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LEAGUE OF NATIONS

ORGANISATION FOR COMMUNICATIONS  
AND TRANSIT

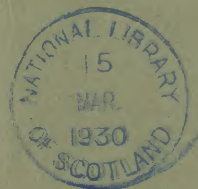
EUROPEAN CONFERENCE

ON THE

TRANSPORT OF NEWSPAPERS  
AND PERIODICALS

Held in Geneva, November 25th to 29th, 1929.

RECORDS AND TEXTS



GENEVA, 1930.

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Official No.: **C. 115. M. 36.** 1930. VIII.

GENEVA, January 15th, 1930.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

ORGANISATION FOR COMMUNICATIONS  
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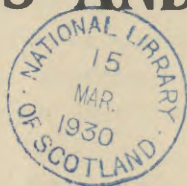
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Series of League of Nations Publications

VIII. TRANSIT  
1930. VIII. 1.

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REPORT OF THE

ORGANIZATION FOR COMMERCIAL  
AND TRAVEL

EUROPEAN CONFERENCE

ON THE

TRANSPORT OF NEWSPAPERS  
AND PERIODICALS

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## I. COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATIONS TO THE CONFERENCE

### GERMANY.

M. H. H. VOELCKERS, German Consul-General at Geneva.  
M. H. KATZENBERGER, Counsellor of Legation at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.  
M. W. GUT, Ministerial Counsellor at the Ministry of Posts.

### BELGIUM.

M. J. G. CRISPIELS, Inspector-General of Customs.  
M. E. MONS, Chief of Division in the General Post Office.  
M. G. J. GILSON, Head of Office in the National Railway Company.

### UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.

Mr. C. B. COLLINS, Of the Air Ministry.  
Mr. H. W. PHILLIPS, Assistant Overseas and Continental Traffic Manager,  
London, Midland and Scottish Railway Company.

### BULGARIA.

M. D. MIKOFF, Chargé d'Affaires accredited to the Swiss Federal Council.  
M. S. IVANOFF, Deputy-Director of Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones.  
M. J. MITKOFF, Chief of the Customs Section in the Ministry of Finance.

### DENMARK.

M. C. I. MONDRUP, Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs.  
M. N. A. MÖLLER, Head of Section in the Department of Posts and  
Telegraphs.

### SPAIN.

M. E. M. DANIS, Head of the Press Bureau in the Ministry for Foreign  
Affairs.  
M. H. CUARTARA GARCIA, Assessor in the Customs Department.  
M. F. JIMENEZ ONTIVEROS, Engineer to the State Railways.

### FRANCE.

M. P. BARGETON, Minister Plenipotentiary, Head of the Press Service  
in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.  
M. E. LECUYER, Administrator of Customs.  
M. A. POURCEL, Chief Engineer attached to the management of the  
P.L.M. Railway Company.

### HUNGARY.

M. P. DE HEVESY DE HEVES, Resident Minister, Permanent Delegate accredited to  
the League of Nations.  
M. Zoltán BARANYAI, First Secretary of Legation.  
Dr. Dénes DE KOVACS, Counsellor of Section in the Ministry of the Interior.  
M. Kálmán PRIHRADNY, Deputy-Director of the State Railways.  
Dr. Charles DE FORSTER, Counsellor at the General Post Office.

### ITALY.

M. M. GALDI, Chief of Division in the Ministry of Communications.  
M. G. BARELLA, Director-Manager of the *Popolo d'Italia*.  
M. L. BELMONTE, Chief Inspector of State Railways.  
M. A. PIROZZI, Chief of Section in the Air Ministry.  
General G. PELLISSERO, Director-Manager of the *Gazzetta del Popolo*.

### THE NETHERLANDS.

M. A. HELDRING, Director-General of the *Algemeen Handelsblad*.  
M. A. P. F. DUIJNSTEE, Chief Inspector of Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones.  
M. W. F. H. VAN RIJCKEVORSEL, Chief Inspector of the Netherlands Railways.

POLAND.

M. Thadée GWIAZDOWSKI, Counsellor of Legation.  
M. S. HLADKI, Counsellor in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

PORTUGAL.

M. F. DE CALHEIROS E MENEZES, Head of the Portuguese Office attached to the League of Nations.  
M. J. FERREIRA DE MESQUITA, Director-General of the Portuguese Railway Company.

ROUMANIA.

M. L. BLAGA, Press Attaché to the Roumanian Legation in Switzerland.  
M. M. ROSCA, Deputy Director-General of Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones.

SWEDEN.

M. G. LAGER, Chief of Division in the General Post Office.

SWITZERLAND.

M. Samuel HAUSERMANN, Inspector-General of Customs.  
M. E. HESS, Chief of the Commercial Division of the Federal Railways.  
M. Max FISCHER, Inspector in the General Post Office.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

M. Zdenek FIERLINGER, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary accredited to the Swiss Federal Council.

TURKEY.

Mehmed MUNIR Bey, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary accredited to the Swiss Federal Council.  
M. RIFAT ISMAIL, Deputy Director-General of State Railways.

YUGOSLAVIA.

M. B. DJOURITCHITCH, Director-General of State Railways.

FINLAND.

(Attending the Conference for information).

M. E. GYLLENBÖGEL, Chargé d'Affaires at Berne.

SAAR TERRITORY GOVERNING COMMISSION.

(Attending the Conference in an advisory capacity.)

M. A. NICKLAUS, Divisional Director of the Saar Railways.

Attending the Conference in an advisory capacity :

INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF THE UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION.

M. E. GARBANI-NERINI, Director of the Bureau.  
M. E. VOUTAT, Secretary of the Bureau.

CENTRAL OFFICE FOR INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY TRANSPORT.

M. E. LOHNER, Director of the Office.  
M. G. NOE, Secretary of the Office.

INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY UNION.

M. A. POURCEL, Deputy Secretary-General of the Union.  
M. E. HESS, Chairman of the Goods Traffic Committee to enquire into the Question of Newspaper Transport.



INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAFFIC ASSOCIATION.

Jonkheer L. VAN DEN BERCH VAN  
HEEMSTEDÉ, Director-General of the Association.  
M. M. WRONSKY, Chairman of the Association's Committee on the Transport  
of Newspapers by Air, Director of the "Deutsche  
Luft Hansa".

"COMPAGNIE INTERNATIONALE DES WAGONS-LITS  
ET DES GRANDS EXPRESS EUROPÉENS."

M. H. LUUYT, Chief Inspector.

THE NEWSPAPER PROPRIETORS' ASSOCIATION, LIMITED, LONDON.

Mr. T. W. MCARA, Secretary of the Association.

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FRENCH NEWSPAPERS.

M. A. CHAUCHAT, Secretary of the Federation.

THE SWISS NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION.

M. E. RIETMANN, Chairman of the Association.

MESSAGERIES HACHETTE, PARIS.

M. R. SCHOELLER, Director-General.

GEORG STILKE, PUBLISHER, BERLIN.

Dr. G. STILKE, Bookseller and Publisher.  
M. H. W. VON HERWARTH, Bookseller and Publisher.

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*Secretariat:*

M. R. HAAS, Chief of the Communications and Transit Section of the League Secretariat,  
Secretary-General of the Conference.  
M. ROMEIN, Member of the Communications and Transit Section of the League Secretariat.

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## II. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

### FIRST MEETING

*Held on November 25th, 1929, at 3 p.m.*

*President:* The Right Hon. Viscount BURNHAM.

#### 1. Opening of the Conference : President's Speech.

The PRESIDENT declared the Conference open. He welcomed the various delegations on behalf of the Council and then spoke as follows :

“ I am very glad to find myself again in the Chair of a Newspaper Conference, however limited its scope and purpose. Like an old war-horse in the unregenerate days of the world, I feel myself in congenial surroundings when I deal with Press questions. It is more than two years since I presided over the first International Conference of Press Experts ever held by the League of Nations and, as I pointed out at the time, the first independent Conference that the League had organised. In its constitution and in its discussions, it was free of official trammels and inspiration, but it owed a great deal of its easy working and its far-reaching conclusions to the elaborate and benevolent assistance of all the officers of the League of Nations concerned with such matters.

“ In my concluding speech, I pointed out that the resolutions then adopted would be passed to the Council of the League for examination and report with a view to immediate action for the purpose of obtaining the sanction and support of all States. These are practical matters of immediate interest to newspapers in all countries and to the countless numbers of their readers, who depend upon them for their information and instruction in the history of the present and the preparation for the future. On the Continent of Europe, all the means of communication are either in Government hands or under Government control. Similarly, it is only through the agency of the League through Governments that such reforms can be obtained in the system of transportation as will enable the distribution of newspapers to be accelerated and increased for the common advantage’.

“ In regard to the transport of newspapers, the Conference of Press Experts adopted the resolution set out on page 14 of the Final Report.

“ Thereafter, the Council of the League, to whom I personally reported the results of the Conference, considered the work of the Press Conference and requested the Secretary-General to ask ‘the Organisation for Communications and Transit to continue, with the help of the Press groups interested, the technical study’ of the resolutions which included the conveyance of newspapers, and the Assembly, at its eighth ordinary session in September 1927, referred the report of the Press Conference to its Sixth Committee (Political Questions), which, in turn, devoted two meetings to the examination of its work, thereafter adopting resolutions for ‘ promptly giving the necessary effect to the resolutions of the Conference’.

“ Both the Council and the Assembly declared themselves willing, in principle, to lend the assistance of the League’s technical organisations for the study of technical international problems which affect the Press.

“ Hence, I take it, we are assembled here to carry the transport resolutions to such practical application as may be possible and desirable. There may be difficulties in the way of complete success, which can only be removed by discreet handling, and it is obvious that, bearing this in mind, it will be impossible to discuss the censorship of news and opinion except so far as it may delay the transit and delivery of newspapers.

“ In laying this down as a general rule to guide us in our deliberations, I feel sure that I shall have the general concurrence of the members of this Conference.

“ To adopt, as the most pacific of orators still do, the imagery of arms, it may be said with sincerity and assurance that newspapers are both the munitions of peace and the munitions of war, but, as is pointed out most truly in one of the “Green Books” issued by the International Labour Office on the Conditions of Work and Life of Journalists, ‘ the newspaper Press is a factor which plays such a part in the life of to-day that it would be difficult to picture the world without it’, and newspapers ‘ are very like the nerve impulses of present-day civilisation’.

“ Taking recent figures, there are in Great Britain 2,400 newspapers, several of which have circulations of more than one million copies daily. In 1920, in the United States, there were 2,400 daily newspapers and 14,800 weeklies, and the total circulation of the daily newspapers rose from 28,700,000 in 1914 to 35,730,000 in 1923. In the same year, the newspaper industry comprised 10,267 establishments, employing 238,550 persons. A hundred daily papers appear in Paris alone. In Germany, in 1926, there were 3,812 dailies and 4,309 weeklies.

Switzerland has 2,000 papers and magazines, or one periodical per 2,000 inhabitants. In Denmark the high figure is reached of one copy of a newspaper for every three inhabitants.

"This mighty engine for the formation and information of public opinion is growing in power and potentiality every year—east and west, north and south. Its use and abuse are a solemn responsibility upon all who are concerned with the production and distribution of newspapers.

"Here and now, we are only concerned with the latter part of the problem. We have to do our best with what the poet called 'Motions and means, on land and sea', (and I must add 'air') that they may not —

. . . prove a bar  
To the mind's gaining that prophetic sense  
Of future change, that point of vision whence  
May be discovered what in soul ye are."

M. BARGETON (France) said how pleased the French delegation had been to learn that Lord Burnham had agreed to take the Chair at this Conference. Lord Burnham had presided over the 1927 Conference of Press Experts with an ability, firmness, tact and cordiality which had been greatly appreciated by all.

## 2. Programme of Work.

The PRESIDENT said that, although it was the usual practice for conferences to resolve themselves into committees, each of which was directed to examine some particular question, this procedure was not immediately necessary in the case of the present Conference in view of its restricted scope. The Conference might therefore follow for the moment the English practice of "constituting itself into committee of the whole Conference", after the general statements which certain delegates would no doubt wish to make.

*This was agreed to.*

*The Conference adopted the draft agenda (see Annex 1).*

## 3. General Discussion : Questions relating to Railway Administration (Item 1 of the Agenda).

M. POURCEL (International Railway Union) thought that he could best assist the Conference by reading the conclusions adopted by the Managing Committee of the International Railway Union, after examination by the competent Committee of the Union and in conformity with its suggestions. These conclusions were shown in Part 3 of the preparatory documents (see Annex 2).

If these recommendations were applied, transport would take place under conditions of greater simplicity and speed, based upon the conditions of French national tariff, with which the French Press was entirely satisfied. The international waybill system would be applied, the newspapers being forwarded direct from the place of departure to the place of destination, without it being necessary to re-forward the papers from one frontier to another or to employ the services of transit agents. The cost would be calculated by adding together the charges to which the papers were liable in their transit through the various countries. M. Pourcel would be glad to know whether the representatives of the Press approved of this solution.

M. CHAUCHAT (National Federation of French Newspapers) said that the French Press endorsed the conclusions of the Rapporteur of the International Railway Union, except, perhaps, in the case of one small point of detail. The Union granted the same treatment to financial newspapers which were published six days a week as to daily newspapers. Would it not be possible to extend this regime to all newspapers appearing six days a week and not only to financial papers ?

M. POURCEL (International Railway Union) said that this question would be enquired into. He did not think that he would make any rash statement in asserting that M. Chauchat's request would be favourably received. A newspaper appearing six times a week might, indeed, be regarded as practically the same as a daily paper.

M. SCHOELLER (Messageries Hachette) said that he was only attending the Conference in an advisory capacity. He wished, however, to present certain observations on the proposals of the International Railway Union in connection with the application to the transport of newspapers of the international Convention on the Transport of Goods. He believed that the result of such application would be a rise in transport prices. In so far as French newspapers were concerned, there would be an increase of 350 per cent for Belgium, 500 per cent for Spain and for Italy, and 300 per cent for Switzerland and Luxemburg. Moreover, if the countries to which France forwarded newspapers by post were also taken into account, it would be found that in the case of six of these there would also be a considerable increase in the cost of transport. For Bulgaria there would be an increase of 3 per cent, for Greece and Roumania of 10 per cent, for Russia and Turkey of 25 per cent and for the Netherlands of 3 per cent.

Under these circumstances, M. Schoeller asked the International Railway Union whether it could not consider the establishment of special rates for the transport of newspapers.

M. WRONSKY (International Air Traffic Association) said that his part in the Conference was comparatively unimportant, since he represented the Committee of the Association which dealt with newspaper transport by air. This method of transport was still in its initial stages, and had not yet firmly established itself, although it had greatly developed during

recent years. He wished to present a few observations on the difficulties of aerial transport of newspapers :

1. The regularity of the service had been fairly satisfactory in preceding years, at any rate for nine months of the year.
2. Accessory loads were still unimportant, although in this respect also there had been a marked improvement.
3. As yet there were no night services, but such services would be inaugurated in 1930, plying from Berlin to London, Paris, Barcelona, Constantinople and Scandinavia.

One of the main difficulties was the question of rates. At present, it was impossible to establish uniform rates for the whole of Europe. On the one hand, the different lines varied very greatly in character. The air lines between London and Paris, for instance, were almost entirely luxury lines. On the other hand, the organisations dealing with questions of air transport were too few and were not sufficiently developed to agree upon uniform rates between themselves.

Another difficulty was the lowering of rates. M. Wronsky pointed out that this question was closely bound up with the question of the financial results obtained by air navigation companies. As all his colleagues were aware, there had been frequent criticism in the Press of various countries with regard to the unsatisfactory results obtained by these companies, if the subsidies granted to them were taken into account.

M. Wronsky said that the Committee on Newspaper Transport by Air of the Association was ready to examine any proposal that was submitted to it. He was sure that the members of the Conference would be firmly supported by M. van den Berch van Heemstede.

M. HESS (International Railway Union) said that he did not wish to speak in his capacity as representative of the Swiss Federal Railways, but on behalf of the International Railway Union. He had the honour of presiding over the second Committee of this Union, which had given special consideration to the question of transport of newspapers.

He wished to reply, in the first place, to M. Schoeller, who seemed to fear that the regulations proposed by the International Union would lead to an increase in transport prices for newspapers. M. Hess could assert that the measures contemplated would not in any way affect transport prices, which would remain the same as they were at present. The Union was aiming first and foremost at acceleration of transport. Newspapers required an accelerated transport such as that which at present existed for non-accompanied luggage. The main considerations had been a simplification of the system of forwarding, accelerated transport as a result of the determination of fixed routes in advance and, lastly, a simplification of delivery formalities.

This was the goal which the International Union was endeavouring to reach. When it had been informed of the views of the Conference, it might be able to lay down more detailed provisions.

With regard to transport prices, the International Union was in much the same position as the airway companies. It was very difficult to come to an agreement. The Union believed, therefore, that it would not be possible to secure unification of rates for the moment.

There would not, therefore, be any increase in transport prices, such as M. Schoeller seemed to fear. On the contrary, the Union hoped that it would be able to lower these prices—for instance, by removing the necessity for any intermediary at the frontier, where the Customs formalities might be carried out by the railway administrations themselves.

Mr. MCARA (The Newspaper Proprietors' Association) said that M. Hess had made several points clearer. He himself believed that the proposals submitted by the International Railway Union should be adopted in their present form. It would be very advantageous to Great Britain if newspapers could be assimilated to goods. An English consignor at Manchester might send a packet of newspapers direct to any part of the Continent, and this packet would be delivered direct to the consignee. Under the present conditions, he was obliged, on the contrary, to employ the services—which, incidentally, gave complete satisfaction—of the Messageries Hachette. It would be a great advantage for English newspapers if a system of transport of newspapers direct from consignor to consignee could be adopted.

He thought that there were one or two points which should be specially examined. It had been sought, for instance, to assimilate newspapers and goods. It should not be forgotten, however, that newspaper traffic was regular, whereas the transport of goods was irregular and was much more uncertain and more subject to variations. M. Hess had also alluded to the great advantages which newspapers would derive from accelerated transport, for instance, as a result of simplification of Customs formalities at the frontiers. Mr. McARA also thought that this was a very important point to which the Conference should give close attention.

Speaking on behalf of the English newspapers, he would be glad if points (a) and (f) of the proposals submitted by the International Railway Union (see Annex 2) were adopted by the Conference.

In reply to M. Hess, he did not understand why the International Union had decided that the term "daily newspapers" was to be taken as implying newspapers which appeared every weekday. This was a very important point in respect of the English newspapers, since it was to the interest of several English newspapers which were only published on Sunday that they should be transported under the same conditions as daily papers.

In conclusion, he hoped that the railway companies would not oppose a reduction of rates, which would be a much better solution than unification of rates.

M. SCHOELLER (Messageries Hachette) declared that the International Convention gave satisfaction on many points concerning the transport of newspapers by rail. It provided for the acceleration of newspaper transport. But the question of rates remained untouched. M. Schoeller had believed that in the event of the Convention being applied, prices of transport would become still higher. M. Hess had lessened his anxiety on this point; he would like to ask him if the newspaper forwarders would derive any profit from the reduction resulting in the application of this Convention.

Concerning the preliminary measures for the newspapers, it was suggested in the third paragraph of the proposal presented by the International Railway Union that they should have recourse to the international trains of the Sleeping-Car Company. M. Schoeller asked if the International Railway Union had consulted the Sleeping-Car Company on this question.

In reply to M. Wronsky, he declared that it was not only the question of tariffs which had been discussed at Berlin on October 12th, 1928. At that time, M. Wronsky had said that the transport of newspapers by air at reduced rates would only be granted if there were unengaged space in the aeroplanes. But he would draw their attention to the fact that newspapers were perishable goods and could not wait until space was available. He realised that great efforts had been made concerning the transport of newspapers by air both from the point of view of regularity of service and of price. Consequently, there was no lack of good intentions, but it would be better for the transport of newspapers if the regularity of the air services could be firmly relied upon.

Finally, M. Schoeller wished to say a few words on the resolutions of the Conference of Press Experts in 1927, particularly concerning the dropping of newspapers from aeroplanes. The experiment had been made and had given the following results: On an itinerary of 300 km., an aeroplane could gain 30 or 35 minutes, a saving of approximately one-sixth of its time. That was quite an appreciable result.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE asked several questions to clear up the application of the Convention proposed by the International Union.

1. Concerning transport rates, he well understood that the propositions excluded, at least for the moment, the establishment of rates at internationally agreed figures: he would like to know if the deduction could be made that the most favourable national rates would be the ones applied to international transport.

2. Did not the International Railway Union intend to simplify the formalities by applying the international rates and concentrating all the necessary formalities at departure?

3. The case mentioned by Mr. McAra showed that it would be necessary to draw up all future proposals with care. It was certain that the weekly English newspapers which appeared on Sundays needed the same rapidity of transport as the daily newspapers which appeared on the other days of the week. His opinion was that the same conditions should apply to the Sunday newspapers.

4. Had the International Railway Union taken into consideration the case of States that had not agreed to the Convention of Berne, for example, Great Britain? Had special measures been thought out to enable Great Britain to benefit from all the modifications that had been made in the present situation? He added that an analogous question arose concerning States that had a postal monopoly.

M. CHAUCHAT (National Federation of French Newspapers) said that he was in complete agreement with the declaration of Mr. McAra.

M. STILKE (Georg Stilke, Publisher) said that the interests of his firm were not altogether identical with those of the Maison Hachette. The firm of Stilke distributed German and foreign newspapers principally in Germany and only in a small number of other European countries, the despatch abroad being usually done by the large publishing houses themselves. On the other hand, the number of foreign newspapers read in Germany was not very large. They were received very quickly from the Messageries Hachette, and until now no complaint or criticism had been made. The firm of Stilke had consequently no special observations to make. It would willingly co-operate with the Conference in all questions of general interest.

M. HESS (International Railway Union) thought that the Secretary-General of the Conference had given a very exact summary of the various questions which should be examined by the Conference. He would merely reply to these questions in so far as he was able.

1. It was impossible for the International Railway Union to reply to the question whether the railway administrations would apply their most favourable national tariffs to international traffic. For the moment, this matter depended upon the policy of each country. He thought, nevertheless, that, as a general rule, each country applied the most favourable tariffs of its national service to the international service. There were, however, certain exceptions. The national tariffs of certain countries provided, moreover, certain restrictions with regard to responsibility. If the Berne International Convention were to be applied, the responsibility thus created would, on the contrary, be unlimited. If the full responsibility arising out of that Convention had to be assumed, some railway administrations might raise their tariffs.

2. Unification of Tariffs. — The International Union contemplated the establishment of uniform rules. At its session in the spring of 1930 it would continue its study of the questions relating to the transport of newspapers, and as it would then know the opinions expressed by the present Conference it would be able to take a step forward and apply the measures relating to the acceleration of transport and the simplification of formalities. On the other hand, he thought that for the time being it was out of the question to contemplate establishing prices applicable to the whole of Europe. This might possibly be done for a limited number of countries (*e.g.*, the countries of Western Europe).

