

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Distributed to the
Members of the Council.

C.411. 1923. I.

Geneva, June 25th, 1923.

S A A R B A S I N,

MEMORANDUM FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

Note by the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General has the honour to forward to the Council a Memorandum dated June 21st 1923, on the question of the administration of the Saar, forwarded to him on June 23rd 1923, by the British Foreign Office.

Memorandum for the Members of the Council.

His Britannic Majesty's Government have asked for the insertion in the agenda of the next Council meeting of a proposal for an enquiry as to whether the administration of the Saar Basin by the Governing Commission has been in accordance with the spirit and terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

His Britannic Majesty's Government desire to add for the information of the members of the Council that the following seem to be the more important provisions in the annex to article 50 as to the interpretation of which it is desirable that there should be a clear agreement among the members of the Council. It is upon the meaning of these provisions that the question ^{arises} whether the practice and procedure adopted by the Governing Commission and the acts and proceedings which have been criticized are in conformity with the Treaty of Versailles.

(a) Section 17 deals with the Governing Commission. The questions for consideration are, more particularly, the methods of administration which the Commission was intended to follow and whether the five members were intended to represent in any way the States of which they are nationals and to be at liberty to maintain relations with them.

(b) Section 18 defines the position and functions of the Chairman of the Commission.

(c) Section 23 deals with the laws and regulations to apply in the Saar Basin, particularly as to the right of the Governing Commission to introduce legislation which was not in force in Germany on November 11, 1918, and as to the conditions which must be fulfilled with regard to consulting the elected representatives of the inhabitants.

(d) Section 30 contains provisions as to the protection of persons and property in the Saar Basin and the rights and duties of the Governing Commission in connection therewith.

His Majesty's Government feel that as the League of Nations is the trustee for the Saar Basin and as the Governing Commission represents the League, it is the duty of the Council to make sure that the administration is being carried on in accordance with the Treaty of Versailles: it will be for the Council itself to determine the mode of enquiry to be adopted. Whatever form of enquiry may be decided upon, it will be necessary for the Secretariat to see that the necessary witnesses and documents are available if required.

Foreign Office,

June 21st, 1923.