

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

C.458M.174,1924.I.

Communicated to the Council and  
Members of the League.

Geneva, September 4th, 1924.

SAAR BASIN

THE FRENCH MILITARY FORCES IN THE SAAR TERRITORY.

Letter dated September 1st 1924 from the Governing Commission

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Note by the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General has the honour to forward for the  
information of the Council and the Members of the League, copy  
of the letter dated September 1st 1924 from the Saar Basin  
Governing Commission containing observations on a petition from  
representatives of certain political groups in the Advisory  
Council of the Saar Territory entitled "The French military forces  
in the Saar Territory." (1)

(1) C.414.M.153.

To the Secretary-General.

Relation

Saarbruck, September 1924

I had the honour to forward to you in my letter No.5023 August 19th two Memoranda,(C.413.M.152. 1924 I and C.414.M.153. I.I.)from certain prominent persons in the Saar Territory. The Governing Commission would wish to make the following observations on these memoranda:

With reference to its letter of July 15th,1924,(C.361.1924 I) the Governing Commission is of the opinion that the memorandum titled,"The Abuses and Unnecessary Maintenance of the French Military Authority in the Saar" does not call for any particular remarks, except with regard to its two Annexes. The Commission observe that it has no information concerning events prior to its assuming office on February 26th, 1920. In particular, it possesses no details as to <sup>the</sup>regrettable occurrences of October, when disorderly scenes took place involving fatal casualties both the troops and the civilian population. It has made successful efforts to obtain pardons for a very large number of inhabitants of the Territory who, in connection with these disturbances, had been sentenced by the Courts-Martial of the forces at that time occupying the Territory under the Armistice terms. The Commission regrets the only two incidents involving casualties which have occurred since February 26th, 1920 ; are quoted in the Annex. Regarding the case of M. Jennewein, let us recall the communication addressed on this matter to the Secretariat of the League of Nations on November 8th, 1922 (C.744.1922.I). In the case of MM. Müller and Mayer , two persons were charged and tried by court-martial. They were

mitted by the court on the ground that they acted justifiably in self-defence.

As for the unfortunate accident which happened on June 1, 1924, on the drill-ground at Fraulautern, an enquiry has revealed the facts that there were notices in German forbidding access to the ground, that the grenades were German, and that the French troops do not use either German or French grenades in the Saar Territory. In all probability they were munitions of war remaining in the possession of individual persons, who got rid of them by leaving them on a drill-ground. The military authorities state that they would not have left grenades upon a ground where soldiers were constantly being drilled.

The Governing Commission has never known of nor authorised the existence of a recruiting office for the Foreign Legion. It has asked the military authorities for particulars. The Colonel commanding the garrison informed the Commission on August 21st, 1924, that there was no recruiting office for the Foreign Legion at No. 42 Vorstadtstrasse, Saarbruck. If enlistments were made under the Armistice régime, this practice ceased when the Governing Commission took office. Whenever individual inhabitants of the Saar enquire of members of the garrison forces the procedure to be followed in order to enlist, they are told that they must apply in the proper way to a recruiting office in French territory.

(Signed) V. PAULT.