3. Concerning periodicals and Sunday editions of English newspapers, the International Union had decided to exclude periodicals from the Convention. It was, however, very difficult to define what was meant by "periodicals". The French railway system gave one definition (Tariff G.V.118); the systems of other countries gave others. It only remained, then, for the International Union to agree on what was to be understood by "periodical". The non-inclusion of periodicals among newspapers in general might present certain advantages. As a matter of fact, in some international trains space was extremely restricted, and if periodicals were allowed daily newspapers might not be accepted through lack of space. It should also not be forgotten that periodicals did not require the same rapidity of transport as daily newspapers. Consequently, the Union thought that it was not necessary to encumber the quickest trains with periodicals that could quite well arrive at their destination a few hours later; and so the International Railway Union had not provided special transport facilities for them. However, if the present Conference thought that such facilities ought to be granted, the Union would be quite prepared to examine the question, but on the condition that the Conference gave a precise definition of what was meant by "periodicals".

4. Concerning those countries that had not agreed to the Convention of Berne, for example, Great Britain, M. Hess declared that the English railways were quite ready to come to an agreement with the Continental railways in order to establish special rules for the transport of newspapers.

The International Union was unable to do anything concerning the countries with postal monopolies, for according to the provisions of the International Convention of Berne, goods whose transport was reserved by the postal administration, were it only for one of the countries to be crossed, were excluded from transport by the rules for international waybills.

Finally, the representative of the British newspapers had believed that M. Hess had said that the regulations of the International Union did away with Customs formalities at the frontier. That was a misunderstanding which must be cleared away. The International Union had only intended the suppression of the transit agents, while leaving the railways to carry out these formalities themselves.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE quite understood that M. Hess had not been able to reply to certain questions which were not in the domain of the International Union; but he pointed out that the present Conference was a Conference of Governments, and was consequently capable of dealing with important questions such as those of rates, and it was exactly that question which would be principally studied by the present Conference.

To begin with, it had just been said that the unification of transport rates was extremely difficult. In that case, it would be advantageous to apply the rates laid down by the Convention of Berne. But the explanations of M. Hess made this question more complicated. Actually, the transport rates of certain countries were based on a limitation of responsibility; if it were decided to apply the Convention of Berne, with the increased responsibility involved, an increase of transport rates might result. The Secretary-General of the Conference only wished to draw attention to this question, which ought to be studied later when it was decided whether the Convention of Berne should be applied or not. Perhaps an international agreement might be arrived at which did not provide for such complete responsibility as that established by the Convention of Berne.

Concerning periodicals, the Secretary-General of the Conference thought that M. Hess had not understood him well, if M. Hess believed that he had said that it would be necessary to establish similar conditions for periodicals. What he actually believed was, that if a definition could be given to what was understood by "periodicals", the application of certain measures favouring daily newspapers might perhaps be extended to periodicals.

M. BARGETON (France) also believed that the regime proposed by the Berne Union would provide a satisfactory solution. There were certain objections, however, to the application of that regime to every country, and the removal of those objections appeared to lie outside the powers conferred by the Governments upon the International Railway Union. It should, however, be possible to solve these difficulties at the present Conference, which comprised representatives of a large number of Governments. As the representative of the French Government, he was ready to participate in any exchange of views which might take place for that purpose. If no solution could be reached by means of the existing agreements, they would need the widest liberty which the Governments could grant them in order to find solution.

Mr. PHILLIPS (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) declared that the English railways had decided to establish special rates on certain lines, such as London-Paris, London-Berlin, and *vice-versa*.

In his opinion, the International Railway Union had up to the present taken into consideration the point of view of daily newspapers only and not that of English Sunday papers. He thought that if the International Union understood what the English Sunday newspapers really were, it would doubtless agree to class them among daily newspapers.

The PRESIDENT proposed to adjourn the rest of the general discussion to the next meeting when the Conference would also examine item 2 of the agenda: "Fiscal tariff, and similar questions", including the special question of aerial transport.

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## SECOND MEETING

*Held on November 26th, 1929, at 10.30 a.m.*

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*President:* The Right Hon. Viscount BURNHAM,

### 4. General Discussion : Questions relating to Railway Administrations (Item 1 of the Agenda) (continued).

The PRESIDENT opening the meeting, recalled the decision taken in the previous meeting that the general discussion should be followed by item 2 of the agenda: "Fiscal tariff and similar questions". However, since certain questions relating to them might not be absolutely clear, he asked if any delegate had any further observations to make on this item.

M. LOHNER (Central Office for International Railway Transport) made the following statement:

"You have been good enough to invite the Central Office for International Railway Transport to take part in your discussions. Our main interest in the subject of these discussions is to know how it is proposed that the Berne International Convention should be applied to the transport of newspapers. I venture to emphasise one point raised by the Secretary-General of the Conference who said that the present Conference was a Conference of Government representatives and was consequently able to contemplate modifications to the provisions of the Berne International Convention. I share this view in principle, but I feel I ought to draw your attention to the fact that the Berne Convention, which is binding upon the contracting States, expressly provides for the procedure to be followed for the revision of the Convention: it provides for revisory conferences, the next of which will not take place before 1931 and perhaps not even before 1933. If we bear in mind that ratification by the various States will not take place in less than a year, is the European Conference prepared to postpone the realisation of its projects for so long? If so, the next conference for the revision of the International Convention concerning Traffic of Goods by Rail (C.I.M.) might certainly, among other innovations (such as, for example, the introduction of provisions relating to the international express parcels traffic), draw up permanent regulations for the transport of newspapers. In the meantime, and in order to meet urgent needs, an international tariff might be established on the model of the existing inland tariff in France (special tariff G.V.118). This new tariff might be based on: (1) the provisions of the C.I.M.; (2) uniform supplementary provisions drawn up by the International Transport Committee; (3) special supplementary provisions, the main lines of which might be discussed by the present Conference. They should not, however, be contrary to the provisions of the C.I.M., since according to Article 9, paragraph 2, of the latter, 'the conditions of rates laid down therein shall be valid, provided that they are not contrary to the present Convention. Otherwise they shall be regarded as null and void'. In this way, the legal regime regulating the transport of newspapers would be defined.

"As regards the financial system, that is to say, the taxation of consignments, discussions on this question should be held between the railway administrations concerned.

"M. Schoeller said yesterday that the application of the C.I.M. would mean an increase in costs of transport. Such an inference, however, cannot be drawn without further justification, since the C.I.M. does not contain any scale of rates."

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE did not believe that he had said that the present Conference could undertake on its own account a modification of the Berne Convention (C.I.M.). His opinion was that, if they decided that the existing regulations were insufficient or inconvenient, they ought not to stop at that point, since the representatives of the Governments of the different States were competent to consider all the measures that ought to be taken to introduce the necessary modifications in the dispositions of the Berne Convention. However, the moment had not yet come for them to discuss the procedure to be followed. The Secretary-General of the Conference thought that it was quite possible to consider, if not a modification according to the habitual procedure, at least an adaptation of the Convention by appropriate measures. It seemed to him that, provided that the third parties were not inconvenienced, the contracting States had the right to agree among themselves

to certain modifications. But that was a question which it would be more convenient, if possible, to leave over for the present.

It was the substance of the question only which counted, and that practically reduced itself to the question of price. He was certain that, although the Berne Convention fixed no scales of charges, its application might cause an indirect rise in prices, for since the responsibility of the railway companies would be increased, these companies might be brought to raise their transport rates, and if that increase were large enough to influence the internal tariff, the whole system would be affected.

Consequently, the question ought not to be examined from a theoretical point of view, for everything depended on the actual facts, and it would be necessary to have fuller information (which was being collected at the present moment) before deciding what measures, if any, could be taken.

Finally, the Secretary-General of the Conference wished to ask M. Lohner the following question: Was it possible, according to the C.I.M., for the contracting States to establish direct rates with non-contracting States on another basis than that of the C.I.M.? To take a particular example, could Great Britain establish direct rates with Berlin, and utilise the State railways that had adhered to the C.I.M., on a different basis from that established by the Convention of Berne?

M. LOHNER (Central Office for International Railway Transport) thought, on hearing the observations of the Secretary-General of the Conference, that there was really very little difference of opinion between the Secretary-General of the Conference and himself. It was the following sentence in the proposal submitted by the International Railway Union that had led him to make his statement: "The system of newspaper transport by international traffic will be based on the C.I.M.". He thought that the meaning of this sentence was somewhat vague and should be made clear. Moreover, he considered that the ground had already been sufficiently prepared by the previous discussions.

In reply to the Secretary-General of the Conference, who had just asked whether, supposing the transport of newspapers were effected under the provisions of the C.I.M., States could not modify the system established by that Convention, he would make the following observations: If he understood aright the text proposed by the International Railway Union, the railway administrations would require a transport document to be used stating that the newspaper traffic was carried on under the terms of the C.I.M. In that case, the railway administrations would not be able to include in their tariffs any provisions contrary to the C.I.M.; otherwise, such provisions might be declared by courts of law to be null and void. As regards the question whether a special supplementary provision would be contrary to the C.I.M., the Central Office, according to the rules laid down for it by the various revisory conferences, was not competent to give an opinion or a consultation which could be cited by parties to a suit; the question must be left wholly for the courts to decide.

The situation would be quite different if the transport of newspapers were effected under the terms of special inter-State conventions in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 2, of the C.I.M., more especially if the postal regulations in some countries did not allow of the international railway transport of newspapers.

To the question put by the Secretary-General of the Conference whether there was any special procedure for modifying the Berne Convention, he would reply that the provisions of the C.I.M., which had legal force in the various contracting States, could be modified only by one procedure, namely, by means of the revisory conferences provided for by Article 60 of the Convention. The Convention did not provide for revision by correspondence, as appeared to be the case in regard to the Universal Postal Convention.

M. CHAUCHAT (National Federation of French Newspapers) thought that this important discussion defined the position of the Conference, not only in respect of the Berne Convention, but also in respect of the Stockholm Convention. It was for this reason that the *Fédération française des Journaux* expressed the desire that States which had not yet acceded to the Stockholm Convention should do so, in the interests of uniform conditions of transport of newspapers and periodicals throughout the world.

The PRESIDENT said that the general discussion was concluded. He called upon the Conference to discuss item 2 of the agenda, setting aside for the moment, however, the question of postal monopolies in the transport of newspapers. This question would be discussed at the following meeting, at which certain German officials with special knowledge of the subject would give full information. The Conference would therefore now discuss Customs and tariff questions.

##### 5. Fiscal, Tariff and Similar Questions (Item 2 of the Agenda).

M. SCHOELLER (Messageries Hachette) thought that the question of transport systems should be considered first and should be settled before the Customs questions. It seemed that it would be difficult to secure a revision of the Berne Convention, for, if it were sought to adapt this Convention to the transport of newspapers, it would, it appeared, be necessary entirely to re-cast the Convention. He thought that it might be simpler, in the circumstances, to draw up a special convention on the transport of newspapers.

In France, for instance, the railway companies had established three systems: postal, goods and newspaper systems. When the last mentioned of these systems—the *Grande Vitesse* 118—was being prepared in 1911, the railway companies examined at length the question of the transport of Press publications and finally reached the conclusion that this transport



called for a special system. In his opinion, a special system was also necessary from the international point of view. He wondered, therefore, whether it would not be better to approach the International Railway Union with a view to the conclusion of a special agreement, which would be independent of the Berne Convention. An advantage of this course would be that, while countries which had or had not acceded to the Berne Convention might or might not accede to the special agreement on the transport of newspapers, the States signatories of this agreement might gradually secure the accession of the majority of States by bringing the system of reciprocity into play.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE thought that the question of principle could not properly be examined until all the special questions had first been examined, since everything would depend upon the conclusions that were reached with regard to these special questions. For several reasons, it would be better, if it were possible, to leave the Berne Convention untouched.

In the first place, the Secretary-General of the Conference believed that the Berne Convention had compulsory force only as regards the kind of transport specified therein and effected on lines that had been fixed on the basis of the Convention. He did not think that there was anything in the Convention which could be regarded, *prima facie*, as precluding the conclusion of agreements on different bases between contracting and non-contracting States.

Another question to be settled was that of transport utilising the railways of countries which possessed a postal monopoly. It would, no doubt, be advisable to hold over the examination of this question until the question of postal monopolies had itself been examined, although the possibility of a rail-postal waybill might be considered. This method would not be contrary to the Berne Convention, since it had been provided for in that Convention.

The question remained whether, if a special Convention were concluded, too great responsibility would not be laid upon the railway companies, the result of which might be an increase in prices. It would be necessary in that event to calculate the exact extent of this increase. If no other basis were found, the Conference would have to revert to the proposal of the International Railway Union.

The question depended, lastly, on the Customs and fiscal systems, the consideration of which was on the agenda of the present meeting. The Secretary-General of the Conference thought, therefore, that before replying to M. Schoeller's proposal, it would be advisable first to examine in turn the special questions raised by this proposal.

The PRESIDENT said that he would prefer, for his part, to keep to the procedure that had been proposed at the beginning of the meeting, which would not preclude members from making statements upon any points in which they were particularly interested. Since the Conference was composed of representatives of the Governments of the various States, he thought that it would be very valuable to discuss the question of Customs in the first place.

It was, moreover, hardly necessary to point out that it would be paradoxical if the Conference were to increase the cost of transport of newspapers. The Conference should always keep in mind, on the contrary, the necessity of securing a reduction of that cost in the general interests of the European public.

M. LÉCUYER (France) thought that the President had explained the problem very clearly. There were three hindrances to transport of newspapers: (1) the actual conditions of this transport, which had been examined at the preceding meeting; (2) the fiscal and Customs conditions which, as the President had just recommended, might be examined at the present meeting; (3) the formalities required by the services of public safety and order.

With regard to the Customs questions, he did not think that there were any protective tariffs in Europe for newspapers and periodicals. In any case, there were no such tariffs in France. In that country, as in others, there were only duties which were levied upon all newspapers for fiscal purposes or as recompense for services rendered; for instance, statistical and sealing duties. These duties were so small that it was hardly worth while to refer to them, but they raised, nevertheless, a question which would have to be settled, since the levying of Customs duties on imported newspapers and on newspapers in transit was obviously calculated to delay the clearing of these newspapers through the Customs. These duties should therefore be reduced to a strict minimum. This was a point which a sub-committee might enquire into with profit. If such a sub-committee were not to come to any definite conclusions, the Communications and Transit Section might be asked to continue this work, and to examine the matter more closely.

With regard to Customs formalities, which were both Customs control and police formalities, he might draw the attention of the Conference to the fact that France had organised several Customs offices which had been given authority to clear newspapers through the Customs and which exercised financial, Customs and also police control. There were at present eighty of these offices. M. Lécuyer thought that it would be of value to obtain information of this kind with regard to other countries, for this question was a very important one from the point of view of the delays involved in transport.

The PRESIDENT quite agreed with M. Lécuyer. While acknowledging that he had no special knowledge of this subject, he thought that it would be very valuable if the Conference could obtain information on this point, which would give it a clear understanding of the matters with which it had to deal. If the technical advisers could not give any information, the Secretariat might be requested to prepare the documentation.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE thought that, as M. Lécuyer had pointed out, there were two quite different questions to be considered; the question of Customs duties and the question of Customs formalities. Obviously, the two questions were inter-related, since the more complicated the duties, the longer were the formalities.

With regard to the first question, there was no information available. At the Conference of Press Experts, the question of Government monopoly taxes had been raised by the representative of the Messageries Hachette. The question of the amount of the taxes had not, however, been raised as yet, nor had he any information with regard to transit taxes. It was possible, however, that such taxes were levied, in which case certain important questions would arise, and in particular the question whether the existence of such duties was compatible with the provisions of the General Convention of Freedom of Transit and the annexed Statute.

He thought that it would be difficult to collect documentation of this kind, and he did not believe, moreover, that it was absolutely essential, since the Governments were no doubt ready to abolish such taxes. It would, of course, be possible to prepare documentation by resorting to the services of the Committee on Communications and Transit and of the Secretariat, and to obtain a gradual decrease in these taxes. In the absence of such documentation, however, he thought that it would be difficult to continue the examination of this question at present.

On the other hand, he thought that it was necessary thoroughly to examine the question of Customs formalities, which was bound up with transport questions. This examination would not be undertaken by the Committee for Communications and Transit alone, but also by the Fiscal Committee, which might indicate certain solutions for the unification of fiscal provisions. The question of formalities might be examined in its bearing both upon periodicals and upon daily papers. He believed that the formalities in connection with periodicals were more complicated than those which had to be complied with in connection with newspapers. Sometimes, for instance, periodicals were taxed only in respect of the part containing advertisements, whereas the remainder of the periodical was free of taxation. This system resulted in all manner of complications in determining the weight of the parts reserved for advertisements, provided that this operation were strictly carried out.

The PRESIDENT drew attention, in this connection, to the action of the League, which had resulted in the passing of the following resolution by the Conference of Press Experts:

“Believing that international understanding and the promotion of peace can best be encouraged by the widest dissemination of news, the Conference urges the Governments concerned to consider the urgent need for early abolition of any taxes and other restrictions on newspapers which hinder a fuller and more extended circulation of the international Press.”

He quite agreed with the preceding speakers and with the Secretariat in thinking that no purpose would be served at present by making a detailed examination of the taxes in question, since in the absence of information no definite conclusions could be reached. The question might, however, be referred to the Council of the League, which could entrust its task to the organisation which it thought most appropriate. He would be glad to hear any statements which the representatives of the various Governments might have to make in this connection.

M. DANIS (Spain), in reply to the President's request, said that in Spain there was a very inconsiderable tax of 10 centimes per 100 kg. on the transport of newspapers.

M. LÉCUYER (France) apologised for reverting to the question which he had just raised. In his opinion, however, this question was extremely difficult and important, and although the Conference could not examine it thoroughly, he thought that it was essential to ascertain as soon as possible the state of affairs in every country with regard to it and the rate of the duties applied. For the moment, the Conference could do no more than express a more or less formal recommendation, which might be used as a basis for further examination.

He also wished to point out that the question should not be limited to newspapers, but should also include periodicals, which played an equally important part with the daily papers in the dissemination of ideas. The definition of periodicals varied according to the administrations. The railways administration had one definition, the postal administration another, and the Customs administration yet another, and so forth. He thought, therefore, in conclusion, that the enquiry of the Section for Communications and Transit must also include this definition, together with the question of the duties levied upon both newspapers and periodicals.

M. HAUSERMANN (Switzerland) agreed that two separate points might be distinguished in this question: Customs and other charges, and Customs formalities.

With regard to charges, he did not think that those imposed upon newspapers and periodicals were very high in any European country. In Switzerland, the duties were very small—5 centimes per kg., together with a statistical duty of 10 centimes per 100 kg. This was a very trifling amount. Generally speaking, these duties did not have the slightest influence upon the sale prices of newspapers in any country.

He believed, on the other hand, that there was something to be done in connection with the formalities. Without going into detail, he was convinced that a great deal would be gained if formalities could be abolished or reduced to a strict minimum. In Switzerland, there was no discrimination between the various kinds of newspapers.

M. LÉCUYER (France) quite agreed with M. Häusermann. It was true that there were two separate questions. It would not be possible, however, to simplify the formalities, if the charges were allowed to remain. Since the charges upon newspapers were, generally speaking, inconsiderable, as had been shown in the case of Spain and Switzerland, and as was also the case in France (the Treasuries in these countries derived an annual income of only 500,000 francs from these charges), it seemed that they might easily be abandoned.

The PRESIDENT said that it would be difficult to give details with regard to Great Britain, since in that country the formalities were not connected with payment of duties.

M. CALHEIROS E MENEZES (Portugal) said that in his country the price fixed for the transport of newspapers despatched from abroad was 3 escudos per 10 kg. There were no Customs duties.

Mr. COLLINS (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said that in so far as Great Britain was concerned, no Customs duties of any kind were levied upon newspapers. He would, however, be glad to hear the views of distributing agencies in this connection, and to ascertain whether the transport of their newspapers was delayed as a result of any of the British regulations.

In the second place, he reminded the Conference that, in the preceding discussion, various divergent views had been expressed by the representatives of the associations of railway transport and the representatives of the forwarding companies and of the newspaper companies. The discussion had proved the necessity of defining the points which should be settled between the transport companies and the newspaper companies. In other words, it would be of no value to enquire into possible agreement between the railway companies and the newspaper companies, if this agreement on the improvement of their relationship were not to entail changes in the present arrangements. It was also important that any alterations decided upon should be sorted out into two parts, the one requiring action between commercial administrations alone, and the other requiring alteration to existing Government or fiscal laws, so that each representative might communicate with his own Government in order to obtain fuller information and, where necessary, definite instructions before the conclusion of the Conference.

M. DJOURITCHITCH (Yugoslavia) said, in the first place, that there were no duties on the importation of newspapers into Yugoslavia and that therefore the Customs formalities on entry could be reduced to a minimum, since they could be carried out by the railway authorities at the station of entry during the stop of the train; and, secondly, that the transport tariffs applicable to newspapers in Yugoslavia were shown in the document circulated to the members of the Conference.

M. GWIAZDOWSKI (Poland) said that he had no definite information with regard to duties. He did not believe, however, that any such duties were levied in Poland. In his country, the Customs formalities were not such as to delay the transport of newspapers.

M. PRIHRADNY (Hungary) said that in his country there were no Customs duties on newspapers and that the Customs formalities were as simple as possible.

M. DUIJNSTEE (Netherlands) proposed that the delegates should transmit the information that they had given to the Secretariat in writing, since it would be impossible to remember all the statements that had just been made. He wished, for his part, to transmit to the Secretariat a statement which he had drawn up in advance, without reading it to the Conference, in order not to trespass upon its time (see Annex 3).

The PRESIDENT left the members of the Conference full liberty in this matter, but he thought that perhaps it would be best if information were given to the Secretariat by writing.

M. CRISPIELS (Belgium) was glad to say that in Belgium the system of newspaper transport was very similar to those that had already been described by the speakers of various countries before him.

1. *Customs duties.* — There was no Customs duty on imported newspapers and periodicals, but there was a statistical duty, though very small—5 centimes per consignment for packed newspapers, 15 centimes per 1,000 kg. for unpacked newspapers if the consignment weighed 3,000 kg. or less, and 5 centimes per 1,000 kg. for unpacked newspapers if the consignment weighed more than 3,000 kg. Further, a special "transmission" tax was levied, not only on imported foreign newspapers, but also on Belgian newspapers. This tax corresponded to the business turnover tax levied in France. It would be difficult to abolish it, as such a step would apply preferential treatment to foreign as compared with Belgian newspapers. He would add that this tax was not excessive; it amounted to 2 per cent of the value of the consignment and, moreover, was payable on any imported goods. A bill would shortly be laid before the Belgian Parliament which it was hoped would reduce the "transmission" tax in the near future from 2 to 1 per cent.

2. *Customs formalities.* — For newspapers consigned to the interior of the country, a simple declaration had to be made by the importer. This declaration did not in any way delay delivery; thus, French newspapers arriving in Brussels about 12.30 p.m. were generally taken away within four minutes.

3. *Transit.* — There was no duty or charge for transit, and the formalities were reduced to a minimum. All that had to be done was to produce the ordinary Customs declaration called the "feuille de route" (way-sheet), which was quite a concise document. The formality of sealing, where carried out by the Customs, had never delayed consignments.

Mr. MCARA (The Newspaper Proprietors' Association) wished to point out to the Belgian representative that his statement was not entirely exact and that, in principle, Belgium applied special duties to fashion papers.

