free and for which concessions have not yet been granted, but also to the deposits for which concessions have already been granted, whoever may be the present proprietors, irrespective of whether they belong to the Prussian State, to the Bavarian State, to other States or bodies, to companies or to individuals, whether they have been worked or not,

or whether a right of exploitation distinct from the right of the owners of the surface of the soil has or has not been recognized.

As far as concerns the mines which are being worked, the transfer of the ownership to the French State will apply to all the accessories and subsidiaries of the said mines, in particular to their plant and equipment both on and below the surface, to their extracting machinery, their plants for transforming coal into electric power, coke and by-products, their workshops, means of communication, electric lines, plant for catching and distributing water, land, buildings such as offices, managers', employees' and workmen's dwellings, schools, hospitals and dispensaries, their stocks and supplies of every description, their archives and plans, and in general everything which those who own or exploit the mines possess or enjoy for the purpose of exploiting the mines and their accessories and subsidiaries.

The transfer will apply also to the debts owing for products delivered before the entry into possession by the French State, and after the signature of the present Treaty, and to deposits of money made by customers, whose rights will be guaranteed by the French State.

4.

The French State will acquire the property free and clear of all debts and charges. Nevertheless, the rights acquired, or in course of being acquired, by the employees of the mines and their accessories and subsidiaries at the date of the coming into force of the present Treaty, in connection with pensions for old

age or disability, will not be affected. In return, Germany must pay over to the French State a sum representing the actuarial amounts to which the said employees are entitled.

5.

The value of the property thus ceded to the French State will be determined by the Reparation Commission referred to in Article 233 of Part VIII (Reparation) of the present Treaty.

This value shall be credited to Germany in part payment of the amount due for reparation.

It will be for Germany to indemnify the proprietors or parties concerned, whoever they may be.

6.

No tariff shall be established on the German railways and canals which may directly or indirectly discriminate to the prejudice of the transport of the personnel or products of the mines and their accessories or subsidiaries, or of the material necessary to their exploitation. Such transport shall enjoy all the rights and privileges which any international railway conventions may guarantee to similar products of French origin.

7.

The equipment and personnel necessary to ensure the despatch and transport of the products of the mines and their accessories and subsidiaries, as well as the carriage of workmen and employees, will be provided by the local railway administration of the Basin.

8.

No obstacle shall be placed in the way of such improvements of railways or waterways as the French State may judge necessary to assure the despatch and the transport of the products of the mines, and their accessories and subsidiaries, such as double trackage, enlargement of stations, and construction of yards and appurtenances. The distribution of expenses will, in the event of disagreement, be submitted to arbitration.

The French State may also establish any new means of communication, such as roads, electric lines and telephone connections which it may consider necessary for the exploitation of the mines.

It may exploit freely and without any restrictions the means of communication of which it may become the owner, particularly those connecting the mines and their accessories and subsidiaries with the means of communication situated in French territory.

9.

The French State shall always be entitled to demand the application of the German mining laws and regulations in force on November 11, 1918, excepting provisions adopted exclusively in view of the state of war, with a view to the acquisition of such land as it may judge necessary for the exploitation of the mines and their accessories and subsidiaries.

The payment for damage caused to immovable property by the working of the said mines and their accessories and subsidiaries

shall be made in accordance with the German mining laws and regulations above referred to.

10.

Every person whom the French State may substitute for itself as regards the whole or part of its rights to the exploitation of the mines and their accessories and subsidiaries shall enjoy the benefit of the privileges provided in this Annex.

11.

The mines and other immovable property which become the property of the French State may never be made the subject of measures of forfeiture, forced sale, expropriation or requisition, nor of any other measure affecting the right of property.

The personnel and the plant connected with the exploitation of these mines or their accessories and subsidiaries, as well as the product extracted from the mines or manufactured in their accessories and subsidiaries, may not at any time be made the subject of any measures of requisition.

