Petition from the "Saarländische Wirtschaftsvereinigung".

Letter from the Chairman of the Governing Commission of the Saar Territory, dated August 30th, 1934, to the Secretary-General of the League, enclosing a petition from the "Saarländische Wirtschaftsvereinigung", dated August 20th, 1934.

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Saarbrücken,

To the Secretary-General of the League of Nations.

Sir,

I have the honour to send you herewith a petition dated August 20th, 1934, addressed to the Council of the League of Nations by the Saar Economic Union ("Saarländische Wirtschaftsvereinigung").

In so far as this petition relates to the situation in the Saar Territory, the Governing Commission has the honour to refer to the particulars given in its last periodical reports and in the special reports concerning the internal situation which it has addressed to the Council of the League of Nations.

I have the honour to be,

etc.

(Signed) C. C. MOX.
To the Secretariat of the League of Nations, Geneva.

Saarlouis, August 20th, 1934.

The Saar Economic Union ("Saarländische Wirtschaftsvereinigung") has the honour to submit to you respectfully the resolution adopted at its meeting of August 19th, 1934. It asks that favourable consideration should be given to its proposals.

The campaign we are conducting in favour of justice, truth and freedom is meeting with the resistance of the so-called German Front, supported by German propaganda subsidies. This German Front is carrying on a violent campaign of defamation against the efforts we are making under the flag of a free Saar to secure the independence of the Saar Territory. It is helped by a large proportion of the Saar authorities.

We accuse the judges, police officials and gendarmes of the Saar Territory of being to a large extent actuated by the spirit of party and of acting with the grossest unfairness. The National Socialists wear uniforms and political badges in the streets and public places without hindrance from the police or gendarmes. When anti-Fascists wear political badges, the police immediately take action against them.

The people see this partial attitude of the officials and are therefore practically obliged, from fear of reprisals, to behave as if they were National Socialists, although in their hearts they think otherwise. Tradesmen who do not allow themselves to be intimidated by the German Front are boycotted. All those who have not come into line are placed under a ban and are systematically persecuted.

National Socialism undisguisedly sets itself up as dictator of the Saar Territory. The Governing Commission's authority is systematically and unscrupulously undermined, both secretly and publicly.

The German Front's memorandum of August 16th shows this. These protagonists of the handing over of the honest Saar population to a régime of terrorism state in this memorandum: "Police truncheons and machine guns are no substitute for the confidence of a population in its Government". The Saar population shrinks with horror from certain acts committed in certain places on June 30th, 1934. An endeavour is being made to induce it to forget them by stirring up hate against foreigners and foreign countries.

We have confidence in the sense of justice of the League of Nations and ask that our wishes should be taken into consideration.

(Signed) MARX,
For the Committee.
The Saar Economic Union, being anxious that the plebiscite of the Saar population which is to be held on January 13th, 1935, should take place in accordance with the regular and peaceful methods of justice, and realizing that the excessive and intolerable terrorism at present exercised by National Socialism which, under the name of the German Front, illegally sets itself up as dictator of the Saar Territory - and the policy of which tramples all human and divine laws underfoot - is calculated to sabotage the freedom, secrecy and trustworthiness of the voting provided for in the Treaty of Peace of Versailles, has unanimously adopted the following resolution at its meeting held on August 19th, 1934, at Saarlouis:

We request the League of Nations,

1) To place immediately at the disposal of the Governing Commission of the Saar Territory such resources as may seem to it suitable and sufficient to prevent a "Putsch" or other acts of terrorism by the National Socialists in the Saar Territory.

2) To take the necessary steps to deal with the partiality of those judges, police officials and other functionaries who, in the course of their duties, show themselves to be the tools of National Socialism, and if necessary to dismiss them.

3) To arrange that the police administration of the larger communes, such as Saarlouis, Dillingen, Merzig, etc., should be placed under the direct authority of the Saar Government, since the prejudiced attitude of these organs has been clearly shown.

4) To take effective measures to protect the lives, health, freedom and property of all Saar inhabitants in every eventuality against inadmissible action on the part of a foreign Power.

5) To decide that the independent Saar Territory should have a democratic constitution and should govern itself.

6) To arrange for the meeting of the neutral Plebiscite Tribunals at an early date.

7) To arrange that steps should be taken by the authorities under absolutely neutral direction that meeting halls in the Saar Territory should be placed at the disposal of parties of all political complexions on an equal footing and in rotation.

8) To put an end to the campaign conducted by the German wireless and German press against the supporters of the status quo, who, contrary to the German Government's promise, are constantly denounced as "Scoundrels," "traitors," "unpatriotic elements," "substitut-Frenchmen," etc.
9) To give the supporters of the status quo, by the creation of a Saar wireless transmitting station, an opportunity of talking to the Saar population in order to reply to the illegal German attacks.

10) To prevent, by administrative intervention, the personal libels and insults against the aims, leaders and supporters of a free Saar which are at present daily published with impunity in the press of the German Front, contrary to all the principles of an impartial and decent political campaign. This course would be preferable to judicial proceedings, which either last too long or are doomed to failure owing to the attitude of a large number of the judges, or cannot be undertaken by individuals owing to the general nature of the insults.

11) To arrange that the communal Committees responsible for making preparations for the plebiscite should not mainly consist, as has hitherto been the case, of supporters of National Socialism camouflaged as the German Front, but of supporters of all political tendencies on an equal footing.

12) To prevent that private persons, under the appearance and pretext of official proceedings, should visit persons entitled to vote and draw up lists for the German Front.

13) To decide that, in order to avoid any falsification of the results of the voting, the ballot boxes should, after the close of the voting, be officially sealed and conveyed immediately and by the shortest route, and not through Germany, to the Secretariat of the League of Nations at Geneva, with the documents and lists on which the voting was based, with a view to an impartial determination of the results, since otherwise it is to be feared that illicit influences might be exercised.

14) To arrange that persons who, although not at present resident in the Saar, are entitled to vote, should be entered forthwith in the "provisional lists" of voters.

15) To arrange that the period fixed for the registration of the above-mentioned persons, which at present expires on September 1st, 1934, should be extended until at least October 15th, since some of these persons live at a great distance and the time-limit is too short.