M. CRISPIELS (Belgium) replied that the system in force for newspapers and periodicals was, in fact, not the same as that for fashion papers. The rates prescribed by the Customs tariff for fashion papers varied according to the special kind of printing used for those publications and according to the quality of the paper. He was afraid he could not state the amount of the duties, as he had not the Belgian tariff at hand.

M. VOELCKERS (Germany) declared: (1) that newspaper transport in Germany took place only through the post; consequently there were no special duties; (2) there were no special Customs formalities. However, the German experts would give more complete and precise explanations during the next meeting.

M. CHAUCHAT (The National Association of French Newspapers) wished to ask for information from the Belgian representative on two points: (1) he did not think that the quality of printing affected the distinction made in fashion papers, for certain of those papers were printed in the same way as ordinary newspapers; (2) M. Crispiels had not spoken in his statement of the taxes on the unsold copies that were returned. Those were very inconvenient taxes, and he did not think that they had been suppressed.

The PRESIDENT wished to ask M. Crispiels a new question. Did the tax on fashion papers apply also to ordinary newspapers which contained pages devoted to fashions? For example, the English newspapers, which had each week two or three such pages.

M. CRISPIELS (Belgium) replied first to the President that periodicals whose news pages, etc., included a fashion page were treated as ordinary newspapers. Customs duties were levied only on fashion publications which did not appear periodically. As was known, some of these publications did not always appear at regular intervals.

Replying to M. Chauchat, he said, in the first place, that as he had not the Belgian tariff at hand he could not state the exact text, but he thought, as he had said, that the discriminative rate of duty applied according to the method of printing; it certainly varied according to the number of colours. In any case, the quality of the paper, as determined by its weight per square metre, was certainly taken into account as well. In the second place, he assumed that the tax to which M. Chauchat had referred was the "transmission" tax, which was paid at the time of Customs clearance and which was ostensibly payable on unsold newspapers. He would add, however, that the registration administration had reached certain agreements with the parties concerned, whereby the *ad valorem* tax was converted for printed matter into a specific duty which was taken as an equivalent. There was thus a scale of two or three duties. The specific duty thus leviable at a flat rate was based on the estimated number of unsold copies returned to the export country.

M. CHAUCHAT (The National Association of French Newspapers) replied that, nevertheless, the measure impeded the circulation of foreign newspapers, and that, if the Belgian newspapers had been consulted, it was quite certain that the foreign newspapers had not been consulted.

M. CRISPIELS (Belgium) declared the situation was the same whether the newspapers were Belgian or foreign.

MUNIR Bey (Turkey) declared: (1) that in Turkey, newspapers were exempted from all Customs duties; (2) as regards formalities, newspapers and periodicals were granted every facility for rapid and reliable transport.

The PRESIDENT declared that the Conference had brought to light a certain amount of interesting information, but he was convinced that the question of Customs taxation which concerned the Governments of different States could not be effectively treated by the present Conference, and that the only procedure to follow would be to pass a resolution by which the Conference could ask the Council for a new examination of the question, or even for the summoning of a financial conference.

M. HELDRING (Netherlands) wished to question the Belgian representative on an interesting point which did not appear very clearly from his statement. Was there a difference in the importation of newspapers to Belgium between the imports by railway and the imports by post, and, in the latter case, what Customs formalities were there?

M. CRISPIELS (Belgium) replied that, generally speaking, the Customs regime applicable to newspaper transport by post was the same as that for transport by rail. There was an agreement between the Customs and the postal administrations whereby the latter notified the former of all consignments which seemed dutiable. In practice, newspapers were imported into Belgium through the post only in single copies sent direct to private individuals and

were then admitted free on account of the smallness of the consignment. If large packets of newspapers were sent by post, the Customs would carry out formalities similar to those required for transport by rail and would levy the same charges.

Mr. McARA (The Newspaper Proprietors' Association) declared that, if the Conference dealt with the complete question of tariffs and decided to refer it to a committee that would examine it thoroughly, the solution would be delayed *sine die*, or at least until the distant future. In his opinion, it would be preferable to follow another course and to try to arrive at an agreement between the railway companies and the companies of aerial transport on the question of newspaper transport from capital to capital, considering only certain stations and certain routes, instead of treating the whole question *en bloc*.

In this manner, the matter could be studied precisely and the Customs rates for the different routes could be established, whereas if this were not done the Conference could only arrive at vague results.

The PRESIDENT had the impression that Mr. McARA was confusing two different things and using the word "tariff" in the sense of "transport tariffs", whereas, as a matter of fact, the speakers before him had had in view "Customs tariffs", which were the special province of the Governments of the different States and could only be discussed by a financial conference.

In his opinion, owing to the fact that information was still insufficient, it was better to refer the question of transport tariffs to the Council; but, on the other hand, the Conference could continue its examination of the question of Customs formalities. For this they could nominate a committee which would draw up a report, on the basis of which the Conference might arrive at certain resolutions.

*This was agreed.*

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### THIRD MEETING.

*Held on November 26th, 1929, at 3.15 p.m.*

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*President:* The Right Honourable Viscount BURNHAM.

#### 5. General Discussion: Fiscal, Tariff and Similar Questions (Item 2 of the Agenda) (continued).

The PRESIDENT opened the discussion on the question of Customs and police formalities.

M. ROSCA (Roumania) declared that Roumania levied no Customs duties and imposed no Customs formalities on foreign newspapers. On the other hand, newspaper transport in the interior of the country took place both by post and by railway. He wished to draw the attention of the Conference to the fact that Roumania had concluded a Convention with the Sleeping-Car Company in 1926, by which the transport of correspondence and newspapers was taken over by the Simplon Orient Express.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE asked M. Rosca if the Conference could obtain fuller information, not on the details, but on the principles of this agreement with the Sleeping-Car Company. For instance, it would be useful to know if the parcels of newspapers transported by the Sleeping-Car Company were considered as if they had been transported by post.

M. ROSCA (Roumania) replied in the affirmative.

The PRESIDENT observed that this example was of great interest to them at a moment when the Conference intended to study the possibility of establishing a system of newspaper transport by the trains of the Sleeping-Car Company.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE declared that if no other member wished to speak on the question of Customs formalities, he would ask if, while waiting for the formation of the sub-committee, it would not be possible to come to an agreement on a well-defined principle. It seemed that the proposals made by the International Railway Union would result in assuring newspaper transit by express trains. Consequently, it seemed necessary that Customs formalities should be similar to those applied to the compartment examination of travellers' luggage. If there was difference of opinion on this point between the members of the Conference, it would be better for them to find it out immediately, before the formation of the sub-committee; otherwise, it would be for the sub-committee to decide on the way in which Customs formalities should be applied to the newspaper parcels carried by express trains.

Mr. PHILLIPS (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) declared that there was no Customs tax on foreign newspapers that entered England; however, there were sometimes formalities to be gone through which entailed certain expense. The International Railway Union had tried to get over the difficulty by suppressing the formalities, but that would only lead to more obstacles. The best thing would be, not to suppress formalities, but to reduce them and so to make the expenses less considerable.

M. LECUYER (France) wished to make an observation concerning the comparison of newspaper parcels with luggage : he drew attention to the fact that the Convention of October 1923 (Article 25) laid down that the traveller should present his luggage personally for examination at the Customs and was responsible for any infringement of this rule. It seemed to him that if newspaper parcels were going to be identified with luggage for the purpose of Customs formalities a certain adjustment would have to be made. It was the railway companies which would have to take charge of the Customs formalities, presentation at the Customs, and the responsibility that might result from infringement of these rules.

M. POURCEL (International Railway Union) confirmed the statement of M. Hess that the transport system as laid down by the International Railway Union made Customs formalities necessary during the stop of the train, in the same way as for baggage ; and it was the railway company which would hand over the newspaper parcels to the Customs, in the same way as travellers were obliged to present their luggage. He added that all the proposals that the International Railway Union had made would be rendered useless if the Customs and police formalities could not be fulfilled during the stop of the train or during waits at junctions for connecting trains.

The PRESIDENT said that the discussion on newspaper transport by railway and the future obligations of the railways concerning Customs formalities and the payment of Customs dues had led to a very interesting discussion. He thought that it would now be easy for the sub-committee to draw up a draft resolution expressing the opinion of the different members of the Conference. The very important question of police formalities now remained to be studied, the principal point of which was the censorship which still existed in many countries. The President thought it would be useful to clear up this question immediately. He wished to emphasise the fact that they were not going to study the political side of censorship in relation to certain European countries, but censorship only in so far as it concerned newspaper transport. He asked the Secretary-General of the Conference to make a general statement on this question.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE replied that he had not been able to study it thoroughly enough, but he thought that he could say that it was not the duty of the present Conference, being a transport Conference, to discuss whether this or that newspaper could be read in this or that country. Only the question of transport interested him, and from this point of view two considerations arose : the first concerning transit, the other concerning importation.

It did not seem that police formalities should be applied to newspapers during transit. However, he thought that the delegates of the different Governments could be asked if, in their opinion, it would be necessary to keep up police formalities when there was only a question of newspaper transit. At the same time, the representatives of forwarding companies might be able to supply interesting information on this point.

M. SCHOELLER (Messageries Hachette) drew attention to the fact that it was impossible to establish a general regulation for censorship that should apply to all countries ; censorship depended on more or less serious difficulties that existed in each country. He did not wish to mention countries by name, but he thought that they might be divided into two kinds : (1) countries where censorship was more or less permanent, (2) countries where it was only occasional. Concerning the latter form of censorship, he wished to inform the Conference of the following facts : the Messageries Hachette had been informed that French newspapers had been held up at certain frontiers by the censor for 20 to 48 hours without the editors of these newspapers or those who were in charge of their transport being informed. Even restoration of the seized copies had not been obtained. That was an abnormal situation. He thought that measures should be taken so that the editors of newspapers should be informed in time that it was impossible for certain newspapers to enter this or that country because of the police regulations in force.

M. FIERLINGER (Czechoslovakia) agreed with the President that the discussion should be limited to general questions ; that was to say, that they should only deal with the question of delays in newspaper transport which might be brought about by police formalities. If the political side of the question was touched, he would not allow himself to speak, for he believed that the present Conference was not competent to deal with that side of the question.

He declared that there was censorship in Czechoslovakia, but that it meant only that certain newspapers whose distribution was forbidden in the country were put on the index. But, he pointed out, that brought no delay to the distribution of authorised foreign newspapers in Czechoslovakia. He added that the International Railway Union had suggested a procedure by which the railway companies themselves would carry out Customs and police formalities : in that case, the railway companies would know which newspapers were on the index which would simplify matters considerably.

M. BARGETON (France) was convinced that the Conference did not intend to discuss the right of States to regulate, as they thought fit, the introduction of certain foreign publications into their countries. But, he believed, the question could be studied from the special point of view of newspaper transport. In the case of simple transit, it would be best to try to suppress all censorship as much as possible. In the case of importation, censorship was indispensable, but it ought to work without any delay. He mentioned that in France the formalities of censorship worked simultaneously with those of the Customs, that was to say, as quickly as was possible.

M. HESS (International Railway Union) pointed out, with regard to the statement of the delegate of Czechoslovakia, that in countries where censorship was exercised by the Government the railways could not escape its application, but it would be very difficult for the forwarding railway companies to know the names of the newspapers which were banned, in this or that country, and to know if the censorship, exercised in this or that country, was temporary or permanent. He wished to point out that under no circumstances could the railway companies assume responsibility in this matter.

M. FIERLINGER (Czechoslovakia) declared that he had just mentioned the case of newspapers which were forbidden in Czechoslovakia. He would point out that the names of those newspapers were always known; and so it was the duty of the railway companies to take care not to accept these newspapers for despatch. In the special case of Czechoslovakia, he stated that the railways were kept informed by the competent authorities of the list of forbidden newspapers, which list was revised at regular intervals. Moreover, he believed that the censorship was exercised in a similar manner in all countries.

M. SCHOELLER (Messageries Hachette) thought that a newspaper with a circulation of several thousand copies ought to be informed as quickly as possible when a certain country was closed to it, in order to prevent the printing of useless editions. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that newspapers were perishable goods which could suffer no delay. Sometimes the ban of a certain country was made against a newspaper between its departure and its arrival at the frontier; in that case, the railways were evidently ignorant of the fact that this newspaper was forbidden to enter the country. He thought that if the railway companies took upon themselves the formalities of transit it would be necessary that they should take measures to warn, as quickly as possible, the senders concerned, should their newspapers be forbidden to enter a certain country.

Concerning Customs examinations at the frontier, M. Schoeller wished to point out that sometimes for very large newspaper parcels a stop of six hours or more was necessary, and that delay often prevented the newspapers from being sold when they arrived at their destination. He believed that it would be useful if these newspaper parcels were accompanied by a specimen parcel containing all the titles, which would facilitate the Customs inspection at the frontier and avoid any unnecessary delay.

M. HESS (International Railway Union) replied to M. Schoeller that the newspaper transport with international waybills implied that the railway company ought to warn the sender as quickly as possible when the newspaper concerned was forbidden to enter any country (C.I.M. Article 23).

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE wished to ask M. Hess whether he could inform him how quickly this notice would be given the sender.

M. HESS (International Railway Union) replied that it was necessary to take into account the time that a letter took by post or by railway; in any case, notice was sent immediately.

The PRESIDENT observed that the discussion had arrived at a point when the sub-committee could be informed of the opinion of the Conference. For his part, he believed that a solution could be reached without in the least compromising the sovereign rights of each State. He thought it was obvious that if the railways took it upon themselves to supervise the transit formalities at the frontier, all sorts of advantages would be obtained so far as censorship was concerned. The railway companies would be in a better situation than that in which the publishers were at present. There would certainly be less delay and fewer losses.

He thought that the Conference would have to wait for the report of the sub-committee. He now suggested that the Conference should examine the question of postal monopolies in certain countries; and he asked M. Garbani-Nerini to make a general statement.

M. GARBANI-NERINI (International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union) pointed out that the question of postal monopolies could be studied under two aspects: (1) taking into consideration the motives that justified them, and (2) examining the general conditions in which the postal monopolies were applied.

He would leave it to the representatives of the countries with postal monopolies to explain the first of these aspects and to give the Conference detailed information as to the second, but he believed that it was necessary to explain the general conditions under which the transport service of printed matter was run in the countries which had agreed to the Universal Postal Union, that was to say in every civilised country. He thought it was necessary to give these general explanations, because he had noticed that in the documents which had been distributed to the members of the Conference there was some uncertainty.

For example, it was stated that a Convention signed at Stockholm would bring into operation a reduced tariff of 15 centimes per 50 grammes for the transport of periodicals. This Convention had, it was said, been signed by only twenty-two countries, and the tariff applied was still relatively high. No special convention existed, however. The matter was regulated by the Universal Postal Convention of Stockholm, concluded among all the countries belonging to the Universal Postal Union, which prescribed a charge of 5 gold centimes per 50 grammes for all printed matter. In making this provision, it was hoped that a uniform charge would be established. In view of the existing conditions in certain countries, however, that was not possible. Accordingly, a minimum of 4 centimes and a maximum of 8 centimes had had to be fixed in the Final Protocol. In addition, however, a provision was introduced into the Convention enabling the administrations to allow each other for newspapers and

periodicals sent direct from the publisher a reduction of 50 per cent on the general printed-matter rate. This clause, which was an optional one, had been applied in Europe and elsewhere, but not yet by the majority of members of the Universal Postal Union. The objections to the introduction of the optional clause in certain countries were due to various causes, on which it was not for him to give an opinion.

M. Garbani-Nerini had not found any reference in the report to any other special service, on terms favourable to the Press, for delivery of newspapers ordered on subscription. Such a service had been the subject of a special Agreement, also concluded at Stockholm. The rates that had been fixed for this service represented an appreciable reduction as compared with the general printed-matter rates. The Universal Postal Union had extended this facility to every country, but the number which made use of it was still quite small.

The Postal Union had also had to deal in recent years with the question of aerial transport of newspapers. It had not been able to secure uniform rates for this method of transport, but it had succeeded in establishing minimum rates. Under this system, the taxes which he had already mentioned were levied, together with an aerial surtax of 25 centimes per 20 grammes and per 1,000 kilometres of voyage at the maximum (1927 Hague Agreement). This Agreement, which was optional, had been attached to the Universal Postal Convention of London, and its terms were regarded as forming an integral part of the new Convention.

With regard to postal packets, the following rules had been laid down. In the case of postal packets of 5 kg. and under, a territorial duty of 50 centimes was levied for each country crossed. This duty might be doubled. There was also an optional delivery duty of 50 centimes at the maximum per packet. Lastly, the country of origin or the country of destination might, in certain circumstances, levy a surtax of 25 centimes at the maximum.

All these provisions had been gradually introduced by the Postal Union, in order to meet the desiderata expressed by the International Press. A recommendation might possibly be made by the present Conference that still greater facilities should be given for the transport of printed matter. M. Garbani-Nerini had pointed out already in this connection that any proposals which the Conference might bring forward with regard to transport of printed matter by post would have to be submitted to the Universal Postal Union for its examination and approval. This was usually done through the Congresses. The date of the next Postal Congress had, however, been fixed for 1934, which was far too distant. If it were not possible to examine the proposals of the Conference until this date, their application would be greatly delayed. There would very probably be a conference on aerial postal transport, but the date for that conference had not yet been fixed. Apart from these Congresses or conferences, there was also the procedure of circular communication, according to which the proposals from the various delegations would be submitted to each of the States parties to the Postal Union. This procedure was practicable, but very lengthy. Six months were required for the examination of the question by the States concerned, six months for the vote and three months for carrying the measure into effect. If the Conference wished to obtain immediate results, one method which it could adopt would be to induce the Governments concerned either to accede to the Agreement regarding postal subscriptions or to allow the reduction of 50 per cent on the general printed-matter rates.

Another course would be that indicated by Article 5 of the Convention, which grants States belonging to the Universal Postal Union the option of concluding treaties and establishing small unions for the reduction of charges or of any other improvements in postal relations. This latter course was a particularly practical one, because, if experience showed that definite progress had been made and that the general relations between countries might benefit from the application of such measures, it made it possible to propose later that the measures in question should be embodied in the Universal Postal Convention, so that all countries would have to adopt them. In his opinion, that was the best means of making rapid progress in the transport of printed matter, and in particular of newspapers.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE wished to make an observation with regard to the question of procedure which M. Garbani-Nerini had raised. This question of procedure was very much the same as the one that M. Lohner had raised in regard to the Berne Convention. It had been said that the revision of the Berne Convention would take place in 1932, and it had just been stated that the revision of the Postal Convention would not take place until 1934. The Secretary-General of the Conference did not think that the European Governments could wait for five years before proceeding to a revision of these Conventions. The International Railway Union and the Universal Postal Union could not be regarded as organisations the existence of which prohibited Governments from settling railway and postal questions between themselves—particularly in view of the fact that certain questions affected both Conventions. Attention should therefore be concentrated on the 1932 Conference, it being hoped that the 1934 Conference would take decisions which would be compatible with those taken in 1932. Otherwise, the vicious circle of delays would continue.

Should it be proposed to apply further measures affecting both Conventions, the Governments might, he thought, conclude special agreements between themselves. Otherwise, the Governments would be in the position of being unable to take measures upon the desirability of which they were unanimously agreed.

M. GUR (Germany) said that the German Postal Administration had accepted with pleasure the invitation to take part in this Conference, since it was keenly interested in all questions relating to the Press. As the Conference was aware, the German Postal Administration itself conducted a very extensive service for the delivery of newspapers. It was compelled by law to ensure this service. It also enjoyed the exclusive right to transport political newspapers published more than once a week outside a radius of two miles from the



place of publication. Foreign political newspapers which were to be sent to Germany, or which had to cross that country, also had to be handed over for this purpose to the German Postal Administration.

M. Gut wished to stress the fact that this system had never been employed by the Administration as a source of profit. On the contrary, it had always dealt with it on the only lines that had seemed practicable, namely, by making it further the dissemination of news and, consequently, promote the progress of culture.

The efforts made by the German Postal Administration to facilitate the dissemination of news were not, however, restricted to the inland services alone. It was Germany who had suggested in 1891 the adoption of the international Agreement with regard to newspapers ordered on subscription on a basis of a scheme which it had drawn up, and since that date it had done much to improve this Agreement. Germany had also been one of the first countries to apply the reduction of 50 per cent in the rates for printed matter despatched direct by the publishers. It had effected this reduction immediately after the decision by the Stockholm Postal Congress in this connection, and it had made every effort in order to secure the adoption of this reduction by as many countries as possible.

It would be realised, therefore, that the German Postal Administration endeavoured to meet the requirements of the newspaper service as far as possible. It endeavoured, in particular, to facilitate rapid transport of newspapers. The same rules were applied to newspapers as to letters—that was to say, the newspapers were despatched by the most rapid means available. Similarly, with regard to aerial transport of newspapers, the German Postal Administration had concluded agreements with the airway companies in connection with the transport of foreign newspapers, which would be subject to very inconsiderable rates and very simple tariffs.

The monopoly in the transport of newspapers which the German Postal Administration possessed could not be abolished for the profit of foreign newspapers transported to or through Germany. The Administration would, however, continue to do everything possible, as it had always done in the past, to ensure rapid transport of such newspapers. It was quite ready to open friendly negotiations with those concerned with regard to the possibilities of such transport.

M. Gut was sure that it would always be possible to take account, within the limits of the present system, of the requirements and desiderata of the Press.

M. CHAUCHAT (National Federation of French Newspapers) wished to correct an observation which he had made at the morning meeting. The provision of the Stockholm Convention regarding the reduction of the charge in the case of newspapers was, of course, purely optional; but he wished to point out that the States which had not applied that Convention were in a minority, at any rate in so far as Europe was concerned. There were, indeed, only four such States.

He believed, for his part, that the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union might make representations to the Governments in order to emphasise the necessity of according to all newspapers, without exception, the reduction of 50 per cent on the rates for printed matter.

M. GARBANI-NERINI, (International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union), taking note of M. Chauchat's observation, wished also to correct an error which he had involuntarily committed. He himself also recognised that countries applying the 50 per cent reduction were in a majority in Europe; there were twenty-two such countries in all on that continent. His statement had been based upon the systems of all the countries in the world.

In reply to the observations of the Secretary-General of the Conference he wished to point out that that he quite understood that it might not be found practicable to defer the application of the proposals of the Conference until the Congresses of 1932 and of 1934 had met. He thought, however, that he ought to point out at once the difficulties to which the procedure provided by the Stockholm Convention gave rise when an attempt was made to change any of its provisions, so that they would not make the mistake of thinking that such changes could be effected by the present Conference. Although the delegates to the present Conference were Government delegates, it must not be forgotten that the Universal Postal Convention also had been concluded by plenipotentiaries of Governments, and was ratified by the Governments.

Provisions which had been approved and ratified by eighty-seven States could not, therefore, be changed by the delegates of a very small number of those countries, and in disregard of the formalities to which the Governments had committed themselves by way of safeguards in respect of such changes.

Such was the present position, and it required to be made clear. At the same time, however, he thought he could point out to the Conference the most rapid available means of reaching the desired end.