The exploitation of the mines and their accessories and subsidiaries, which become the property of the French State, will continue, subject to the provisions of paragraph 23 below, to be subject to the regime established by the German laws and regulations in force on November 11, 1918, excepting provisions adopted exclusively in view of the state of war.

The rights of the workmen shall similarly be maintained, subject to the provisions of the said paragraph 23, as established on November 11, 1918, by the German laws and regulations

above referred to.

No impediment shall be placed in the way of the introduction or employment in the mines and their accessories and subsidiaries of workmen from without the Basin.

The employees and workmen of French nationality shall have the right to belong to French labour unions.

13.

The amount contributed by the mines and their accessories and subsidiaries, either to the local budget of the territory of the Saar Basin or to the communal funds, shall be fixed with due regard to the ratio of the value of the mines to the total taxable wealth of the Basin.

14.

The French State shall always have the right of establishing and maintaining, as incidental to the mines, primary or technical schools for its employees and their children, and of causing instruction therein to be given in the French language, in accordance with such curriculum and by such teachers as it may select.

It shall also have the right to establish and maintain hospitals, dispensaries, workmen's houses and gardens and other charitable and social institutions.

15.

The French State shall enjoy complete liberty with respect to the distribution, dispatch and sale prices of the products of the mines and their accessories and subsidiaries.

Nevertheless, whatever may be the total product of the mines, the French Government undertakes that the requirements of local consumption for industrial and domestic purposes shall always be satisfied in the proportion existing in 1913 between the amount consumed locally and the total output of the Saar Basin.

CHAPTER II.

GOVERNMENT OF THE TERRITORY OF THE SAAR BASIN.

16.

The Government of the territory of the Saar Basin shall be entrusted to a Commission representing the League of Nations. This Commission shall sit in the territory of the Saar Basin.

17.

The Governing Commission provided for by paragraph 16 shall consist of five members chosen by the Council of the League of Nations, and will include one citizen of France, one native inhabitant of the Saar Basin, not a citizen of France, and three members belonging to three countries other than France or Germany.

The members of the Governing Commission shall be appointed for one year and may be re-appointed. They can be removed by the Council of the League of Nations, which will provide for their replacement.

The members of the Governing Commission will be entitled to a salary which will be fixed by the Council of the League of Nations, and charged on the local revenues.

18.

The Chairman of the Governing Commission shall be appointed for one year from among the members of the Commission by the Council of the League of Nations and may be re-appointed.

The Chairman will act as the executive of the Commission.

19.

Within the territory of the Saar Basin the Governing Commission shall have all the powers of government hitherto belonging to the German Empire, Prussia, or Bavaria, including the appointment and dismissal of officials, and the creation of such administrative and representative bodies as it may deem necessary.

It shall have full powers to administer and operate the railways, canals and the different public services.

Its decisions shall be taken by a majority.

20.

Germany will place at the disposal of the Governing Commission all official documents and archives under the control of Germany, of any German State, or of any local authority, which relate to the territory of the Saar Basin or to the rights of the inhabitants thereof.

21.

It will be the duty of the Governing Commission to ensure, by such means and under such conditions as it may deem suitable, the protection abroad of the interests of the inhabitants of the territory of the Saar Basin.

The Governing Commission shall have the full right of user of all property, other than mines, belonging, either in public or in private domain, to the Government of the German Empire, or the Government of any German State in the territory of the Saar Basin.

As regards the railways an equitable apportionment of rolling stock shall be made by a mixed Commission on which the Government of the territory of the Saar Basin and the German railways will be represented.

Persons, goods, vessels, carriages, wagons and mails coming from or going to the Saar Basin shall enjoy all the rights and privileges relating to transit and transport which are specified in the provisions of Part XII (Ports, Waterways and Railways) of the present Treaty.

23.

The laws and regulations in force on November 11, 1918, in the territory of the Saar Basin (except those enacted in consequence of the state of war) shall continue to apply.

