

situation had thus come about that the city's constitution had placed the control of its destinies in the hands of persons in the service of the Great Power from which the Peace Conference had intended to separate it.

*Danzig-Polish Relations.*

12. In accordance with the treaty with Poland, relations between Danzig and Poland were conducted through a Polish High Commissioner at Danzig; matters on which direct agreement could not be reached were referred to the League of Nations High Commissioner, with appeal to the League itself as a last resort. In some cases the League referred points to the Permanent Court of International Justice. A number of disputes arose which were thus given wide publicity and probably attracted an exaggerated degree of attention. The following are the more important of these disputes:—

13.—(a) The first Polish-Danzig controversy concerned the use by Poland of the port of Danzig for military purposes. This dispute arose before the Free City had been actually constituted, owing to the refusal of Danzig dockers to handle munitions for Poland in July 1920, during the Russo-Polish war, in which the sympathy of the Danzigers was neutral or pro-Soviet. The need of the moment was met by the employment of some of the British occupying troops. The incident greatly strengthened the Polish desire for a port under Polish sovereignty, which was the major cause of the building of the port of Gdynia. The dispute itself was settled in October 1925 by the decision to create a Polish munitions depot at the Westerplatte, north of the port of Danzig.

14.—(b) A similar dispute arose over the question whether Poland had the right to use the port of Danzig for ships of war. This was discussed by the League of Nations as early as 1921, but was not settled until 1932, when the Danzig Senate agreed for a provisional period of three years to grant Poland somewhat greater privileges than other Powers. In the meantime Poland had made great progress in the construction of a naval base on her own soil as part of the port of Gdynia. Until Gdynia was built, indeed, Poland had no port at which she could maintain ships of war.

15.—(c) The growth of Gdynia as a commercial port led to a contention by the Danzig Senate that Poland was bound under the Treaty of Versailles to use the port of Danzig up to its capacity, only using Gdynia when the capacity of Danzig was insufficient. Already in 1925 it was feared in Danzig that competition from Gdynia would have an adverse effect on the traffic through Danzig. These fears were soon realised (see Part II of this paper, paragraph 39). In the years 1932–33 Gdynian traffic overtook and surpassed that of Danzig, at a time when Danzig traffic was gravely affected by the general depression. From 1933 onwards, the advantage enjoyed by Gdynia was, moreover, considerably greater as regards the value of the traffic handled. The main decision in this case was given by the League Council on the 10th May, 1932, to the effect that Poland was "bound to make full use" of the port of Danzig, but that the two parties should come to an agreement between themselves. On the 18th September, 1933, a Polish-Danzig agreement was signed, providing for the establishment of a joint committee to deal with further questions that might arise in this connexion, and for the division of trade between Gdynia and Danzig. These efforts maintained a certain balance in the tonnage handled by the two ports, though even in this respect Gdynia always had the advantage. As regards the value of the traffic handled, Gdynia's advantage continued to grow uninterruptedly until 1938 (see Appendix to Part II of this paper).

16.—(d) The question of the defence of Danzig in case of attack was dealt with by the League Council in June 1921. The Council had before it a report from its Permanent Military, Naval and Air Advisory Committee dated the 1st December, 1920, recommending that Poland should be authorised to undertake defensive preparations in Danzig territory. This proposal was strongly criticised by Mr. Balfour, who declared that "the strength of small States such as Danzig would be the strength of the League itself and would not depend on the inherent strength of their military alliance with a neighbouring Power." Ultimately, on the 22nd June, 1921, the Council accepted the principle that Poland was the Power "specially fitted to ensure the defence of Danzig by land, as well as the maintenance of order in the territory of the Free City, in the event of the local police forces proving insufficient." The resolution empowered the High Commissioner to "address a direct invitation to the Polish Government . . . in the event of the territory of the Free City being the object of aggression, threat, or danger of aggression, from a neighbouring country other than Poland."