M. LOHNER (Central Office for International Railway Transport), desired, in order to dispel any misunderstanding, to reply in brief to what the Secretary-General of the Conference had said. He was anxious that the Conference should not retain the impression that the representatives of international organisations present at the Conference were hostile to such changes as were necessitated by the development of means of transport and the needs of international traffic. As regards the revision of the International Conventions of Berne, his position was somewhat similar to that which had just been described to the Conference by his colleague, M. Garbani-Nerini.

Of the Conventions in question, one had been in existence for more than thirty and the other for more than fifty years, and they had proved their value in the organisation of international communications. Obviously, these Conventions required to be revised from time to time ; but, in view of the large number of contracting States, the revision procedure was necessarily long and complex. It had already been explained to the Conference what course could be taken to be most certain of attaining the proposed end. At the previous meeting it had been said that, in order to reach a provisional solution of the problem, the railway administrations might draw up an international tariff, which, if necessary, would be made subject to the approval of their respective Governments. This tariff might be based on the C.I.M., on the uniform supplementary provisions already in existence and on any special provisions which might subsequently be made. That was one way which might achieve the desired end. The next Conference for the revision of the Berne Convention might place on a permanent footing the provisional system thus drawn up, at the same time taking into account the experience gained from it.

M. GALDI (Italy) said that the Italian Postal Administration was among those administrations which had acceded to and ratified the Convention, and had conducted a service for the delivery of newspapers ordered by subscription, which, as the Director of the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union had explained, enabled the public to obtain newspapers and periodicals on very favourable terms.

Nevertheless, like most other postal administrations, and chiefly for reasons connected with its service, it had not yet seen its way to adopting the 50 per cent reduction on the normal rates for printed matter, which had been provided for as optional by Article 34 of the Stockholm Convention.

It was very interesting to learn that the Universal Postal Congress which had recently been held in London had examined and rejected a suggestion by the International Press Federation that the reduction in question should be extended and made compulsory for all countries within the Union.

Having set forth these considerations, M. Galdi stated that, under the present circumstances, the Italian delegation could only support the views that had been expressed by the Director of the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union.

M. FIERLINGER (Czechoslovakia) wished to add a few observations to the statements of M. Garbani-Nerini and M. Lohner. The Conference was confronted with two contentions. The limits of the existing Conventions might be observed, resort being had to agreements between the railway administrations or, alternatively, a special contractual system might be established.

The Czechoslovak Government had examined with close attention the proposals of the International Railway Union. It would be unwilling to have a fresh contractual system set up side by side with the existing Conventions. His Government would not oppose the adoption of the first point of view. In the special case of Czechoslovakia, the postal monopoly was, of course, to some extent an obstacle, but this obstacle was not a very considerable one. The State, indeed, allowed various undertakings to transport newspapers themselves, and in the law under preparation no provision had been made for an exclusive monopoly by the postal administration in transport of newspapers. Obviously, the situation in certain countries, for instance, Germany, was more complicated. The representative of the German Government had, however, just stated that every effort would be made in Germany to circumvent this difficulty. M. Fierlinger thought, therefore, that the proposals that had been presented might be applied by the railway administrations.

M. BARGETON (France) observed that the situation was becoming less complicated. He had no doubt, in particular, that the representatives of the already existing international organisations might feel completely reassured with regard to the aims of the Conference. The Conference did not wish by any means to subvert the present situation. On the contrary, it wished to make use of it. It was, indeed, taking as a basis for its proposals a scheme which had been presented by one of these organisations, namely, the International Railway Union. He believed that the Conventions at present in force might be supplemented without it being necessary to modify them.

Dr. DE FORSTER (Hungary) said that, in Hungary, the postal monopoly was restricted to consignments of newspapers weighing less than 2 kg. Most consignments were, therefore, unaffected by this monopoly.

With regard to the 50 per cent reduction, Hungary had applied this reduction to newspapers from the outset. It had also applied from the outset the Convention with regard to the delivery of newspapers ordered on subscription. He thought that it was very desirable that the number of countries signatory to these two Conventions should be increased, and he believed that the League, with its great prestige, might do much in this respect, without affecting the Conventions already in force.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE apologised for having prolonged a discussion which was of a somewhat abstract character. He had done so merely in order to facilitate later discussion. He could assert that no attempt would be made to establish fresh rules which would be incompatible with those already laid down by the Berne Convention. This was also the case with regard to the postal Convention. But that did not mean that the provisions of those instruments might not be supplemented if this course were deemed necessary. It appeared from the statements that had been made in the discussion which had just taken place that the Conference was in favour of a generalisation of the proposals

of the International Railway Union, which aimed at abolishing certain of the various formalities that at present delayed the transport of newspapers. The question remained as to how this abolition could be secured, account being taken of the postal monopolies existing in certain countries. The Conference would have to ascertain what rule should be adopted in cases in which consignments of newspapers had to cross a country with a postal monopoly. This question would not be discussed immediately. The delegates of countries with a postal monopoly would first have to study the question as to whether the proposal of the International Railway Union could be so modified as to render it compatible with the institution of postal monopolies. For his part, he believed that this was not impossible, since this result had, if his information was correct, already been obtained by means of special agreements.

M. DE CALHEIROS E MENEZES (Portugal) had only one observation to make. Since the countries which had acceded to the Stockholm Convention and which applied the 50 per cent reduction in rates were now under consideration, he wished to point out that Portugal should be included among these countries, although it had not been mentioned in the documents which had been circulated.

M. VOELCKERS (Germany) replied that M. Gut had already declared that the German Government was willing to collaborate with all the delegations to the Conference in discovering a solution which would produce the results that were desired by all. Although there was a postal monopoly in Germany, the German Government would be the first to agree to a solution if one could be found which would not affect the monopoly. He thought that the best course would be to appoint a sub-committee to discover a solution which might afterwards be submitted to the Conference.

The PRESIDENT said that he agreed with M. Voelckers' proposal. In his opinion, also, the examination of the question of police and Customs formalities should be entrusted to a sub-committee. Another sub-committee might deal with the question of postal monopolies and of the means by which the proposals of the International Railway Union might be so modified as to render them compatible with the existence of these monopolies.

He proposed that the Conference should meet on the following morning to continue the general discussion. It might then take up the question of aerial transport.

*The proposals of the President were adopted.*

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#### FOURTH MEETING.

*Held on November 27th, 1929, at 10.30 a.m.*

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*President: The Right Honourable Viscount BURNHAM.*

#### **7. General Discussion (continued). Air Transport (Item 3 of the Agenda).**

The PRESIDENT, before passing to the agenda, which included the study of aerial transport, wished to draw the attention of the Conference to the memoranda sent by the Association of Austrian Daily Newspapers (see Annex 4), by the Estonian Government (see Annex 5) and by the Norwegian Association of Newspaper Owners (see Annex 6).

He first wanted to emphasise certain points in the Austrian memorandum. He was pleased to notice that relations between Austria and other foreign countries were extremely favourable, and that the difficulties which had occurred between Austria and Yugoslavia had been quite recently overcome.

In the interest of the Conference, he laid special emphasis on the following points of the memorandum :

(1) The simplification and reduction of costs of the international transport of newspapers, in so far as it affected foreign countries, was not of sufficient importance to necessitate consignment by express services or by *grande vitesse*, since Austria did not export a sufficient amount of newspapers to foreign countries.

(2) Concerning the proposal by Messageries Hachette of Paris, that newspapers should be carried by international expresses and by the expresses of the International Sleeping-Car Company, the Association of Austrian Daily Newspapers considered that the suggestion was without interest, since those trains did not run daily but only once or twice a week (*e.g.*, the Orient express).

(3) Concerning the question of tariffs, the Association drew attention to the inconvenience of the fact that not every State had yet agreed to the Convention of Stockholm of August 1924, or made use of the optional provision of that Convention, which gave them the right to allow a reduction of 50 per cent of the ordinary rate for printed matter (this was particularly the case with Great Britain, the United States of America, Italy and Switzerland).

(4) The Association of Austrian Daily Newspapers also wished to see an improvement in the international postal service for newspapers, which suffered at the moment from certain restrictions. In most countries, a subscription to a newspaper could only be taken out for a calendar quarter of the year, and that subscription must be taken out at the beginning of the quarter ; whereas, in Germany, for example, it was possible to subscribe to a newspaper for shorter periods, and, in the case of a quarterly subscription, to begin it at the first or second

month of the calendar quarter. The method generally used for subscriptions to foreign newspapers was of considerable inconvenience to travellers who did not remain so long as a calendar quarter abroad, and who wished to take out a subscription for less than a quarter.

The Austrian memorandum concluded with the statement that the import of foreign newspapers into Austria has been subject to no restrictions since 1919.

The Norwegian memorandum complained of the small number of members who had adhered to the Convention of Berne and put its provisions into application.

The Estonian memorandum also declared itself in favour of the unification of postal rates.

As for the eventual suppression of the tax on postal subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals, which amounts to 5 per cent in Estonia, the competent Estonian authorities were of the opinion that that tax, which was designed to cover the costs of correspondence, could not be abolished.

The President thought that it had not been useless to draw attention to these different facts, and he would be pleased if the Conference could have explanations from the companies concerned, on the questions that had been raised, and especially on the subject of the utilisation of the trains of the International Sleeping-Car Company for newspaper transport.

M. LUUYT (International Sleeping-Car Company), in reply to the President's invitation, wished to give precise information on this point, and notably on the matter of the Orient express, which ran only three times a week from Paris to Constantinople; but he wished to point out that the Arlberg express assured communication between Paris and Vienna on the three days when the Orient express did not run, and that, consequently, communication was assured six times a week.

M. SCHOELLER (Messageries Hachette) declared that the question of newspaper subscription raised by the Austrian memorandum seemed to him to be a matter of internal administration for each country and not an international question.

M. DUIJNSTEE (Netherlands) thought that the question of subscriptions was an international question which had been regulated by the agreements of Stockholm and London in such a way that, at the present time, the administrations of the different countries which had agreed to these agreements could quite well allow subscriptions of a fortnight, a month, a month and a-half, etc. This simplification should have excellent results if it was properly applied.

Replying to a question of the President, M. Duijnsteet declared that the Convention of London would enter into force on July 1st, 1930.

It was the opinion of the PRESIDENT that it was eminently desirable in the interests of newspaper readers that individuals should have the possibility of subscribing for periods of less than a month.

M. HELDRING (Netherlands) added that it was very convenient indeed for travellers who were going to spend a month abroad to be able to receive the newspapers of their country.

M. ROMEIN (Member of the Communications and Transit Section) drew attention to another question raised by the discussion of postal subscriptions to newspapers—that of the forwarding of newspapers. When a subscriber to a French newspaper in Switzerland went travelling in Italy, and wished that his newspaper should be forwarded to him there, he ought to inform the Swiss Postal Administration of his change of address. The postal administration would then see to it that his French newspaper was sent him directly from France. In the same way, when a subscriber left Italy to return to Switzerland, he ought to inform the postal administration in Italy, which in its turn should inform the French administration of the change of address that had taken place. But it sometimes happened that the Post Office employees in little towns did not understand the regulations governing the forwarding of newspapers, and it often happened that the postal administration concerned had not been informed of the subscriber's change of address. This entailed an appreciable delay in the reception of newspapers and consequently caused quite serious inconvenience. Would it not be pertinent for the postal administrations to take the necessary steps to see that their employees were informed exactly of the necessary formalities?

M. GARBANI-NERINI (International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union) replied that the two questions just raised by the representative of the Netherlands and by M. Romein were only points of detail which it was difficult for the International Bureau to try to solve. But he thought he could declare, as he had already said, that there were actually international provisions on these two points in the agreements of London and Stockholm.

Concerning the periods of subscription, the Stockholm Agreement laid down in Article 7, paragraph 1, "subscriptions may only be taken out for the periods mentioned in the official lists", and Article 4 of the Detailed Regulations said:

"1. Subscriptions come into force for one year on January 1st; for six months on January 1st and July 1st; for three months on January 1st, April 1st, July 1st and October 1st.

"Exceptions to this rule are allowed in the case of occasional or temporary publications; subscriptions are received for the proper period without being limited to the dates above-mentioned.

"2. The administrations concerned may arrange with one another to accept subscriptions for a fortnight, a month, a month and a-half, two months, and two months and a-half."

The administrations concerned were allowed to come to agreements among themselves, and the London Agreement had introduced other detailed provisions. Moreover, as the Netherlands delegate had declared, exceptions could be allowed for papers of intermittent and temporary publication (cf. the London Agreement).

In that case, it seemed that every possibility had been foreseen and that, with the aid of arrangements between the administrations concerned, every eventuality could be faced.

As for the question of the forwarding of newspapers, there were special regulations in force, and the administration of each country took the necessary care that the employees in all its offices were fully informed.

The PRESIDENT, in conclusion, reminded the Conference of the wish expressed by the Conference of Press Experts in August 1927 :

“ The Conference expresses the wish :

“ (1) That the countries which have not adhered to the Stockholm Agreement of 1924 concerning postal subscriptions to newspapers should do so as soon as possible ;

“ (2) That the countries which have adhered to this Agreement should put it into force without delay.”

He now asked the Conference to pass to the examination of aerial transport.

M. VAN DEN BERCH VAN HEEMSTEDÉ (International Air Traffic Association) declared that aerial lines were being more and more used for the despatch of newspapers, a fact which was explained by the rapidity of this mode of transport. The International Association of Air Traffic, being asked by the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit to study this question, had nominated a special Committee, which had delivered its report last year to the Advisory and Technical Committee. However, M. van den Berch van Heemstede had to point out that this reply had not been altogether satisfactory.

It dealt with three questions : the question of regularity, the question of tariffs, and the question of the manipulation of newspapers despatched by airships.

1. *Regularity.* — The air companies had been asked to guarantee a regularity of 100 per cent. Such a standard of regularity was certainly the desire of the air companies themselves, but, as might well be thought, it was an impossibility. No form of transport could guarantee 100 per cent regularity. However, during the summer, and even during the immediately preceding and following months, the air companies could from now onwards give a guarantee of about 95 per cent regularity. This fact had been recognised by the Press representatives at one of the meetings of the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit. This guarantee was not valid during the winter, but certain inventions were being studied which would allow greater regularity, even in time of fog. Fog, as was well known, was the great enemy of aerial transport.

Besides that, it had been asked that air services should be continual during the year. From January 1st, 1930, the services of the principal lines would be established for the whole year round, and even night flights would be organised on certain sections. The lines that would carry out this night traffic were marked on the map (see Annex 7) which had been distributed among the delegates and which would be submitted to the Conference of the International Association of Air Traffic, which would deal with the question of air time-tables at Berlin.

Arrangements had also been made for a combination between air and railway transport. The first line of this kind would be from Barcelona to Berlin and would function the whole year round.

2. *Tariffs.* — The Messageries Hachette had asked that a single tariff should be made uniform in all Europe for newspaper transport by air. The International Association was sorry to be unable to agree to this demand. It should be remembered that the companies were not yet in a situation to safeguard their capital without Government subsidies. On the other hand, the provisions of the various agreements drawn up between Governments and the companies varied according to the countries, and material and means of working varied from one line to another. It was impossible, at any rate for the moment, to arrive at a uniform tariff.

In the preparatory documents (Annex 2) there was a table for comparison giving the different rates charged by the great French companies. M. van den Berch van Heemstede drew attention to the fact that this table was already out of date and that the rates had been considerably lowered. He was very pleased to hear Mr. McAra say that the *Times* had been able to make satisfactory arrangements with the aerial companies. At the present moment, it was sufficient to apply to the company situated in the town of departure, and that company made all arrangements with the other companies, relieving the sender of all worry and assuring him the lowest possible rates. Henceforth, it would be possible to charge an average uniform rate of about 0.2 gold centime per kilometer per kilogramme carried.

3. *Question of the dropping of parcels of newspapers.* — M. van den Berch van Heemstede had been rather surprised to see several objections to this system in the Austrian memorandum (see Annex 4). However, parcels could be dropped by modern technique at the spot where they were wanted, every day without exception ; and, so far, there had been no complaints on the lines where the dropping of newspapers had been practised. The question was of great importance from the point of view of the newspaper agencies. It had been said that the act of throwing newspapers could only be carried out on aeroderomes that possessed a Customs office. That was not absolutely necessary so long as the aeroplane carried a form stamped by the Customs officials at the point of departure, which contained a list of the goods. It was

consequently easy to notice on arrival if certain parcels were missing. The principal obstacle to the spreading of the practice of dropping newspapers was the International Convention on Air Navigation of October 13th, 1919, which only permitted the dropping of ballast, such as fine sand and water.

M. SCHOELLER (Messageries Hachette) declared that the firm of Hachette had made many experiments in aerial transport. As for sales, the results were indisputable, the increase resulting from air transport varied from 4 per cent to 50 per cent. From the point of view of regularity, the Press representatives had formulated certain requests at previous meetings of the International Association of Air Traffic, for it was indispensable if one tried to attract a reader to see that he received his newspapers as regularly as possible. The last experiments, it was true, had given much better results than before. The Messageries Hachette had sent between July 1st and 31st 77 tons of newspapers on the line Paris to London (Air Union Company). The time of arrival was fixed at 7.30 a.m. One day the mail arrived 30 minutes late, on other days 47 minutes, 1 hour 17 minutes, 1 hour 15 minutes, and once 6 hours 40 minutes late. The last was the only occasion on which the mail had arrived in the afternoon. All the other days the hour of arrival had been up to time. Attempts had also been made on the line Paris to Berlin and *vice versa*. These had also shown a similar increase in regularity; newspapers had arrived every day, even in foggy weather.

It was precisely the frequency of fog that had determined the Messageries Hachette to unload their newspapers at Lympne in the direction Paris to London, and to send them on to London by rail. During the last month newspapers had arrived on four days 30 minutes late, twice 1 hour 25 minutes late, once 2 hours 45 minutes, and once 54 minutes late; that showed good enough regularity. The service during the month of November had been rather more difficult; however, only on four days had the mail arrived in the afternoon. On long routes the time gained became considerable; between Paris and Berlin there was a gain of 18 hours. The traders and business men of the two capitals appreciated considerably the possibility of receiving news so quickly.

The question of price was one of the most important. The lines used by the Messageries Hachette had considerably reduced their tariffs. On the English line there had been a reduction of 25 per cent; on certain Dutch lines 75 per cent reduction on the original rates; on the German lines 90 per cent reduction on the original rates.

The only fact which raised great disquietude was that the International Association of Air Traffic had declared that special rates for newspapers could only be granted in cases where there was enough room at their disposal. It was obvious that newspaper editors could not accept such conditions.

Finally, certain Governments had hitherto opposed the dropping of packets for police reasons. This method was, however, essential. There should be a site for the dropping of packets on the English coast at Lympne, and it was desirable that it should be possible to drop packets on the journey in the opposite direction at Berck, on the French coast. Landing entailed a loss of between twenty and twenty-five minutes on a journey of two hours. On the Paris-Berlin route, the landings entailed delays of between two and two and a-half hours, apart from risks of accident. It seemed, therefore, that Governments should agree, at any rate, to the dropping of packets upon certain specified aerodromes.

In reply to a question by the President, M. Schoeller said that the table contained in the preparatory documents (Annex 2) had been drawn up almost a year and a-half previously. As he had just shown, there had been a marked improvement in the situation since that time.

Mr. COLLINS (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), recalled that it had been pointed out that Great Britain had not yet acceded to the Stockholm Agreement, nor agreed to the 50 per cent reduction in the postal rates for the transport of periodical printed matter. He was ready to draw the attention of his Government to the recommendations that had been made at this Conference, and he was sure that the British Government would not fail to give them due consideration.

With regard to aerial transport, M. van den Berch van Heemstede had pointed out that the dropping of packets was prohibited by the International Convention on Air Navigation. Great Britain, which was a party to this Convention, had not yet authorised the dropping of newspaper parcels from aircraft. If it were sought to modify these provisions of the Convention, if modification were necessary, Great Britain would not, however, raise any opposition, particularly in respect of the dropping of packets of newspapers on aerodromes where there was a Customs office. If, moreover, it were necessary to drop such packets on an aerodrome where there was no Customs office it might be possible to arrange for facilities at this aerodrome. The difficulties that this question presented were, therefore, technical rather than legal, and even when the views expressed in the Austrian memorandum (Annex 4) were taken into account, these technical difficulties did not appear insuperable. Experiments had already been made in America and Germany, and if it were proved that the system offered every desirable guarantee for safety, Great Britain would be prepared to change its regulations in this respect.

Speaking more particularly in his capacity as representative of the Department for Civil Aviation at the Air Ministry, Mr. Collins was glad to note that the pessimism which had characterised the report of the Messageries Hachette in respect of air parcel services was being rapidly dispelled. He had also been glad to hear M. Schoeller's reference to the progress that had been made in aerial transport from the point of view of regularity. He wondered, nevertheless, whether it was desirable to aim at an absolutely uniform tariff for the whole of Europe and whether a little healthy competition would not be to the advantage of the Press agencies.

Lastly, Mr. Collins would ask the companies concerned especially to examine the question of the available tonnage. This question would, however, no longer be so important when larger aeroplanes and aeroplanes intended solely for the transport of goods had been constructed.

M. FIERLINGER (Czechoslovakia) said that the question of the dropping of packets of newspapers was not of great importance to his country, since Prague was a regular port of call for all the air lines of central Europe.

The Treasury had no objection to this system, provided : (1) that the packages did not contain any objects other than newspapers ; (2) that the packages were accompanied by a label stamped by the Customs office at the point of departure ; (3) that the dropping of the packets took place above the aerodromes at a time fixed approximately in advance ; (4) that the right to drop packets was only granted to companies running a regular service (these companies would formally undertake to present the packets to the Customs authorities) ; and (5) that the aerodrome selected for this purpose contained a Customs office or was situated in the neighbourhood of a Customs office at which the companies would present the packets.

M. SCHOELLER (Messageries Hachette) believed that certain delegates feared that the packets might be damaged. He recalled in this connection that the air service of the Messageries Hachette had dropped the Paris evening newspapers at Deauville a few hours after their publication during a period of thirty days (400 kg. of newspapers being dropped). (*He distributed photographs showing how this operation was carried out.*) The packets rolled for barely thirty metres, and remained close together. M. Schoeller, thought, however, that the combined railway and air lines which the Luft Hansa was planning raised the question as to the kind of waybills which should be utilised in order that the newspapers might be transferred from the aircraft to the train and *vice versa*. This was an important question which should be solved as soon as possible.

M. GALDI (Italy) recalled that, under the terms of Article 35 of Annex D to the Paris Convention of October 13th, 1919, "dropping of ballast other than fine sand or water from aircraft in the air was prohibited". The Italian laws were in conformity with this article. In view of this fact, it would not be possible to introduce any change in this respect unless the procedure provided for by the Convention was followed. The Conference might, if it wished, examine the question of the dropping of packets from the theoretical point of view, but it could not adopt any formal undertaking in this matter.

M. ROMEIN (Member of the Communications and Transit Section) felt some doubt with regard to the interpretation of Annex D of Article 35 that had just been given by certain delegates. This article read as follows : "The dropping of ballast other than fine sand or water from aircraft in the air is prohibited". Were packets of newspapers to be regarded as ballast ? There was all the more reason to doubt that they should be so regarded in view of the fact that the Convention on Air Traffic between Austria and Germany, which reproduced the text of Article 35, also contained another article, which read as follows : "Any other substance than ballast may only be dropped or otherwise removed in flight if special permission has been obtained from the State on whose territory this act is to take place".