If, for general reasons or to bring these laws and regulations into accord with the provisions of the present Treaty, it is necessary to introduce modifications, these shall be decided on, and put into effect by the Governing Commission, after consultation with the elected representatives of the inhabitants in such a manner as the Commission may determine.

No modification may be made in the legal regime for the ex-

plottation of the mines, provided for in paragraph 12, without the French State being previously consulted, unless such modification results from a general regulation respecting labour adopted by the League of Nations.

In fixing the conditions and hours of labour for men, women and children, the Governing Commission is to take into consideration the wishes expressed by the local labour organizations, as well as the principles adopted by the League of Nations.

24.

Subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, no rights of the inhabitants of the Saar Basin acquired or in process of acquisition at the date of the coming into force of this Treaty, in respect of any insurance system of Germany or in respect of any pension of any kind, are affected by any of the provisions of the present Treaty.

Germany and the Government of the territory of the Saar Basin will preserve and continue all of the aforesaid rights.

25.

The civil and criminal courts existing in the territory of the Saar Basin shall continue.

A civil and criminal court will be established by the Governing Commission to hear appeals from the decisions of the said courts and to decide matters for which these courts are not competent.

The Governing Commission will be responsible for settling the organisation and jurisdiction of the said court.

Justice will be rendered in the name of the Governing Commission.

26.

The Governing Commission will alone have the power of levying taxes and dues in the territory of Saar Basin.

These taxes and dues will be exclusively applied to the needs of the territory.

The fiscal system existing on November 11, 1918, will be maintained as far as possible, and no new tax except customs duties may be imposed without previously consulting the elected representatives of the inhabitants.

27.

The present stipulations will not affect the existing nationality of the inhabitants of the territory of the Saar Basin.

No hindrance shall be placed in the way of those who wish to acquire a different nationality, but in such case the acquisition of the new nationality will involve the loss of any other.

28.

Under the control of the Governing Commission the inhabitants will retain their local assemblies, their religious liberties, their schools and their language.

The right of voting will not be exercised for any assemblies other than the local assemblies, and will belong to every inhabitant over the age of twenty years, without distinction of sex.

29.

Any of the inhabitants of the Saar Basin who may desire to

leave the territory will have full liberty to retain in it their immovable property or to sell it at fair prices, and to remove their movable property free of any charges.

30.

There will be no military service, whether compulsory or voluntary, in the territory of the Saar Basin, and the construction of fortifications therein is forbidden.

Only a local gendarmerie for the maintenance of order may be established.

It will be the duty of the Governing Commission to provide in all cases for the protection of persons and property in the Saar Basin.

31.

The territory of the Saar Basin as defined by Article 48 of the present Treaty shall be subjected to the French customs regime. The receipts from the customs duties on goods intended for local consumption shall be included in the budget of the said territory after deduction of all costs of collection.

No export tax shall be imposed upon metallurgical products or coal exported from the said territory to Germany, nor upon German exports for the use of the industries of the territory of the Saar Basin.

Natural or manufactured products originating in the Basin in transit over German territory and, similarly, German products in transit over the territory of the Basin shall be free of all customs duties.

Products which both originate in and pass from the Basin into Germany shall be free of import duties for a period of five years from the date of the coming into force of the present Treaty, and during the same period articles imported from Germany into the territory of the Basin for local consumption shall likewise be free of import duties.

During these five years the French Government reserves to itself the right of limiting to the annual average of the quantities imported into Alsace-Lorraine and France in the years 1911 to 1913 the quantities which may be sent into France of all articles coming from the Basin which include raw materials and semi-manufactured goods imported duty free from Germany. Such average shall be determined after reference to all available official information and statistics.

32.

No prohibition or restriction shall be imposed upon the circulation of French money in the territory of the Saar Basin.