This latter provision not being contained in the International Convention on Air Traffic, was it to be concluded that the term "ballast" implied any object which might be thrown from aircraft, even from aircraft which was not at a great height from the ground ? From the point of view of safety, the dropping of objects would be especially dangerous if it were to take place at a considerable height. In view, however, of the technical methods now employed, dropping would not be dangerous when it took place at a height of between fifty and one hundred metres, which would be the usual height in the cases which the Conference was considering. It seemed that the dropping of ballast might be necessary at a certain height—this was the possibility referred to in the expression "aircraft in the air"—and that it had been on this account that only fine sand and water had been mentioned as ballast which might be dropped.

Moreover, apart from the question of the interpretation of Article 35, it should be pointed out that this article was contained in an annex, and not in the Convention itself. It might, therefore, be modified, if this were thought necessary, by a mere decision of the International Commission on Air Traffic and, if the Governments represented on that Commission were to agree that the dropping of packets of newspapers might be authorised, these Governments could give instructions to their delegates on the Commission with a view to such modifications.

M. LÉCUYER (France) thought that the question of the dropping of packets had not been regulated by Article 35 of Annex D but by Article 15 of Annex H, which related to Customs formalities. This article read as follows : "Except in the case of postal aircraft, all unloading or throwing out in the course of flight, except of ballast, may be prohibited". Governments were not, therefore, obliged to prohibit such unloading, but only had the option of prohibiting it. An instance of the exercise of this option was the French law of March 31st, 1924.

Mr. COLLINS (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) did not think that the provisions of the International Convention could act as a hindrance to the Conference. The question did not raise any technical difficulties, and there was no reason why Article 35 of Annex D should not be interpreted as applying to ballast alone, nor why it should not be stated that the dropping of newspapers might be authorised. The question might, if necessary, be referred to the Legal Sub-Committee of the International Commission on Air Traffic, and

Mr. Collins could assure the Conference that his Government would request that it should be placed upon the agenda of this Commission. There was no doubt that the Commission would discuss the question if other Governments took the same step.

Mr. Collins thought, moreover, that, if this possibility had been considered at the time when the Convention had been drawn up, this article would have been drafted differently.

M. ROMEIN (Member of the Communications and Transit Section) thanked M. Lécuyer for his explanations, which confirmed his own interpretation. In reply to Mr. Collins' last observations, he thought that it was clear from the text of Article 15 of Annex H that the drafters of this article had had the dropping of packets in mind. Under this article, States were enabled to prohibit the dropping of packets, an exception being made, indeed, in favour of postal aircraft, to which this article did not apply.

M. GALDI (Italy) wished to point out that his statement had not referred to postal consignments but to newspapers despatched as goods.

M. VAN DEN BERCH VAN HEEMSTEDÉ (International Air Traffic Association) was glad that the Conference attached such great importance to the transport of newspapers by air. He would assure the Conference once more that the problem of the dropping of packets did not present any technical difficulties. He was convinced that, if the Conference were to express the wish that the dropping of packets should be authorised in international traffic, it would be possible to give effect to this recommendation.

He begged the delegate of Czechoslovakia to bear in mind the fact that, if too many conditions were imposed upon the dropping of newspapers, there would no longer be any advantage in this method.

He recognised that, if the companies granted the benefit of the reduced tariffs to newspapers only in accordance with the tonnage available, the agencies would not have an adequate guarantee of regularity. He would point out, however, that the average tonnage of aircraft had considerably increased, that the use of aircraft solely for transport of goods was becoming more widespread and that, generally, speaking, companies would henceforth be able to transport what was offered to them.

M. van den Berch van Heemstede recalled that the question of waybills for combined rail and air transport was being examined by the Air Transport Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce and by the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit. The Second International Conference on Private Law in Aerial Navigation, which had been held at Warsaw in October 1929, had also dealt with the question of aerial transport. The International Air Traffic Association was very anxious that the validity of transport waybills for combined rail and air transport should be recognised, and it might be hoped that the Conference, which had not yet taken any decision as to the form of the document would decide that the International Air Traffic Association should be consulted as regards the form.

In these circumstances, there was reason to believe that the question would be solved on the lines which the International Air Traffic Association desired.

M. VOELCKERS (Germany) said that, as regards Germany, it was not the Reich, but the different States that would be competent to grant authorisation to aircraft to drop packets. He also recalled that packets of newspapers were regarded in Germany as postal packets. He did not think that the Reichstag would have any objections of principle to the dropping of postal packets.

## 8. Composition of Committees.

The PRESIDENT noted that there did not appear to be any considerable divergencies of view upon the substance of this question. The discussion had related mainly to the procedure that should be followed. This being so, practically all the items on the agenda had been considered, and the time had come for the Conference to resolve itself into committees.

The President proposed that the *Committee for the Examination of Customs and Police Formalities* (with which the Government representatives were competent to deal) should be composed as follows :

M. KATZENBERGER (Germany)	M. VAN RIJCKEVORSEL (Netherlands)
M. CRISPIELS (Belgium)	M. FERREIRA DE MESQUITA (Portugal)
M. MIKOFF (Bulgaria)	M. ROSCA (Roumania)
M. CUARTARA (Spain)	M. HAEUSERMANN (Switzerland)
M. LÉCUYER (France)	M. DJOURITCHITCH (Yugoslavia)
M. BELMONTE (Italy)	M. LUUYT (International Sleeping-Car Company)

The *Committee for the Examination of Postal Questions* might be a very small one, since it only had to examine the question of the postal monopoly, and since only a very few countries were directly concerned in this matter. He proposed that the following members should be appointed to serve on this Committee :

M. GUT (Germany)	M. LAGER (Sweden)
Dr. DE FORSTER (Hungary)	M. FISCHER (Switzerland)
M. PIROZZI (Italy)	M. POURCEL (International Railway Union)
M. DUIJNSTEE (Netherlands)	M. HESS (International Railway Union)



The President added that it was desirable that M. Pourcel and M. Hess should take part in the work of both of these Committees, since the principal aim of the Committees was to discover practical solutions upon the basis of the proposals of the International Railway Union.

He proposed, finally, that the *Drafting Committee* should be composed as follows :

M. VOELCKERS (Germany)	M. BARGETON (France)
Mr. COLLINS (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)	M. GALDI (Italy)
M. DANIS (Spain)	M. FIERLINGER (Czechoslovakia)

*The proposals of the President were adopted.*

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## FIFTH MEETING.

*Held on November 29th, 1929, at 3.15 p.m.*

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*President:* The Right Honourable Viscount BURNHAM.

### 9. Results of the Work of the Committees.

The PRESIDENT observed that the Conference had reached the final stage of the task that it had undertaken.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE read the two following summaries :

1. Summary of the discussions of the Committee on questions connected with Customs and police formalities.

In reply to a question put by M. Belmonte (Italie), the Secretary-General of the Conference said that a few mistakes had crept into the text distributed. The correct version would be annexed to the Minutes of the Conference (see Annex 8).

2. Summary of the discussions of the Committee on Postal Monopolies (see Annex 9).

### 10. Adoption of the Final Act.

The PRESIDENT proposed that the Conference should now proceed to examine the draft Final Act, paragraph by paragraph (see Annex 10). When this examination had been concluded, the Conference might discuss the amendment submitted by the Swiss delegation with regard to instruction of staff (see Annex 11). He wished, however, to point out at once that the text in question was not an amendment in the strict sense of the term, but an addition to the Final Act.

The President asked whether any member of the Conference had any general observations to make with regard to the text as a whole.

MUNIR Bey (Turkey) said that, while not wishing to examine the scope or the legal character of the Act submitted to the Conference for its approval, he had certain explanations to give with regard to some of its provisions.

With regard to Chapter I and Chapter 2, relating respectively to the system of transport for daily newspapers in international traffic and to rates, the application of the system of the Berne International Convention to the transport by rail of newspapers would only be possible in the case of certain railways in Turkey belonging to concessionaire companies, within the limits of their acts of concession. Obviously, moreover, the system could only be applied to the companies included in the list contained in Article 58 of the Convention of October 23rd, 1924. Should the transport of newspapers be one of the activities subject to postal monopoly in either of the countries concerned, application of the measures that were now recommended for countries with such a monopoly might, of course, also be considered.

With regard to Customs and police formalities, Turkey, which had already set up a very liberal regime for the importation of foreign newspapers and periodicals, these publications being exempt from all import duties and from the handling tax of 6 per cent, *ad valorem*, which was levied upon imports in general, would certainly be willing to grant any facility which was compatible with the requirements of public order.

With regard to the recommendation relating to the dropping of newspapers from aircraft in flight, since the Turkish Government had not acceded to the 1919 Paris Convention, and since, moreover, aerial navigation very closely concerned national defence and public security, it was obvious that any action taken as a result of this recommendation would necessarily depend upon the extent to which the rules now in force permitted such navigation and upon the arrangements which these rules would impose.

M. BARGETON (France) said that the Conference had followed the remarkable statement of Munir Bey with great interest.

*Chapter I. — System of Transport for Daily and Similar Newspapers in International Traffic.*

The PRESIDENT opened the discussion upon this Chapter.

M. VAN DEN BERCH VAN HEEMSTEDÉ (International Air Traffic Association) asked whether the Final Act, and in particular Chapter I, covered both combined transport and transport by rail alone.

M. BARGETON (France) said that M. van den Berch van Heemstede's observation was very justified, since paragraph (a) referred solely to transport by rail. He was sure, however, that M. van den Berch van Heemstede would also have examined Chapter VI (combined Railway and Air Navigation Transport) where the hope was expressed that the efforts made to create a single transport document would speedily prove successful.

The PRESIDENT called upon the Conference to discuss paragraphs (b) to (f) of Chapter I.

M. SCHOELLER (Messageries Hachette) observed that there was no reference in the Final Act to the responsibility which had been mentioned in the summary of the discussions of the Committee on questions connected with Customs and police formalities. It frequently happened that a large number of newspapers disappeared from packets when crossing the frontier. It was essential that the responsibility of the railway companies, which was a very important point, should be clearly stated in the Final Act.

M. BARGETON (France) thought that M. Schoeller would be completely re-assured if he were to recall the fact that this responsibility had been stated in the Berne Convention.

M. HESS (International Railway Union) said that the decisions of the Conference went further than the proposals of the International Railway Union, at any rate in respect of two points. It had been proposed that the measures recommended for the transport of newspapers should apply not only to daily newspapers, but also to newspapers which were published six times a week and to newspapers which were published on Sunday.

The International Railway Union was quite ready to give its most favourable consideration to these two proposals. In so far as newspapers which only appeared on weekdays were concerned, he did not think that there would be any difficulty. Matters were different, however, in the case of newspapers which were published on Sunday, with regard to which further information would have to be obtained.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE wished to make an observation which might, he hoped, make the position clearer for the Union. With regard to the first point, he did not think that more was asked of the Union than it had itself proposed. The Union had certainly not wished to exclude English newspapers and almost all the German newspapers which, as was common knowledge, were only published on weekdays. With regard to the second point, the Secretary-General of the Conference wished to make it clear that the publications in question were not reviews, but Sunday newspapers which were intended for the same public that read the weekday newspapers. He believed, therefore, that the International Railway Union would have no objection to the adoption of this second point.

M. HESS (International Railway Union) said that, for his part, he quite agreed with the observations of the Secretary-General of the Conference. He could not claim, however, to represent the views of all the members of the Union.

*Chapter II. — Rates.*

The PRESIDENT opened the discussion on this Chapter.

M. BELMONTE (Italy) said that he would prefer that, for the expression, "Unless exceptional circumstances . . ." there should be substituted the more definite expression, "Unless certain exceptional circumstances (responsibility, cost price, etc.)."

M. BARGETON (France) thought that M. Belmonte's request might be complied with. This part of the text of the Final Act would thus be made clearer.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE said that he was certain that the possibilities in question should be regarded as exceptional. They would merely serve as examples of circumstances which might arise in certain countries.

Mr. COLLINS (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) thought that it would be better if for the words "unification of the reductions . . ." in the second line of Chapter II there were substituted the words "the possibility of establishing uniform rates".

*The Conference adopted certain drafting amendments proposed by M. Belmonte.*

*Chapter III. — Customs and Police Formalities.*

The PRESIDENT opened the discussion on this Chapter.

M. LÉCUYER (France) thought that the text of this chapter might be made a little more definite. It was not the declaration accompanying the consignment, which was drawn up by the consignor, that the Customs authorities required, but a declaration drawn up by the

service which undertook the transport. He proposed, therefore, that the Conference should adopt the following text, which would be more in conformity with the decision of the Committee on questions connected with Customs and police formalities :

“ The Conference notes, moreover, that in several countries no written declaration is handed to the Customs ; it requests Governments to bring the verbal declaration into as general use as possible with a view to still further assimilating packets of newspapers to passengers' luggage ”.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE thought that this text was an accurate summary of the substance of the discussion on this point in the Committee on questions connected with Customs and police formalities. Perhaps M. Djouritchitch, who had presided over this Committee, would give his opinion on this subject.

M. DJOURITCHITCH (Yugoslavia) thought that this text was an accurate interpretation of the views that had been expressed in the Committee over which he had presided.

*Chapter IV. — Customs and Fiscal Duties applicable to Newspapers.*

*Chapter V. — Dropping of Packets of Newspapers from Aircraft in Flight.*

*The Conference adopted the text of Chapter IV, subject to an amendment of detail submitted by M. Häusermann, and the text of Chapter V without modification.*

*Chapter VI. — Combined Railway and Air Navigation Transport.*

M. VAN DEN BERCH VAN HEEMSTEDÉ (International Air Traffic Association) referring to the first sentence of Chapter VI, “ The Conference has noted the efforts made to create a single transport document . . . ” pointed out that single transport documents already existed. He proposed, therefore, that this sentence should be amended to read as follows “ . . . to extend the system of single transport documents, etc. ”. He further proposed that, for the words, “ these efforts will speedily prove successful ”, there should be substituted the words, “ such agreements will speedily be followed by a general agreement ”.

M. BARGETON (France) thought that the Conference would be very glad to comply with M. van den Berch van Heemstede's request.

M. SCHOELLER (Messageries Hachette) pointed out that the question M. van den Berch van Heemstede had raised was a very important one. It seemed that the result of such special Conventions would be a relapse into a state of confusion. Would it not be preferable that this matter should be governed by the Berne Convention, extended so as to cover newspapers ?

M. HESS (International Railway Union) said that this question was upon the agenda of the International Railway Union. The Union had communicated observations to the railway companies recommending agreements of this kind. It would retain this question on its agenda until the various companies had ratified a Convention laying down the rules with regard to the responsibility of transport undertakings. When this Convention had been ratified, there would be a definite basis to work upon, and the International Railway Union might then resume its examination of the question of drawing up uniform regulations, which might serve as a starting-point for the work of the next Conference for the revision of the International Convention relating to goods traffic.

*Chapter VII. — Periodicals.*

The PRESIDENT opened the discussion upon this Chapter.

M. SCHOELLER (Messageries Hachette) recalled that it had been decided on the preceding day that an enquiry should be made into the taxes to which newspapers were liable in certain countries. Since it was proposed, however, that transport facilities should be extended to both newspapers and periodicals, he would suggest that the Transit Section should include periodicals in this enquiry.

M. BARGETON (France) believed that the present text covered the point raised by M. Schoeller. He thought that it would be enough if M. Schoeller's observation were recorded in the Minutes.

*Chapter VIII. — Postal Questions relating to Newspapers and Periodicals.*

Mr. COLLINS (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said that, in view of official information which he had just received, the Conference could not expect that Great Britain would agree to the 50 per cent reduction in the normal rates of consignments of newspapers and periodicals, owing to the fact that the rates at present in force were extremely low.

M. SCHOELLER (Messageries Hachette) wished to make an observation of a general character. He would warn those who were to study these difficult questions against regarding certain reductions in rates as unimportant merely because they were small. He believed that reductions in the various countries, even if very slight, would, when added together, constitute a marked improvement.

The PRESIDENT was sure that all the members of the Conference would appreciate M. Schoeller's observation. The aim of the Conference was to reduce the prices paid by readers as far as possible.

Mr. McARA (The Newspaper Proprietors' Association) wished to make it clear that, since the Conference was seeking to reduce the cost of transport of newspapers, the English newspaper publishers would welcome with great pleasure any proposals that it made.

*Addition of a New Chapter to the Final Act proposed by the Swiss Delegation.*

The PRESIDENT opened the discussion upon the addition proposed by the Swiss delegation with regard to instruction of staff (see Annex 11).

M. HAEÜSERMANN (Switzerland) said that, as the Conference was of course aware, the transport of newspapers and periodicals was at present governed by a great number of agreements, conventions and treaties. The various administrations issued numerous regulations and instructions which provided the necessary guidance for their staff in the handling of consignments of newspapers. The agents of transport undertakings and Customs and police officials were, however, continually transferred from one post to another, and the prompt forwarding of consignments of newspapers and periodicals, as also the public information service, suffered as a result of these frequent changes in the staff. This state of affairs was, however, in many cases solely due to the fact that the agent to whom the service was entrusted was not fully informed of the relevant regulations.

The Swiss delegation considered it necessary, therefore, that permanent instructions should be given by the authorities to the agents in question.

In order to obviate these disadvantages and involuntary delays as far as possible, the Swiss delegation proposed that the Conference should add another chapter to the Final Act, under the heading "IX. — Instruction of Staff". A text for this chapter had been submitted to the Conference.

The PRESIDENT thought that no member of the Conference would have any objection to the adoption of this addition.

*The addition proposed by the Swiss delegation was adopted.*

The PRESIDENT called upon the Conference to proceed to a vote by a show of hands upon the adoption of the Final Act as a whole.

*The Final Act was unanimously adopted with the modifications of detail agreed upon (see Annex 12).*

*Sir Eric Drummond, Secretary-General of the League, came to the table of the Conference.*

## 11. Closing Speeches.

The PRESIDENT spoke as follows :

" We have now concluded the labours of this Conference. Altogether, I have presided over five international Conferences at Geneva, and this has certainly been the most peaceful and the least loquacious. As a rule, my difficulty has been to induce the members to sit down, but in this case my difficulty has been to induce them to get up. May I say, also, that I have been much struck by the modesty of the Government delegates in revealing the fiscal resources that their countries enjoy from the newspaper Press, although, taken as a whole, they do not amount to considerable figures? In the language of British parliamentary procedure, we speak of certain amendments to a measure as being consequential; that is to say, as of necessity following on a previous decision. In a real sense, this Conference is consequential on the Press Conference of 1927, and we have been engaged in carrying out the resolutions then adopted in regard to the transport of newspapers. Undoubtedly, the measures now taken and submitted ought to have the effect of accelerating and cheapening the processes of transportation. We have approved and applied the international principle of through traffic subject to the least possible interference and delay. We have reduced to a minimum the Customs and police formalities. We have secured the co-operation of the postal monopolies of certain Governments in respect of carriage and delivery of newspapers. We have approved a certain development of aerial transport which ought to work safely and smoothly and is destined to grow in importance with the certain increase in the use of the air as a medium of world communication, and I regard this as being, eventually although not at present, the most far-reaching and important of our proceedings. But all these measures are only means to an end, and that end is, so far, to reduce the price of, and multiply the facilities for, the sale and circulation of newspapers as will make them more readily within the purchasing power of the masses of the people in every country. This happy consummation does not depend upon us or upon the League of Nations. It rests mainly with the great distributing houses of the

world's Press, or, as we should say in England, with the great wholesale firms. They are powerfully represented at this Conference, and I hope that I shall not appeal in vain to them to pass on to the public, whom we all try to serve, any reduction and economies in expenditure which we have ensured by the results of our deliberations. If this be so, as I assume it will be, it will very much add to my satisfaction, as a *vieux conférencier*, an old Congress wallah as the Indians would call one, to have had the honour of presiding over so distinguished a body as this. It only remains for me to thank all my colleagues for their courtesy and collaboration, and, on their behalf, as well as for myself, to express our grateful acknowledgements to the Secretary-General of the Conference and the other officials of the Transit Section of the League for the admirable service that they rendered us and, through us, the newspaper Press of Europe."

The President added that he wished to take this opportunity of thanking Sir Eric Drummond for the interest which he had shown in the work of the Conference and for all the assistance which the Conference had received from the Secretariat of the League.

M. BARGETON (France) was sure that he might speak on behalf of all his colleagues in thanking Lord Burnham for having presided over the Conference with such skill and geniality.

He also thanked M. Haas, the eminent Director of the Transit Section, for his valuable services to the Conference.

He also wished particularly to welcome the presence of Sir Eric Drummond, who had shown his interest in the Conference by attending its proceedings for a short time at this last meeting.

Sir Eric DRUMMOND (Secretary-General of the League) expressed his sincere thanks for Lord Burnham's reference to the work of the various services of the League. He was particularly glad that special attention had been drawn to the valuable services rendered by M. Haas, whose worth was highly appreciated by everyone, both in respect of his work in the sphere of communications and transit and in general.

He wished to emphasise the fact that this Conference had been both short and successful. He congratulated the President and the delegates upon this success, and thanked them, on behalf of the League, for the services they had rendered, the assiduity with which they had followed the various branches of the work of the Conference, and the satisfactory results they had obtained.

The PRESIDENT thanked Sir Eric Drummond and M. Bargeton for their kind words with regard to himself.

He declared the labours of the European Conference on the Transit of Newspapers and Periodicals concluded.

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ANNEX 1.

[C.E.T.J.6.]

AGENDA.

1. QUESTIONS RELATING TO RAILWAY ADMINISTRATIONS :

Examination of the proposals of the International Railway Union regarding the application to the transport of newspapers of the provisions of the International Convention for the Transport of Goods, the utilisation of through trains, and facilities for despatch and delivery.

Special questions: utilisation of the trains of the Compagnie internationale des Wagons-Lits et des Grands Express européens.

2. FISCAL, TARIFF AND SIMILAR QUESTIONS :

Question of countries having a postal monopoly of the transport of newspapers.

Tariff questions. Possibility of applying the most favourable national tariffs. Possibility of establishing one or more common international tariffs.

Customs and other formalities in the countries of destination.

3. AIR TRANSPORT :

Question of the dropping of newspapers carried by air from aeroplanes in actual flight.

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ANNEX 2.

C.E.T.J.1.

PREPARATORY DOCUMENTS.

1. Resolution adopted by the Conference of Press Experts, held at Geneva from August 24th to 29th, 1927.

1. The Conference of Press Experts — after discussing, in the presence of M. Schoeller, representing the Messageries Hachette ; Mr. Kimpton, representing Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son ; and M. von Herwarth, representing Messrs. Georg Stilke & Co., on the basis of the report presented by the Messageries Hachette, the question of the measures to be taken for developing and accelerating the circulation and interchange of newspapers and periodicals between the various countries in which they are published — decides to request the Council of the League of Nations to transmit the above-mentioned report to the Organisation for Communications and Transit of the League of Nations, in order to examine what effect should be given to its recommendations. It further expresses the desire that this Organisation will, in undertaking the necessary investigations, consult a certain number of experts from among the agencies and newspapers represented at the Conference of Press Experts, as well as representatives of the postal administrations, the railway administrations, and the aerial transport services, and the different newspaper transport companies concerned.

As requested by Sir Campbell Stuart, the Organisation for Communications and Transit, in studying the problem of newspaper transport, should examine the existing regulations and charges in the various countries concerned with a view to giving effect to paragraph 2<sup>1</sup> of Chapter IV (summary) of the Messageries Hachette's report.

2. Believing that international understanding and the promotion of peace can best be encouraged by the widest possible dissemination of news, the Conference urges the Governments concerned to consider the urgent need for early abolition of any taxes and other restrictions on newspapers which hinder a fuller and more extended circulation of the international Press.

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 2 reads :

"Reduction of rates to the strict minimum, irrespective of the methods of conveyance used, in order that they may not be inaccessible to newspapers, which it should always be possible to sell at a price within the means of the general public."

2. Report submitted by the Messageries Hachette to the League of Nations on Possible Methods of Developing and Accelerating the Circulation and Interchange of Newspapers and Periodicals between the Various Countries of Europe in which they are published.

(Conf. E.P. /9.)

CHAPTER I. — PRESENT POSITION.

In France, newspapers for delivery abroad are carried at present by one of the four following methods :

1. By *Ordinary Parcels Service* as far as the Frontier and by *International Parcels Service* beyond.
2. By *Air Parcels Service*.
3. By *Overland Postal Service*.
4. By *Air Postal Service*.

1. *Ordinary Parcels Service as far as the Frontier and by International Parcels Service beyond.*

The newspapers are conveyed directly to the station and thence travel to the frontier at the special "Grande Vitesse" Tariff 118, established by agreement between all the main French railway systems.

The charges under this tariff are exceptionally low, in order not to increase the price of the papers by excessive costs of carriage.

The rate per kilogram of paper is 0.0618 franc per 100 kilometers, but charges for long distances are proportionately reduced, giving approximately 33 centimes per kilogram up to the most distant frontier—a negligible amount on each copy carried.

The benefits of the "Grande Vitesse" Tariff 118 do not, however, extend beyond the frontier.

If the consignment is to proceed by the same method, *i.e.*, by International Parcels Service, the assistance of a transit agent becomes necessary for the following purposes :

- (a) Customs operations.
- (b) Re-consignment on the basis of the "Grande Vitesse" Tariff for the foreign system. These tariffs are subject to frequent revision on account of fluctuations in the exchange.

Further, if after traversing the country adjacent to our own, the papers have to cross a second frontier, the services of a second transit agent will be required in order to repeat the same operations, and so on until the destination is reached.

2. *Air Parcels Service.*

The remarkable advance made by aviation at once led to the notion of utilising this method of transport in order to carry papers much more quickly than by rail, and to avoid delay and other inconveniences at the various frontiers. In the case of aircraft, these operations are confined to a single Customs clearance at the landing-point.

The Messageries Hachette were among the first to give this method a trial.

They took the bold step of allowing one of their heads of department to travel by the air route from Paris to Warsaw as soon as it was opened, in order to form an idea of the conditions on which to base a trial and of its value, if any, in newspaper distribution.

The result of this preliminary investigation was definitely negative.

The main trial was then carried out on the Paris-London route in 1924, in both directions concurrently.

Various practical reasons, however, have since led to the abandonment of this method of conveying newspapers, and at the present time we know of only one service of this kind—that employed by an English newspaper between London and Paris. Possibly this, too, will be discontinued in the near future.

3. *Overland Postal Service.*

At the present time, this service is the only one employed for the despatch of newspapers to non-adjacent countries, since postal mails are not subject to Customs examination in countries of transit. For instance, papers despatched by the ordinary post to Bucharest are examined at the Roumanian frontier only.

4. *Air Postal Service.*

This method of carriage, though already largely employed for ordinary correspondence, is not yet practicable for newspapers, and is used by them only in quite exceptional circumstances.

CHAPTER II. — DRAWBACKS TO THE FOUR EXISTING METHODS.

1. *Ordinary Parcels Service as far as the Frontier and by International Parcels Service beyond.*

While the problem has practically been solved for France itself—at any rate, on the main railway systems (the smaller companies having so far retained complete freedom of action as regards their tariffs)—this is not the case beyond the frontier.



Consequently, this method of carriage, notwithstanding its rapidity, can be used by a French newspaper only to adjacent countries : England, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Spain.

Elsewhere, the charges of successive transit agents make it absolutely prohibitive.

Thus a consignment for Bucharest is handled four times by four transit agents and is subject to four different tariffs.

Moreover, delays are frequent at frontier stations whenever printed matter coming from abroad is subject, by the law of the country of transit, to censorship on entry.

### 2. Air Parcels Service.

The most serious drawback which from the start has made this method of transport difficult is the fact that pilots cannot keep to a time-table.

Thus, for the Paris-London service, the aeroplane (in principle) left Paris at about 8 a.m. and reached London at about 11 a.m., whereas by rail and steamer the papers do not arrive till 3.30 p.m.

Similarly, for the English papers going from London to Paris, the regular time-table was as follows : Leave London 9 a.m. ; reach Paris 11.45 a.m., whereas by rail and steamer, the regular time of arrival is 4.5 p.m.

In practice, however, particularly during winter, these services were found to be defective, with the result that the times of departure and arrival of the mails frequently varied.

Thus, when considered against the doubtful gain in speed, the cost of carriage was so extremely high that the experiment had soon to be abandoned.

Those early disappointments have not prevented further experiments being contemplated on other air lines, but here two fresh obstacles arise : (1) the marked differences in the rates charged by different commercial air lines ; (2) the question of maximum load, which makes the number of copies that can be carried far too small. The appended table illustrates the extent of the difference in rates.

*Comparative Rates charged by Various Commercial Air Lines.*

Company	Route	Rate per kilogram French francs
Air Union . . . . .	Paris-London	10.00
Latécoère . . . . .	Spain-Morocco	17.00
Compagnie internationale de navigation aérienne . . . . .	Central Europe (Germany)	4.75
	Turkey (Budapest)	5.25
Farman (Société générale de transports aériens) . . . . .	Belgium	3.50
	Denmark	16.00
	Netherlands	6.00
	Sweden	17.00
	Germany (Berlin)	9.30
	Moscow	33.30

The arbitrary and impracticable nature of the rates now charged is evidenced by the fact that the same paper when carried to Warsaw by aeroplane costs exactly 0.602 franc per copy and when carried only as far as Berlin by the same means costs 0.80 franc.

To give another example, a commercial air line has recently proposed to put at the service of newspapers, for carriage by aeroplane from Paris to Berlin, a tonnage of 700 kilograms at a charge of 11.40 francs per kilogram on condition that the whole of the tonnage is employed.

By this method, the gross cost of a single copy of a newspaper of average weight would amount at Berlin to 0.91 franc, not including the retailer's profit.

### 3. Overland Postal Service.

The main difficulty is the lack of uniformity between the postal rates in different countries.

Some countries have adhered to a Convention, signed at Stockholm two years ago, which fixes the uniform rate for the carriage of newspapers in all those countries at 0.15 franc per 50 grammes, or 3 francs per kilogram.

There are twenty-two of these countries out of thirty in Europe. They are as follows :

Albania	Germany	Poland
Austria	Greece	Roumania
Belgium	Hungary	Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes
Bulgaria	Latvia	Soviet Russia
Czechoslovakia	Lithuania	Spain
Estonia	Luxemburg	Turkey
Finland	Morocco (not Spanish)	
France	Netherlands	

In the remaining countries the rate is 30 centimes per 50 grammes or fraction thereof, *i.e.*, 6 francs per kilogram.

It will be seen that, even in the twenty-two countries which signed the Convention, the rate is still relatively very high.

Moreover, the fact remains that after the French frontier has been crossed there is no further possibility of control over the fate of the copies forwarded, and indeed in some countries the newspapers are simply not delivered and the consignor is not even notified of the seizure or destruction of censored copies.

#### 4. Air Postal Service.

This is at present impracticable owing to the enormous extra charges made, which, moreover, vary considerably under different companies.

Generally speaking, every newspaper sent by aerial post is, in the first place, charged for at the international postal rate—either the Stockholm Convention rate or the rate charged by the non-signatory countries. In addition, there is the extra charge, which varies as shown in the table below :

*Table of Extra Postal Charges made by the Principal Air Transport Companies.*

Company	Route	Extra charge per 100 grammes French francs
Air Union . . . . .	Paris-London	1.25
Farman (Société générale de transports aériens) . . . . .	Paris-Brussels	1.50
	Paris-Netherlands	2.50
	Paris-Germany	5.00
	Paris-Sweden-Norway- Denmark	7.50
	Paris-Moscow	20.00
Compagnie internationale de navigation aérienne . . . . .	Paris-Czechoslovakia	10.00
	Roumania-Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes	
	Poland, Turkey	
Latécoère . . . . .	Paris-Toulouse-Tangier	3.00
	Paris-Toulouse-Oran	2.50

### CHAPTER III. — WHAT MUST BE DONE TO ACHIEVE PRACTICAL RESULTS.

The increasing development of international relations—diplomatic, political and commercial—urgently calls for a speeding-up of the distribution and expansion of the circulation of the world's newspapers, and at the same time for the reduction to a minimum of the rates for the carriage of newspapers to facilitate this process of mutual peaceful penetration.

The present need of more and more detailed information as to the aspirations, outlets and resources of every nation raises a number of questions for the solution of which the most reliable and easily consulted source of information is the Press.

If, however, the Press is to render these countless services which the public is entitled to expect, it is essential that it should be provided with the best possible distributing organisation—in other words, that it should be able to count upon a constantly increasing acceleration of distribution by the most improved methods of transport and at sufficiently cheap rates to prevent the sale price of newspapers becoming prohibitive when they have to be carried over long distances in order to reach countries remote from their centres of production.

These methods of quick transport are :

1. The great international expresses or *trains de luxe* of the Sleeping-Car Company.
2. The air lines run in connection with these trains.

### 1. *International Expresses.*

The first point to be considered, therefore, is the necessity of a general agreement to increase the facilities for the conveyance of newspapers by international trains, both as regards the cubic space to be allotted to them and as regards the rates to be charged.

The second point will be to arrange the time-tables so that connection is made in the shortest possible time between international expresses and the air lines run to correspond with them, so that the most distant terminal points can be reached with the maximum speed.

These two conditions can only be fulfilled by the establishment of a kind of international regulation for the distribution of newspapers ; for it is obvious that, taking the French point of view for example, it would be impossible to ask other countries to make special sacrifices and special arrangements in order to increase the circulation of French newspapers abroad without reciprocally making similar arrangements to improve the conditions for the importation of foreign newspapers into France.

It will therefore be essential to lay down in the first place the principle that international obligations should be imposed in every country on the railway and air transport companies running official services in the territory of those countries.

Once this principle is established, only the details will need to be worked out.

Further, the censorship will have to be made easier and simpler.

Here, again, international decisions should be taken, and uniform regulations made, which might require every package to be accompanied by a certified list of the contents, and every consignment by a "sample package" containing one copy of each of the daily newspapers or periodicals included in the whole consignment. The censorship would then be exercised on the specimens in the sample package, and there would be no need to open all the packages and thus delay their re-forwarding.

### 2. *Air lines.*

Here, again, an international agreement is required to eliminate the difficulties of differences in rates between various companies and of insufficient weight-carrying capacity.

Assuming that such an agreement is reached, the conveyance of newspapers by air would make it possible, for example, for the Paris morning newspapers to be at Vienna on the same evening, whereas at present, even by the Orient Express, they take twenty-four hours to get there.

If a connection could be made between the air and railway services, the train that leaves Paris at 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, for example, reaching Vienna at 6.30 p.m. on Wednesday, might be overtaken at Vienna by the aeroplane that leaves Paris on Wednesday morning, and Wednesday morning's papers, conveyed by the aeroplane (which does not fly at night), could then be sent on by the same train, which would deliver them at Budapest at 11.50 p.m. on Wednesday and at Bucharest at 9.38 p.m. on Thursday.

Other equally useful combinations would be possible on the line from Paris to Constantinople and on many other routes.

## CHAPTER IV. — SUMMARY.

The following should be the main lines of an international agreement to facilitate the expansion of the circulation of the European Press in all the European countries.

1. *Unification of Rates* on the basis of the gold standard, according to a system similar to that adopted by the postal services of the various countries for the unification of international postal rates.

2. *Reduction of Rates to the strict Minimum* irrespective of the methods of conveyance used, in order that they may not be inaccessible to newspapers, which it should always be possible to sell at a price within the means of the general public.

3. *Conveyance of Newspaper Packages by International Expresses under Regulation*, involving the establishment of a system of newspaper-selling on international trains on the return journey by a special staff forming part of the staff of the companies concerned ; this staff might also be responsible for the transshipment at stations where trains meet.

4. *Liaison between Air Transport Companies and Railway Companies*, so that newspapers could be sent through by rail and air.

5. *General Regulation of Customs Formalities*, and, more particularly, possible arrangements for allowing aircraft pilots to deliver newspaper packages or drop them in passing (which is at present prohibited).

6. *Possible Abolition of certain Special Charges* made by various countries on the conveyance of foreign newspapers (*e.g.*, *taxe régle* (Government monopoly tax) in Switzerland, tax on the re-import of returns in Belgium, etc.).

These are, of course, merely a few "critical" suggestions. At the most, they might serve as a basis for a more thorough examination of all these questions, if every country agreed to make special arrangements to impose the general principle on overland or air transport companies in existing or future official contracts for their services.

3. Proposals submitted by the International Union of Railway Administrations to the Permanent Committee for Transport by Rail of the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit.

Paris, December 24th, 1928.

The Managing Committee of the International Railway Union adopted, in regard to the transport in international traffic of newspapers and periodicals by rail, the following conclusions, which have been approved by the General Meeting :

1. The transport of newspapers in international traffic should be governed by the International Convention concerning the Traffic of Goods by Rail (C.I.M.), and not by the domestic legislation of the various countries concerned.

The regulations adopted should only apply to daily newspapers, including the free supplements of these newspapers. Financial newspapers which appear only on Stock Exchange days should be regarded as daily newspapers. The regulations referred to should not be applied to "periodicals" owing to the difficulties which would be experienced in practice in deciding what are and what are not "periodicals", in determining the duties applicable, and as a result of the diversity of Customs treatment to which periodicals are subject.

The following suggestions may be put forward in connection with the practical application of the proposed system :

(a) *Handing over for Transport.* — The consignor should hand in his packages and the waybill of the International Convention concerning the Traffic of Goods by Rail (C.I.M.) to a specified office at the station of consignment, a baggage office, or some other office specially designated.

(b) *Acceptance.* — After checking (weighing) the consignment, the office would stamp the waybill and accept the consignment for transport.

(c) *Placing on Train.* — The consignment would be placed on the train by the above-mentioned office, or to simplify the procedure, this might be done by the consignor himself.

(d) *Route to be followed.* — The trains by which transport might be effected would be determined by agreements between the Administrations concerned.

(e) *Delivery to Consignee.* — Delivery would be made direct to the consignee, preferably at the luggage-van of the train conveying the consignment. A receipt would be given by the consignee.

(f) *Payment of Costs of Transport.* — All such transport would be prepaid. As payment of the costs might be effected in various ways, the consigning Administration would determine, after agreement with the consignor, the particular method to be adopted (payment by instalments, periodical payment, bank deposit, etc.).

2. No satisfactory arrangement regarding the unification of the reductions which might be allowed by the various Administrations for the transport of newspapers in through international traffic can be suggested owing to differences in the economic situation of the countries concerned and in the tariff systems, and also owing to the fact that a unification of the reduced rates might be against the actual interest of the consignors of newspapers (in some cases there might be an increase in the very low rates allowed in certain countries).

3. Where possible the transport of packets of newspapers might be allowed by through trains and "trains de luxe" so far as such transport is not effected by the International Sleeping-Car Companies. Transport by trains of the said Companies would be authorised only in so far as this was allowed by the terms of the agreements entered into with the Railway Administrations. The trains by which newspapers would be despatched would be determined in each case and for each time-table period by means of agreement entered into by the Administrations concerned in the transport, after arrangement with the consignors.

The preparation of the detailed regulations to be adopted for the traffic in question cannot, however, be pursued with advantage by the International Railway Union until the League Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit has given an opinion on the above conclusions.

In accordance with those conclusions the International Railway Union would suggest, as regards the transport in international traffic of daily newspapers (including the free supplements of these newspapers) and financial newspapers appearing only on Stock Exchange days, and of such newspapers only :

(a) That a system based on the Berne International Convention concerning the Traffic of Goods by Rail (C.I.M.) should be adopted in accordance with the general principles of application laid down ;

(b) That such transport should, as far as possible, be effected by through trains and "trains de luxe" and possibly by trains of the International Sleeping-Car Company.

As regards the *unification* of the reductions which might be granted by the Administrations concerned, it is recognised that no satisfactory solution can under present circumstances be contemplated.

As stated in the above conclusions, the drafting of the detailed regulations to be adopted for the transport in question cannot be pursued with advantage by the International Railway Union until the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit has given an opinion on the principle contained in the above-mentioned conclusions.

4. Extract from the Report of the Committee of Customs Experts on Transport Questions of the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit on its Session held in Paris from December 20th to 22nd, 1928.

(C.C.T.370.)

The Committee of Customs Experts, consisting of :

- M. S. HÄUSERMANN, Inspector-General of Swiss Customs,
- M. A. L. J. JANSSEN, Director-General of Belgian Customs,
- M. E. LECUYER, Administrator of French Customs,
- M. E. SIEGERT, Ministerial Counsellor in the German Ministry of Finance,

met in Paris from December 20th to 22nd, 1928. M. Janssen took the chair.

The Committee had on its agenda :

1. Customs questions affecting the international transport of newspapers (Recommendation of the Conference of Press Experts and Memorandum from the Messageries Hachette).

2. . . . .

The Committee examined the first question with the assistance of :

- M. G. GLATT (Head of the Foreign Department of the Messageries Hachette),
- M. H. W. VON HERWARTH (Bookseller and Publisher, of Georg Stilke & Co., Berlin),
- Mr. A. E. POPE (representing Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son, London).

INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT OF NEWSPAPERS : RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NEWSPAPER TRANSPORT COMPANIES.

The attempt of the newspaper transport companies to secure the adoption of measures to reduce the delays in the transport of newspapers is perfectly legitimate. Every precaution is taken to enable perishable goods to reach their destination in as fresh a condition as possible, and newspapers, whose value resides primarily in their being up-to-date, should also be protected from delays in reaching their distributors at the earliest possible moment.

The statements made before the Committee of Experts show that, in the opinion of the newspaper transport companies, the Customs measures described below should be brought into operation in order to improve the present system of transport.

These recommendations relate to newspapers and periodicals. The rapid conveyance of other printed matter is also, of course, of considerable though less importance.

*Duties and Taxes.* — The transport companies point out that Customs regulations in regard to duties are very variable, that the accompanying formalities produce complications, and that, accordingly, it would be desirable for these charges to be abolished, or at any rate unified.

One point should be made clear at the outset. In the great majority of countries imported newspapers are not liable to Customs duty ; but in some cases, owing to the existence of internal taxes, corresponding charges are made on importation.

Whatever the nature of these charges they are part of the independent *fiscal policy* of each country, and changes or unifications affecting other countries could only be brought about by agreement. In other words, the problem is not one of Customs regulation, and cannot be solved on those lines.

*Transport by Rail.* — The transport companies wish the fastest expresses — even *trains de luxe* and the like — to be available for the transport of newspapers.

The Committee would observe that this is primarily a matter for the railway administrations. It is for them to consider how far their traffic would justify such an arrangement.

There is no doubt whatever that the Customs authorities would willingly agree to newspapers being carried by express trains.

*Transport in Transit.* — The transport companies complain that newspapers consigned to countries not immediately adjoining suffer repeated delays at the frontiers, because when the parcels enter each country "transit agents" have to be brought in to re-forward them and discharge the Customs formalities.

It appears from the particulars obtained that newspaper parcels are not accepted by the railway administrations as through traffic from the country of origin to the country of destination because during the successive stages of the journey these consignments are carried under different regulations, as the transport companies are anxious to take advantage of the most favourable rates. If, therefore, the administrations concerned could agree upon concerted transport rates, through waybills could be used for newspaper parcels, and this would remove the difficulties at once, for if the newspapers were carried under this system, the railway administrations themselves could discharge the Customs formalities in the intermediate

countries. As these formalities are very simple, being commonly limited to the issue of a short document and to verification or sealing, the existing visits would entirely disappear.

On certain journeys the railway administrations cannot make themselves responsible for newspaper parcels from start to finish, because they pass through countries in which it is the law that newspapers must be carried by post. In this case also arrangements would probably be made to avoid interruptions in the journey. It would, of course, rest with the transport services to make such arrangements.

The foregoing survey makes it clear that the obstacles to the rapid conveyance of newspapers in transit cannot be attributed to Customs regulations.

*Transport by Air.* — The newspaper transport companies ask that aircraft carrying newspapers should not be required to land, but that the pilots should be allowed to throw the parcels out at specified places.

This is a complicated question affecting the general conditions of air traffic, public safety, police regulations, etc. etc.

Presumably the competent Customs authorities would not be absolutely opposed to the throw-out system for newspaper parcels. It is clear, however, that if it were allowed it would be on very strict conditions, and in no case could the parcels be thrown out except at air-ports where there is Customs supervision.

The Committee confines itself to these general observations because the Governments of the various countries would obviously have to be consulted before the question could be further studied.

*Various Difficulties.* — The newspaper transport companies are anxious that all the obstacles to the delivery of newspapers should be eliminated, and in particular that the censorship, where it exists, should be carried out rapidly, that newspapers should not be confiscated without warning the consignors, and that it should be made possible to fix responsibility in the case of lost parcels.

These requirements, reasonable as they are, have nothing to do with the Customs, but the Committee would like to emphasise their real importance.

*General Conclusion.* — The suggestions made relate to matters which only partly concern the Customs authorities. In particular, the conditions for the carriage of newspapers by rail are a matter within the immediate sphere of the railway companies. There is, however, a certain interdependence in this field, and, in order to complete the enquiry, it might be advisable, as a final step, to hold a meeting of representatives of the various parties concerned.

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#### **5. Resolution adopted by the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit on March 23rd, 1929, with regard to the Convocation of a European Conference on the Transport of Newspapers.**

The Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit has noted the resolution adopted by the Conference of Press Experts on the transport of newspapers and periodicals (see No. 1 above).

It has considered the memorandum submitted to this Conference by the representative of the newspaper-distributing agencies (see No. 2 above).

It has noted the report submitted by the Permanent Committee for Transport by Rail after examination of the investigations made by the International Union of Railway Administrations (see No. 3 above); and the Special Committee of Customs Experts (see No. 4 above).

The question of the transport of newspapers and periodicals by rail concerns not only the railway administrations, but also the postal, Customs and police administrations.

Certain questions connected with the transport of newspapers by air, particularly that of the dropping of newspapers or periodicals in the course of flight, should also be studied by certain of these administrations.

A joint meeting of all those concerned is therefore necessary.