The French State shall have the right to use French money in all purchases, payments and contracts connected with the exploitation of the mines or their accessories and subsidiaries.

33.

The Governing Commission shall have power to decide all questions arising from the interpretation of the preceding provisions.

France and Germany agree that any dispute involving a difference of opinion as to the interpretation of the said provisions

shall in the same way be submitted to the Governing Commission, and the decision of a majority of the Commission shall be binding on both countries.

CHAPTER III.

PLEBISCITE.

34.

At the termination of a period of fifteen years from the coming into force of the present Treaty, the population of the territory of the Saar Basin will be called upon to indicate their desires in the following manner:

A vote will take place by communes or districts, on the three following alternatives: (a) maintenance of the regime established by the present Treaty and by this Annex; (b) union with France; (c) union with Germany.

All persons without distinction of sex, more than twenty years old at the date of the voting, resident in the territory at the date of the signature of the present Treaty, will have the right to vote.

The other conditions, methods and the date of the voting shall be fixed by the Council of the League of Nations in such a way as to secure the freedom, secrecy and trustworthiness of the voting.

35.

The League of Nations shall decide on the sovereignty under which the territory is to be placed, taking into account the wishes of the inhabitants as expressed by the voting:

(a) If, for the whole or part of the territory, the League of Nations decides in favour of the maintenance of the regime established by the present Treaty and this Annex, Germany hereby agrees to make such renunciation of her sovereignty in favour of the League of Nations as the latter shall deem necessary. It will be the duty of the League of Nations to take appropriate steps to adapt the regime definitively adopted to the permanent welfare of the territory and the general interest;

(b) If, for the whole or part of the territory, the League of Nations decides in favour of union with France, Germany hereby agrees to cede to France in accordance with the decision of the League of Nations all rights and title over the territory specified by the League;

(c) If, for the whole or part of the territory, the League of Nations decides in favour of union with Germany, it will be the duty of the League of Nations to cause the German Government to be re-established in the government of the territory specified by the League.

36.

If the League of Nations decides in favour of the union of the whole or part of the territory of the Saar Basin with Germany, France's rights of ownership in the mines situated in such part of the territory will be repurchased by Germany in their entirety at a price payable in gold. The price to be paid will be fixed by three experts, one nominated by Germany, one by France, and one, who shall be neither a Frenchman nor a German,

by the Council of the League of Nations; the decision of the experts will be given by a majority.

The obligation of Germany to make such payment shall be taken into account by the Reparation Commission, and for the purpose of this payment Germany may create a prior charge upon her assets or revenues upon such detailed terms as shall be agreed to by the Reparation Commission.

If, nevertheless, Germany after a period of one year from the date on which the payment becomes due shall not have effected the said payment, the Reparation Commission shall do so in accordance with such instructions as may be given by the League of Nations, and, if necessary, by liquidating that part of the mines which is in question.

37.

If, in consequence of the repurchase provided for in paragraph 36, the ownership of the mines or any part of them is transferred to Germany, the French State and French nationals shall have the right to purchase such amount of coal of the Saar Basin as their industrial and domestic needs are found at that time to require. An equitable arrangement regarding amounts of coal, duration of contract, and prices will be fixed in due time by the Council of the League of Nations.

38.

It is understood that France and Germany may, by special agreements concluded before the time fixed for the payment of the price for the repurchase of the mines, modify the provisions of paragraphs 36 and 37.

39.

The Council of the League of Nations shall make such provisions as may be necessary for the establishment of the regime which is to take effect after the decisions of the League of Nations mentioned in paragraph 35 have become operative, including an equitable apportionment of any obligations of the Government of the territory of the Saar Basin arising from loans raised by the Commission or from other causes.

From the coming into force of the new regime, the powers of the Governing Commission will terminate, except in the case provided for in paragraph 35 (a).

40.

In all matters dealt with in the present Annex, the decisions of the Council of the League of Nations will be taken by a majority.

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