The Committee accordingly proposes that the Council should convene for next autumn a Conference of Governments and administrations concerned, which representatives of publishing, forwarding or distributing undertakings interested in the transport of newspapers and periodicals might be invited to attend in an advisory capacity.

The Secretary-General of the Committee is instructed to prepare for this Conference an abstract of all previous documents which might be useful to this Conference. All observations subsequently received from the Governments or administrations concerned and from the representatives of the undertakings interested in the transport of newspapers and periodicals will be communicated to the Conference.

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## 6. Rates charged for the Carriage of Packets of Newspapers in Different Countries.

[C.E.T.J./8.]

### MEMORANDUM OF THE SECRETARIAT.

Geneva, November 25th, 1929.

As the outcome of the 1927 Conference of Press Experts, the Communications and Transit Section applied to the proper authorities in the various countries for the following information relating to the carriage of parcels of newspapers :

1. What rates are charged for such parcels ;
2. Whether there is any special tariff ;
3. Whether, apart from the inland tariff, there is an international tariff to which the country in question has adhered ;
4. If so, what are the rates under that international tariff.

The replies received from the Governments are summarised hereunder.

*Germany.* — Under the Law of 1891, newspapers published more than once a week may only be conveyed by post ; this applies both to inland traffic and to traffic proceeding abroad or in transit through Germany.

Germany has consequently no railway tariff for newspapers sent either inland or in international transit.

*Austria.* — 1. The special reduced tariff mentioned below applies to newspapers conveyed in Austria both as parcels by *grande vitesse* and as express consignments.

2. There is no special tariff for international traffic, and the tariff referred to in paragraph 1 applies to such traffic over the Austrian section of the journey.

The tariff is as follows :

(a) *Grande vitesse*, beginning at 0.16 schilling per 100 kg. for distances from 1 to 6 km., the tariff increases, on a scale graduated according to distance, to 2.73 schillings per 300 km. or over.

(b) For express consignments, beginning at 0.016 schilling per 10 kg. for distances from 1 to 6 km., the tariff increases, on a scale graduated according to distance, to 0.264 schilling for 290 km. and 0.274 schilling for any greater distance.

*Belgium.* — 1. Parcels of newspapers and periodicals not exceeding 50 kg. in weight are conveyed at the following special reduced rate : up to 3 kg., 0.70 Belgian franc for any distance ; then rising to, for a parcel weighing 40 to 50 kg., 2 francs up to 70 km. ; 2.40 francs up to 110 km. ; 3.20 francs over 110 km.

2. In addition, there is a special reduced *grande vitesse* tariff for newspapers despatched from Paris, Lille and Rouen to certain Belgian stations.

*Denmark.* — There is no special railway tariff for parcels of newspapers, either inland or in international traffic with Denmark.

*Parcels of newspapers are generally sent by post.*

If sent by rail, they are sent either as express parcels or as parcels with parcel stamps.

1. For express parcels the same rates are paid as for *grande vitesse* parcels, on double the weight of the parcel expressed in multiples of 10 kg. (no fractions of 10 kg. admitted), with a minimum weight of 40 kg. and a minimum charge of 120 öre per parcel.

2. Parcels with parcel stamps, when sent separately by *grande vitesse* and weighing not more than 25 kg., are carried at the following rates : up to 5 kg., 40 öre up to 120 km. ; 60 öre over 120 km.

This tariff rises, on a scale graduated according to weight, to : for parcels weighing from 20 to 25 kg., 120 öre up to 120 km. ; 180 öre over 120 km.

*Spain.* — 1. Inland. *Parcels of newspapers and periodicals are conveyed by post.* The minimum weight is 700 grammes, and the charge 1 centimo per 140 grammes.

The same tariff applies to parcels for Gibraltar, Portugal and the American Republics.

2. For all other countries the ordinary general rate is 10 centimos per 50 grammes.

3. Exceptionally, however, for most countries half-rates are allowed, *i.e.*, 5 centimos per 50 grammes (probably under reciprocity agreements concluded in consequence of the Stockholm Convention).

Regarding transport by rail no particulars are given.

*Finland.* — Parcels of newspapers are carried at the following rates :

1. *Inland :*

(a) 0.03 Finnish mark per copy ;

(b) 0.30 Finnish mark per kg. for parcels sent by post.

2. As regards parcels proceeding abroad or in transit, Finland has acceded to the "Arrangement concerning subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals" signed at Madrid on November 30th, 1920.

*All traffic of this kind is carried exclusively by the Post and Telegraph Department.*

*Greece.* — 1. Newspaper parcels despatched to destinations in Greece by the Hellenic State Railways are carried free of charge over the whole system.

2. There is no international tariff for this traffic.

*Hungary.* — The following rates per 100 kg. are charged for parcels of newspapers :

(a) *Grande vitesse* : from 242 filler per 50 km. to 765 filler per 200 km.

(b) *Petite vitesse* : from 164 filler per 50 km. to 508 filler per 200 km.

(c) In addition, there is a special tariff for newspapers sent by *grande vitesse* from Budapest to any inland destination : from 87 fillér per 50 km. to 152 fillér per 250 km.

(d) There is no international tariff for this traffic, but there is a reduced *grande vitesse* tariff between Vienna on the one hand and Budapest and certain other Hungarian stations on the other.

*Italy.* — 1. The inland rate is 0.05 lire per kg. for any distance, with a minimum charge of 0.40 lire. At present, a 300 per cent increase on this tariff is in force. If the packets of newspapers are completely wrapped up, double rates are charged.

The maximum weight of any parcel is 20 kg.

2. There is no international tariff for this traffic.

*Norway.* — 1. There are no special inland or international tariffs for packets of newspapers; the ordinary *grande vitesse* tariffs apply.

2. Returns, however, if sent by *petite vitesse*, are charged waste-paper rate.

*Netherlands.* — 1. The rate for inland *grande vitesse* traffic is as follows : up to a weight of 15 kg., beginning at 0.30 florin per kg. for distances not exceeding 50 km.; the rate rises in proportion to weight and distance up to 1.30 florin for from 13 to 15 kg. for distances over 100 km.

For parcels weighing over 15 kg., the charge for every additional 10 kg. is from 0.08 florin for distances not exceeding 10 km. to 0.67 florin for distances exceeding 250 km.

2. For parcels up to 15 kg. sent by *accelerated grande vitesse*, the rates for the same weights and distances as in paragraph 1 are 0.45 florin to 1.95 florin; and for every additional 10 kg. over 15 kg., 0.12 florin to 1 florin.

3. There is no international tariff for this traffic.

*Poland.* — 1. Newspaper parcels consigned to inland destinations are carried by ordinary or mixed trains. The weight of the parcel must not exceed 100 kg. The rates are the same as for passengers' luggage, namely, for every 10 kg., from 0.76 grosz for 1 km. to 195 groszy for 600 km., plus 2.52 groszy for every kilometer above 600 km.

2. There is no international tariff for this traffic.

*Roumania.* — 1. The inland rates are : for parcels weighing not more than 5 kg., 0.25 lei for every 50 grammes; and not more than 10 kg., 4 lei for every kg.

2. The rate for parcels proceeding abroad is 2 lei per 50 kg.

However, under reciprocity conventions concluded in consequence of the Stockholm Convention, this latter rate is reduced by 50 per cent for most countries.

*Sweden.* — There is no special inland or international tariff for parcels of newspapers.

The ordinary rates are as follows :

(a) Beginning at 0.60 crown for parcels not exceeding 3 kg. in weight and for distances not exceeding 100 km., the tariff rises in proportion to weight and distance up to 3 crowns per 10 kg. for distances exceeding 1,000 km.

(b) The rates for parcels weighing more than 10 kg. by *grande vitesse* begin at 8 öre per 11 kg. and 60 öre per 100 kg. for the minimum distance (6 km.), and rise to 472 öre and 3,517 öre respectively per 2,000 km.

*Switzerland.* — 1. Newspapers are mostly sent by post at the ordinary printed-matter rate.

Parcels weighing more than 5 kg. may, however, be sent by rail. In this case there is no special tariff; the rate is the ordinary express-parcel rate, equal to that for passengers' luggage; for 100 kg. it begins at 0.77 franc for 1 km. and increases, on a scale graduated according to distance, up to 27.86 francs for 700 km.



2. Where there is an international service and an express-parcel tariff, newspapers are accepted for direct carriage at the express-parcel rate, provided there is no legal objection. At the time the reply was received, there were international express-parcel tariffs in force between Switzerland, on the one hand and Germany, Austria and Italy on the other, and it had been announced that similar agreements, to come into force in 1928, had been concluded with Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Roumania and Yugoslavia.

These international rates are given separately as between all Swiss stations and stations in the countries mentioned on the one hand and the respective frontier stations on the other ; they, therefore, cannot be summarised.

3. Express parcels services have been organised by the International Sleeping-Car Company on the Simplon-Orient and Paris-Switzerland-Arlberg-Vienna expresses. Newspapers can accordingly be carried by rail to stations served by these trains, provided there is no legal objection.

Here, again, the rates in force are shown separately for every station.

*Czechoslovakia.* — 1. There is a special inland railway rate for newspapers, as follows : for every 10 kg., beginning at 0.30 crown for distances not exceeding 20 km., it rises to 2.20 crowns for distances exceeding 350 km.

2. There is no international tariff for this traffic.

*Yugoslavia.* — 10 *By rail.* — This traffic is carried under the same conditions as parcels by *grande vitesse* or small express parcels. There is no special inland tariff for this traffic.

There is also no international tariff for this traffic to which Yugoslavia has adhered.

2. *By post.* — The inland rates for packets of newspapers—allowed only to newspaper offices for their own newspapers—are as follows : for parcels despatched to newsagents, 0.02 dinar per copy (up to 500 grammes). These parcels may weigh up to 10 kg. If similar parcels are sent to a private address, the charge is 0.05 dinar per copy.

3. Apart from these rates, there is no special tariff in force.

4. For international traffic, the same rates are charged as for printed matter, *i.e.*, 0.50 dinar for every 50 grammes, with a maximum weight per parcel of 2 kg.

For most countries, however (probably under reciprocity agreements concluded in consequence of the Stockholm Convention), a 50 per cent reduction is granted, making the rate only 0.25 dinar per 50 grammes.

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### ANNEX 3.

#### INFORMATION CONCERNING CUSTOMS DUTIES AND CUSTOMS FORMALITIES APPLICABLE TO CONSIGNMENTS OF NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS, COMMUNICATED BY THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION.

[C.E.T.J./10.]

Geneva, November 26th, 1929.

Generally speaking, there is no import duty on newspapers and periodicals except on newspapers and periodicals printed in Dutch, which are liable to an 8 per cent *ad valorem* duty. Flemish and South African newspapers are not regarded as Dutch newspapers ; similarly, newspapers from oversea territories are also allowed to enter duty free. The sole object of the stipulation relating to Dutch newspapers is to impose a duty on Dutch newspapers printed abroad for account of Dutch nationals. All goods, whether liable to import duty or not, must be mentioned by the railway or shipping undertaking in its general declaration.

A general declaration is not necessary for newspapers imported by post, neither is it necessary to declare newspapers which are not dutiable. As regards postal packages, these are cleared after the international Customs declarations have been presented.

Newspapers in transit are covered by the general declarations of railway or navigation undertakings unless they have been sealed by the Customs. They can be sent in transit by post and by parcel post without any Customs formality.

In addition to import duties, statistical fees are levied on importation and exportation at the rate of one per thousand *ad valorem*. These fees are payable on goods, whether dutiable or not, if the value of a single consignment exceeds 25 florins and the goods are not sent by post, by parcel post or as hand luggage. The statistical fees, which are charged in multiples of 5 cents, are payable when the import or export declaration is presented ; in the latter case, they are paid in the form of stamps which are affixed to the declaration.

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ANNEX 4.

[C.E.T.J.7.]

MEMORANDUM FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRIAN DAILY NEWSPAPERS  
(FEDERATION OF PUBLISHERS OF AUSTRIAN DAILY NEWSPAPERS).

[Translation.]

Vienna, November 19th, 1929.

In reply to your esteemed communication of the 4th instant, kindly inviting us to take part in the Conference of November 25th, we have the honour to inform you that our Federation greatly regrets its inability to send a representative to Geneva at the present time, as, unfortunately, we cannot spare any of our prominent members on account of the important legislative proceedings in which we are at present engaged.

In order, however, to give, at all events, some idea of our views on the important Press questions which are on the agenda of the Conference, we venture to send you the enclosed memorandum, and request you to be so good as to bring it to the notice of the Conference.

Association of Austrian Daily Newspapers (Federation of Publishers of Austrian Daily Newspapers).

(Signed) FLIEGEL,  
President.

(Signed) DORFLER,  
Secretary-General.

REPORT ON THE QUESTION OF THE SIMPLIFICATION AND REDUCTION IN COST OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT OF NEWSPAPERS, PLACED ON THE AGENDA OF THE PRESS  
CONFERENCE TO BE HELD AT GENEVA.

[Translation.]

The best way for Austrian newspaper publishers to approach this question is to consider it separately with reference to the *former foreign countries* on the one hand and the *Succession States* on the other. The terms on which newspapers are transported in both directions between Austria and the *Succession States*, as far as the *Czechoslovak Republic*, *Hungary* and *Poland* are concerned, are extremely favourable to the countries concerned. They are based on special agreements between those States and Austria, whereby the former undertake to apply inland postal newspaper rates to newspaper traffic with Austria. Thus, it costs an Austrian publisher no more to send newspapers to Prague, Budapest or Warsaw, or *vice versa*, than to send them to places in Austria itself.

Further, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Commerce and Communications has succeeded in obtaining from the railway authorities concerned special tariffs which are particularly favourable to traffic between Vienna (and Austria in general) and the stations in the above-mentioned countries to which the bulk of Austrian newspapers are sent. Under the terms of these tariffs, it has for some time past been possible once more to send consignments of newspapers by an *express service* or by *grande vitesse*, even though the large railway system which before the war was under a single management has now been divided up.

In traffic with these countries, Austrian newspapers cannot expect to obtain further privileges, since, in the opinion of Austrian newspaper publishers, all the special concessions that could possibly be granted have already been conceded.

*Yugoslavia* is the only exception. Since February 1920, that country has refused to apply the inland newspaper rates to consignments of Austrian newspapers to Yugoslavia, and at that time charged the ordinary universal postal newspaper rate (then 8 groschen per 50 grammes). In 1925, however, Yugoslavia agreed, under Article 34 of the Universal Postal Convention of Stockholm, concluded on August 28th, 1924, to a 50 per cent reduction on that rate for newspapers sent direct by the publisher. Thus, to-day, the situation as regards Yugoslavia is satisfactory, and consequently we cannot really expect any improvement or reduction in the rates applicable to the transport of newspapers as regards the territory of the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, except the parts of that territory ceded to *Italy*. We will return to this point later.

Thanks, therefore, to the conciliatory spirit displayed by the postal and railway administrations of the countries concerned, the traffic question between Austria and the Succession States has been settled in a manner satisfactory to newspaper publishers, and we now turn to the second part of the question under discussion, namely, *the simplification and reduction of costs of the international transport of newspapers* in so far as it affects *former foreign countries*. Unfortunately, the newspaper traffic from Vienna and the rest of Austria to those

countries is not large or important enough to necessitate consignment by an *express service* or by *grande vitesse*. Moreover, the railway administrations concerned, however accommodating their attitude, could not grant a transport tariff as low as the existing rate for printed matter. Apart, however, from the question of the rates charged, there are certain objections to consignment by rail in connection with the despatch and carriage of consignments and their delivery at destination, and, in consequence, however well disposed the administrations concerned might be, it would not be practicable to consider any very extensive use of this means of transport, in view of the various manipulations necessitated and of the relatively short stop of trains at frontier and destination stations.

Thus, the quantity of newspapers sent daily from Austria abroad is unfortunately too small for consignment by express or by *grande vitesse* to offer any special financial advantage, while difficulties would certainly arise in connection with the handling of consignments by the railway. There is, however, one way in which the very legitimate desire for the transport of newspapers to be cheapened and simplified may be met. We will consider this point in detail later. We would first observe, however, that the proposal by the Messageries Hachette of Paris—that newspapers should be carried by *international express*—seems to us in part unnecessary, since the expresses which are organised by the railway administrations themselves and provide a regular daily service already carry newspapers; and, further, the suggestion that the expresses of the International Sleeping-Car Company should be utilised is valueless, since those trains do not run daily but only once or twice a week, and it has been the experience of Austrian newspaper publishers that to use for the carriage of daily newspapers a means of conveyance which cannot be employed daily is simply confusing to the addressees and to local newsagents, so that the benefit derived on certain days of the week would seem more than counterbalanced by the attendant disadvantages.

The transport of newspapers *by air* is certainly an increasing possibility. Nevertheless, air transport still depends so much on the season and on weather conditions that it cannot be regarded as a means of transport available throughout the year. At the same time, the Austrian and the Polish Air Transport Companies, the German Luft-Hansa Company and, this season, the Cidna (International Air Navigation Company) have been willing to grant to newspaper publishers facilities for the transport of periodicals in so far as the limited space available for baggage in each aeroplane allows. The Cidna, in particular, has done its utmost to grant favourable rates for the transport of newspapers. These special rates granted by aircraft companies apply, of course, not only to consignments despatched from Vienna but also to traffic to Austria.

The Messageries Hachette of Paris has suggested, among other things, that the prohibition of the practice of dropping parcels of newspapers from aircraft should be cancelled. We are unable to associate ourselves with this proposal. Air transport is in itself by no means so safe as transport by rail or ordinary postal transport, and the element of uncertainty with regard to the receipt of consignments is without doubt greatly increased by the dropping of parcels from aircraft which, although not in full flight, are yet moving; such a practice would often lead to the consignments being damaged or entirely lost, or at least to considerable delay in delivering them to the addressees.

The Association of Austrian Daily Newspapers takes the view that, owing to the regrettably small quantities sent, the normal method of despatch through the post as *printed matter* should prove adequate, especially as it must in fairness be admitted that all the postal administrations concerned have for years made every effort to ensure regularity of transport and the greatest despatch in delivery to the addressees and generally to make the service more reliable.

The rate of 8 groschen per 50 grammes, it is true, makes the prices of newspapers prohibitive, particularly for the middle-class and for intellectual circles. This was admitted by the Universal Postal Congress of Stockholm in August 1924, and for that reason the following provision was inserted in Article 34 of the Convention of August 28th, 1924 :

“ Administrations have the right in their reciprocal relations to allow a reduction of 50 per cent of the ordinary rate for printed papers to newspapers and periodicals posted direct by the publishers.

“ The same right is accorded to them in respect of sewn or bound books, excluding all publicity matter or advertisements.

“ The same applies to literary or scientific works exchanged by learned institutions.”

Unfortunately, up to the present, by no means all countries have made use of this right ; so far, in their relations with Austria, the following 44 countries only have stated their willingness to allow the 50 per cent reduction, whereby the rates are reduced to 4 groschen per 50 grammes :

Abyssinia	Finland	Paraguay
Albania	France, with Monaco	Persia
Algeria	(Colonies, preferential	Portugal and Colonies
Argentine	postal tariff)	Roumania
State of the Alouites	Greece	Saar Territory
Belgium	Guatemala	Salvador
Belgian Congo	Haiti	Spain
Brazil	Latvia	U.S.S.R.
Bulgaria	Lebanon	Union of South Africa
Chile	Lithuania	Syria
Colombia	Luxemburg	Turkey
Cuba	Morocco	Tunis
Dominican Republic	Mexico	Uruguay
Ecuador	Newfoundland	Venezuela
Egypt	Netherlands	Yugoslavia
Estonia		

It is a striking fact that, unfortunately, the countries having a large postal traffic, not only with Austria, but also in general are the very ones that have not yet allowed the 50 per cent reduction, viz., *Great Britain, the United States of America, Italy and Switzerland*. It would be very much in the interest, not only of Austria, but of these countries also if they could see their way to allow without delay the Stockholm reduction, which is unfortunately optional only and not generally binding, as was pointed out by Dr. Ernst Benedikt, the editor and Austrian delegate to the International Conference of Press Experts held at Geneva in the comprehensive survey he gave in his speech to the delegates on August 27th, 1927.

The Austrian Newspapers Association considers it eminently desirable that at least the above-mentioned countries should adhere to the optional agreement, even if it is not possible to get this concession transformed *at the next Conference of the Universal Postal Union into a general compulsory reduction applicable to all the members of the Universal Postal Union*.

Finally, there remains the question of the *international postal service for newspapers and periodicals*, which, in the traffic between countries, enables *subscriptions to foreign newspapers to be taken out through the postal administrations*. This system of subscribing to foreign newspapers is hampered—in every country and not only in Austria—by certain bureaucratic practices which cannot be altogether eliminated owing to the nature of the postal service. As a rule, a subscription can be taken out at a post office—whether for an Austrian paper, say, in Paris, or for a French or other foreign paper in Austria—for a calendar quarter only. In *Germany*, as a matter of fact, it is possible, as an exceptional measure, to take out a subscription for the second or third month of a calendar quarter only ; but everywhere else, without exception, the rule seems to be that such subscriptions can (although this is not usually stipulated by the publishers) be taken out only for calendar quarters. During the last few years there has been a welcome increase in international travel, which is no longer confined to the summer months. Owing to the variety of places visited, with their different seasons, it goes on all the year round, and it would therefore be extremely desirable if facilities could be accorded, with the consent of the publisher, for taking out subscriptions for *any calendar month* or for several calendar months. In most cases, the publisher would have no objection, as the editors of monthly scientific publications are practically the only ones who make it a condition that the publication in question must be taken for at least six months or a year. Another proposal made by the Messageries Hachette, namely, that certain charges should be done away with abroad, such as the *taxe régale* in Switzerland, may also be considered in this connection, and the reduction of the present charges for ordering and forwarding might be contemplated, as these considerably increase the cost of subscriptions to newspapers. It should be added, however, that, even if the postal administrations were to grant concessions more considerable than any granted at the present time, direct despatch by the publisher or wholesale agent would, for practical reasons, still be preferable, so that the whole question of postal subscriptions for newspapers and periodicals is only of secondary importance.

The importation of foreign newspapers into Austria has been unrestricted since 1919. Only in exceptional cases is use made of the right, provided for in the new Press Law, to cancel postal subscriptions to newspapers, and this right may be exercised only where a serious Press offence has been committed by the newspapers in question. Action has been taken in two cases only during the eight years which have elapsed since the introduction of the Press Law. It must be admitted that the Austrian postal and railway administrations have been making constant efforts to facilitate the transport of newspapers to and from all countries, and the undersigned association can only say that it has not yet received any serious complaints from the sister organisations in the Succession States or in foreign countries.

We consider that we have now dealt with the question exhaustively in all its aspects, though we will, of course, be glad to give any further information desired if requested to do so.

ANNEX 5.

[C.E.T.J. 2.]

MEMORANDUM BY THE ESTONIAN GOVERNMENT.

Tallinn, November 7th, 1929.

The competent Estonian authorities, after examining the preparatory documents for the European Conference on transport of newspapers and periodicals, have made the following observations on the questions under review ;

I. RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF PRESS EXPERTS,  
HELD AT GENEVA FROM AUGUST 24TH TO 29TH, 1927.

The Estonian Postal Administration is prepared to make every effort to assist in developing the circulation and interchange of newspapers and periodicals between the various countries. In principle, it considers desirable the reduction of postal rates for newspapers and periodicals to the strict minimum. No further reduction in present rates in Estonia can, however, be entertained, as these rates have already been considerably reduced. The international service of postal subscriptions and the 50 per cent reduction in rates—for periodicals despatched direct by the editors—constitute such considerable privileges that the Estonian Postal Administration does not see its way to going further in this direction, at least under present circumstances. According to the statistics, each postal consignment (transport, delivery to the consignee, etc.) now costs the postal administration 3.4 sents on an average, *i.e.*, 4.7 gold centimes, only 0.7 sent, or about 1 gold centime, of the cost of transmission being borne by the subscriber.

II. REPORT PRESENTED BY THE MESSAGERIES HACHETTE TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS  
(CHAPTER IV. — SUMMARY).

*Unification of Tariffs.*

The competent Estonian authorities would welcome the unification of rates as proposed in this report, and are prepared to give their support to any international action which may be taken in this connection.

*Reduction of Rates to the strict Minimum.*

The view of the competent Estonian authorities is given in point 1 of the present memorandum.

*Possibility of abolishing Certain Special Taxes levied in Various Countries.*

In Estonia, there is only one special tax on foreign newspapers—that on postal subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals, which amounts to 5 per cent of the original price of the newspapers. The competent Estonian authorities are of opinion that this tax, which is designed to cover correspondence, forwarding, etc., cannot be abolished.

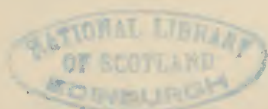
III. PROPOSALS SUBMITTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL UNION  
OF RAILWAY ADMINISTRATIONS.

The Estonian State Railways Administration associates itself with the conclusions adopted by the International Union of Railway Administrations.

IV. CUSTOMS QUESTIONS.

According to the Customs regulations in force in Estonia, newspapers and periodicals of all kinds issued in foreign languages, including those which contain notes, maps, drawings or engravings, either embodied in their text or issued as supplements, are admitted free of Customs duty.

Only periodicals in Estonian and bound periodicals are liable to an import duty of 0.18 gold franc + 30 per cent, and 0.22 gold franc + 30 per cent respectively, per kilo net.



ANNEX 6.

[C.E.T.J.3.]

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE NORWEGIAN ASSOCIATION OF NEWSPAPER OWNERS.

Oslo, November 18th, 1929.

The Norwegian Association of Newspaper Owners has the honour to draw the attention of the Secretariat to a matter, which it considers of great importance in connection with the discussion of the question of international circulation of newspapers. It therefore respectfully suggests that this matter be treated by the Conference.

Our Association received on August 8th, from the Press Office of the Norwegian Foreign Department, a communication from M. J. Avenol, to which were attached Committee reports and resolutions of the International Press Conference held at Geneva in 1927, with a request for our Association's comments on the questions to be dealt with by the Conference this month. We sent the following reply :

“ Your communication of August 8th has been discussed by our board of directors' which agreed that the questions mentioned in M. Avenol's communication, and the enclosures therein, were of the greatest importance for the Press in general.

“ We would like to emphasise that it is of great importance to the Norwegian Press that the ponderous and expensive mailing conditions with foreign countries should be altered.

“ This condition is mentioned in the Messageries Hachette's report, Chapter IV (Summary), paragraph II, which reads as follows :

“ ‘ Reduction of rates to the strict minimum irrespective of the methods of conveyance used, in order that they may not be inaccessible to newspapers, which it should always be possible to sell at a price within the means of the general public.’

“ Newspaper subscribers in countries which are parties to the Berne Convention are fairly reasonably treated, although we consider it desirable that an alteration should be made in the decisions that subscription and payment should pass through the postal authorities in the respective countries, and suggest that subscribers should obtain the same advantages through the postal authorities in the home country, or through a newspaper as a medium.

“ It would be of very great value if the Conference could be instrumental in bringing the nations which are not parties to the Berne Convention.

“ This is especially the case as regards the United States of America and England. At present, the postage to the United States of America, for instance, often exceeds the amount of the subscription itself, which is naturally a great obstacle to a wider circulation of the home country's Press among the Norwegian immigrants in the United States of America.

“ We consider it important that the League of Nations should endeavour to make the Berne Convention more comprehensive in these matters, which will otherwise make any agreement concerning ‘ reduction of rates to the strict minimum ’ quite illusory for the States whose Press is in the same situation as the Norwegian Press.

“ These difficulties were, we presume, also discussed by the Press Conference at Geneva in 1927, in connection with the resolution adopted, paragraph II of which reads as follows :

“ ‘ Believing that international understanding and the promotion of peace can best be encouraged by the widest possible dissemination of news, the Conference urges the Governments concerned to consider the urgent need for early abolition of any taxes and other restrictions on newspapers which hinder a fuller and more extended circulation of the international Press.’

“ We have no observations to make on the present plan for the Conference or the questions to be treated therein.”

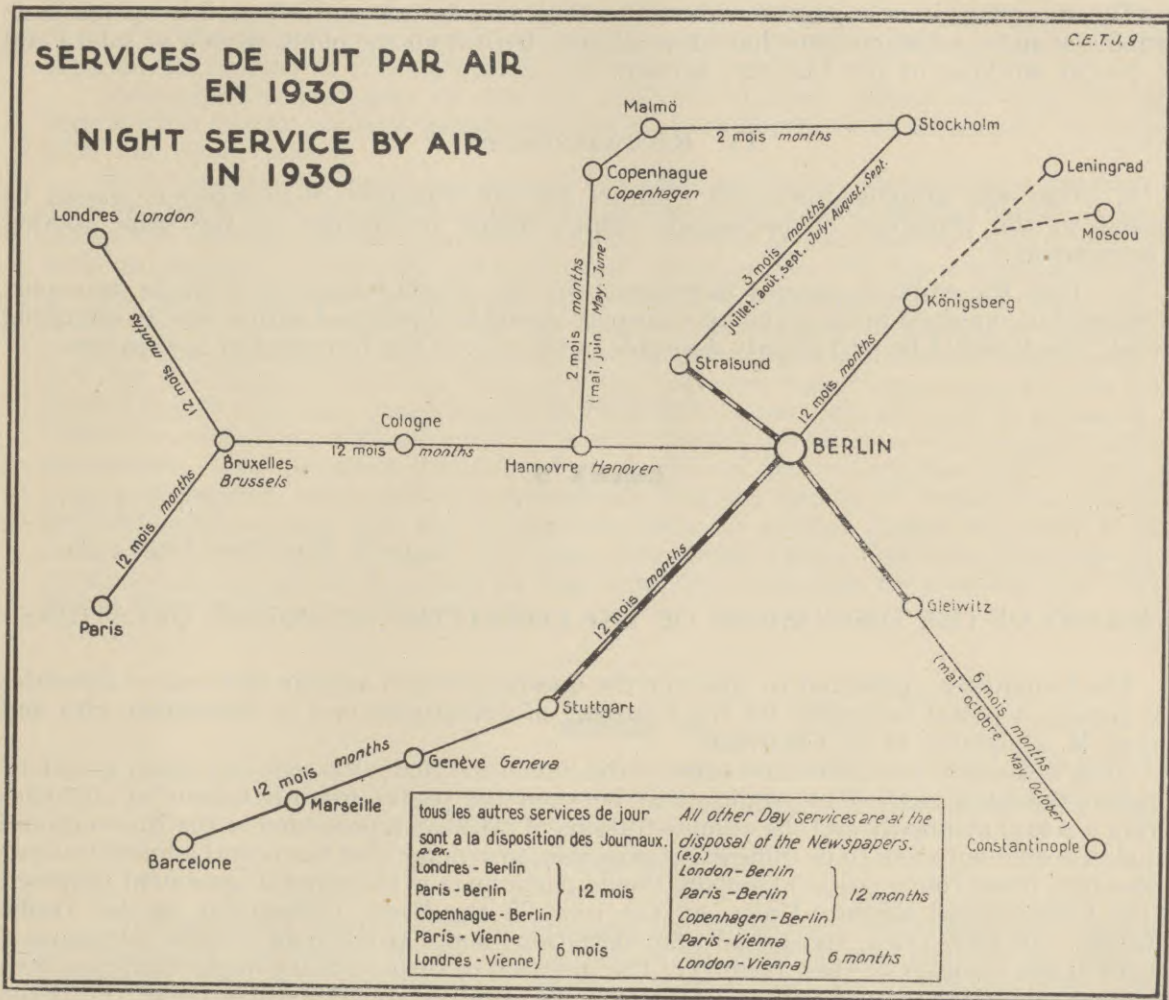
We consider a more detailed description of our Association's point of view on these questions unnecessary, as it will be perfectly evident from the examples quoted in the above communication that the less practical provisions of the Berne Convention are the main hindrance to a quick and effective transmission of newspapers to foreign countries, and particularly the fact that some great nations are not parties to the Convention, a fact which compels the newspapers to maintain prohibitive subscription rates in order to cover the higher postage to these countries.

We consider it, therefore, of the greatest importance for a wider circulation of the Press that these questions should be solved and the difficulties avoided.

In presenting this matter to the Secretariat, we take the liberty of expressing our most sincere hope that it will be thoroughly examined and discussed.

(Signed) D. ERINI.

ANNEX 7.



ANNEX 8.

[C.E.T.J.12.]

Geneva, November 28th, 1929.

SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON QUESTIONS CONNECTED WITH CUSTOMS AND POLICE FORMALITIES.

The Committee appointed to examine questions of Customs and police formalities met at Geneva on November 27th and appointed as its Chairman M. Djouritchitch. It came to the following conclusions :

I. IMPORTATION OF DAILY NEWSPAPERS BY RAIL.

(a) *Duties and charges.* — The Committee noted that these duties and charges are very small everywhere ; their method of collection does not constitute an obstacle in the way of the rapid transmission of newspapers.

(b) *Customs formalities.* — It appears from almost all the explanations given that these formalities can be carried out through the intermediary of the railway authorities whilst the train is stopping at the frontier. Attention is also drawn to the fact that in certain countries not even a statement is handed to the Customs.

(c) *Police supervision.* — This may be carried out while the train is stopping at the station of entry at the same time as the Customs formalities. If packets are seized, the railway officials will inform the consignor of this fact by telegraph if he has expressed the desire beforehand that this should be done.

The necessary additional steps might be taken by the International Committee on Transport in application of the C.I.M.

II. PASSAGE THROUGH THE CUSTOMS OF NEWSPAPERS IN TRANSIT.

As in the case of imports, the railway authorities should undertake to carry out the Customs formalities ; consignments should be sent under lead seal, if necessary.

### III. DROPPING OF PACKETS OF NEWSPAPERS FROM AIRCRAFT IN FLIGHT.

The dropping of newspapers without landing may be allowed when this operation is carried out under satisfactory technical conditions, both from the point of view of safety and the proper working of the Customs Service.

### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. That the simplifications and facilities for the transport of newspapers should be granted to the transport of periodicals, which might be treated on the same footing as newspapers.

2. That the work at present in progress for the establishment of a single transport document for combined railway and air transport should be continued with a view to obtaining a result which would be particularly desirable in the case of the transport of newspapers.

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### ANNEX 9.

[C.E.T.J.13.]

Geneva, November 28th, 1929.

### SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON POSTAL QUESTIONS.<sup>1</sup>

The Committee appointed to consider the questions which arise in the case of countries that possess a postal monopoly for the transport of newspapers met on November 27th and elected M. Duijnstee as its Chairman.

After discussion, the Committee came to the conclusion that, although very many questions of detail should be settled by negotiations between the postal administrations of countries having a postal monopoly and the administrations of railways represented in the International Union, it would not seem to be difficult, in principle, to arrange that the postal administrations of countries possessing a postal monopoly should participate in the general agreement proposed by the International Railway Union on the basis of the Berne Convention on the Traffic of Goods. In such cases, the postal administrations would participate in these agreements instead of the railways of their country. The question of responsibility might doubtless give rise to certain delicate questions of adaptation, as railways are responsible under the Berne Convention, and the postal authorities do not generally admit responsibility. But in the case of the transport of newspapers, the question of responsibility is of so small a practical importance (taking into account the periods allowed for delivery under the Berne Convention, which would be the only periods legally binding on the transporter, even if, in fact, consignment were sent by the most rapid means of transport) that it is not likely to constitute an obstacle to a satisfactory settlement.

The representatives of the International Railway Union have stated that the International Union would, under these circumstances, invite the postal administrations of countries possessing a postal monopoly—a list of which will be communicated by the League of Nations—to the forthcoming session of its Commission on Goods Traffic.

Members of the Committee, who are officials of the postal administrations concerned, have stated that, although they cannot at present bind their administrations, they are personally in favour of the above arrangement, provided the details thereof are settled on a satisfactory basis.

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### Appendix.

(C.E.T.J.II.)

Geneva, November 28th, 1929.

### REPORT BY M. FISCHER TO THE COMMITTEE ON POSTAL QUESTIONS.

May I draw the attention of the second Committee of the Conference on the Transport of Newspapers to the question of the Swiss postal *régale*? This tax only affects the *importation* of foreign dailies into Switzerland *in the form of packages sent by rail*, while periodicals and journals subscribed for postally or sent in transit through Switzerland are not liable to payment of the tax.

The *régale* was originally introduced in Swiss legislation in order to protect the general interests of our small country, which, having three national languages, is in a very special situation. The same reasons still hold good to-day. Under the provisions of the *régale*, foreign dailies, on entering Swiss territory, must be handed over to the postal service and are then delivered to the addressees on payment of a *régalian* duty at present amounting to 2 centimes per copy and per 50 gr. This duty covers not only the delivery of the newspapers to the

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<sup>1</sup> A report by M. Fischer on the Swiss postal monopoly is attached (see Appendix).



addressees but their despatch from the Swiss frontier to any part of the country by the most rapid means of conveyance. It is, therefore, not so much a fiscal duty as a transport charge. Moreover, it cannot hinder the circulation of foreign newspapers in Switzerland, since the number of newspapers imported is continually increasing and is now more than six times as large as the number of Swiss journals exported.

Switzerland cannot give up this tax, and, indeed, must reserve not only the right to levy it upon foreign political newspapers but also the liberty to fix its amount in accordance with her requirements.

In my opinion, the Swiss postal *régale* in no way precludes a satisfactory settlement of the questions before the present Conference. Moreover, it should shortly become possible to reduce the existing duty of 2 centimes per copy and per 50 grammes to 1½ centimes, though without prejudice to the fundamental principle. At all events, this step is under contemplation.

As regards the reduction of 50 per cent on the general printed papers rate for the despatch of newspapers and periodicals, I may say that the refusal up to the present on the part of the Swiss Postal Administration to conclude agreements of this kind was based primarily on the fact that, according to the Final Protocol of the Universal Postal Convention, the international printed papers rate may exceptionally be reduced to 3 centimes for each 50 grammes a rate which, in comparison with our scale of inland charges, would in several respects have been inequitable. This provision was deleted at the Postal Union Congress held in London this year, and, further, under Article 6, paragraph 2, of the Executive Regulations, the postage for newspapers sent at half the international rate for printed papers may now be paid in cash. In view of these changed conditions, the Swiss Postal Administration is prepared to conclude agreements of this kind, to date from the entry into force of the new Universal Postal Convention, *i.e.*, July 1st, 1930.

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ANNEX 10.

(C.E.T.J.14.)

Geneva, November 28th, 1929.

DRAFT FINAL ACT.

The European Conference on the Transport of Newspapers and Periodicals, convened by the Council of the League of Nations on June 12th, 1929, in pursuance of the work of the Conference of Press Experts held in Geneva in August 1927, sat at Geneva from November 25th to..... 1929. It includes representatives of the following States..... whose Delegations were thus composed:..... The Conference was also attended by .....

The Conference found that the Governments represented were unanimously in favour of encouraging the international circulation of newspapers and facilitating their transport, considering how desirable it is in the public interest that each country should be acquainted with the state of opinion in others. It felt that the measures set out below were best calculated, in the existing circumstances, to bring about this result, as they could easily be carried into effect by the departments concerned (Railway, Postal, Customs and Police Departments) and could readily be accepted by Governments in cases where such acceptance was necessary. The measures in question are designed to secure increased speed in transport, the abolition of intermediate agents in the course of transport, the simplification of formalities of all kinds involved in transport, and hence greater speed in the distribution of newspapers and a reduction in expenses enabling the prices at which foreign newspapers are sold to the public to be likewise reduced.

I. SYSTEM OF TRANSPORT FOR DAILY AND SIMILAR NEWSPAPERS IN INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC.

In accordance with the proposals submitted by the International Union of Railway Administrations, the transport system for daily newspapers in international traffic will be based on the International Convention concerning the Traffic of Goods by Rail (C.I.M.). In practice, however, newspapers will be carried in the same way as passengers' luggage; that is to say, as far as possible by through trains and *trains de luxe*, including the International Sleeping-Car Company's trains. The detailed regulations to be introduced for this traffic will be prepared by the International Railway Union, which will endeavour to lay down uniform rules.

The trains by which newspapers are to be forwarded will be determined in each case and for each time-table period by agreements between the administrations concerned in such traffic, after consultation with the senders. Generally speaking, so far as concerns formalities, the following solution would be contemplated :

(a) *Handing over for Transport.* — The consignor should hand in his packages and the waybill of the International Convention concerning the Traffic of Goods by Rail (C.I.M.) to a specified office at the station of consignment, a baggage office, or some other office specially designated.

(b) *Acceptance.* — After checking (weighing) the consignment, the office would stamp the waybill and accept the consignment for transport.

(c) *Placing on Train.* — The consignment would be placed on the train by the above-mentioned office, or to simplify the procedure, this might be done by the consignor himself.

(d) *Route to be followed.* — The trains by which transport might be effected would be determined by agreements between the Administrations concerned.

(e) *Delivery to Consignee.* — Delivery would be made direct to the consignee, preferably at the luggage-van of the train conveying the consignment. A receipt would be given by the consignee.

(f) *Payment of Costs of Transport.* — All such transport would be prepaid. As payment of the costs might be effected in various ways, the consigning Administration would determine, after agreement with the consignor, the particular method to be adopted (payment by instalments, periodical payment, bank deposit, etc.).

With reference to traffic with countries which are not parties to the Berne Convention, notably Great Britain, the Conference took note of the statements made by the representative of the British railways and the representative of the International Railway Union, according to which, in traffic between London and most of the European capitals, similar or identical results could be obtained by special tariffs providing for through transport and a single transport contract.

In the case of countries in which the Post Office has a monopoly of the transport of newspaper parcels, it is desirable, in order that the system described above may produce the necessary practical results, that the Post Office, in place of the national railways, should contract agreements on the basis indicated above with the railway administrations of other countries. The Conference, attaching special importance to the settlement of this question, without which its efforts would be partially nullified, has noted that the International Railway Union intends to invite the Post Offices in question to join in its deliberations on the subject, and trusts that every endeavour will be made on both sides to prosecute the negotiations in such a manner as speedily to bring about the desired result.

For the present, at least, the system described above would apply only to daily newspapers (that is to say, to papers appearing at least six days per week), including their free supplements. Financial newspapers published only on Stock Exchange days would be regarded as daily papers; so, also, would special papers such as those that are published in various European countries, for instance, on Sundays.

The Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit should keep itself informed of the manner in which the above-mentioned measures are carried out, and will report to the Council. If, in the application of these measures, difficulties arise which can be overcome by the conclusion of an agreement between Governments, the Committee will propose to the Council suitable steps to bring about the conclusion of such an agreement.

## II. RATES.

It does not seem possible to contemplate, at least on any general scale, a unification of the reductions which could be granted by the administrations for the transport of newspapers in through international traffic, owing to the differences in the economic situation in different countries and in their system of rates, and having regard to the consequences—prejudicial to the public interest—of such a unification of reductions (which would involve in certain cases an increase in the extremely low rates charged in some countries). As a general rule, therefore, the rates charged in international traffic will be calculated by adding together the rates charged in inland traffic. The attention of the Governments and Administrations concerned is called to the desirability of reducing these rates to the lowest possible level and keeping them there. Unless exceptional circumstances prevent this, the rates charged for the carriage of foreign newspapers should in no case be higher than those charged for the carriage of home newspapers within the country.

## III. CUSTOMS AND POLICE FORMALITIES.

The system described in Section I means that newspaper parcels, though carried on an international waybill (*grande vitesse*), must be dealt with by Customs authorities at frontiers and by inland Customs offices in such a manner as to cause no delay in transport or delivery to consignee, and, more particularly, in such a way as to enable the parcels to be re-forwarded by the same train as brought them to the frontier, or by the next connecting train if the first train goes no further. It appears from statements made to the Conference that these conditions can easily be fulfilled; newspaper parcels would be examined in the same way as luggage, the railway official presenting the parcels to the Customs in place of the passenger, and handing to the Customs the declaration accompanying the consignment, where such a declaration is required.

The Conference likewise found that police formalities can be carried out simultaneously with the Customs operations without additional delay.

If a consignment of newspapers should be stopped for Customs or police reasons, the railway would advise the consignor in accordance with the C.I.M. regulations (Berne Convention). If the consignor so requested, the advice could be sent to him at his own expense by telegraph; the arrangements necessary for this purpose could be adopted by "the International Transport Committee" under the above-mentioned Convention. The Conference considered that, not only in the case of railway traffic, but generally, anything that occurs to prevent the conveyance or delivery of newspapers should at once be brought to the knowledge of those concerned.

#### IV. CUSTOMS AND FISCAL DUTIES APPLICABLE TO NEWSPAPERS.

The Customs formalities applicable to the transport of newspapers would undoubtedly be still further simplified if the various duties on newspapers could be abolished. The statements made at the Conference show that these duties are, as a rule, very small and cannot bring in any considerable revenue in the various countries.

The Conference of Press Experts has adopted the following resolution :

“ Believing that international understanding and the promotion of peace can best be encouraged by the widest possible dissemination of news, the Conference urges the Governments concerned to consider the urgent need for early abolition of any taxes and other restrictions on newspapers which hinder a fuller and more extended circulation of the international Press.”

The Council of the League of Nations is requested to ask the competent organisations of the League to consider the possibility of all or part of these duties being abolished.

#### V. DROPPING OF PACKETS OF NEWSPAPERS FROM AIRCRAFT IN FLIGHT.

The Conference recommended that, whenever technical conditions permit and suitable Customs and/or police supervision can be provided, Governments should allow packets of newspapers to be dropped from aircraft in flight.

The Secretary-General of the League is requested to communicate this recommendation also to the International Air Navigation Commission.

#### VI. COMBINED RAILWAY AND AIR NAVIGATION TRANSPORT.

The Conference has noted the efforts made to create a single transport document for combined railway and air navigation transport. It hopes that these efforts will speedily prove successful and calls attention to the importance, in the case of the transport of newspapers, of a settlement of this question.

#### VII. PERIODICALS.

Although considering the question of the transport of newspapers as being more important and more urgent than that of the transport of periodicals, the Conference is nevertheless of opinion that measures resembling as closely as possible those contemplated above should be adopted in regard to periodicals. In order to facilitate consideration of this question by the International Railway Union and by the Administrations concerned, the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit is requested to examine and propose, after securing all suitable assistance, an international definition of the term “ periodical ”.

#### VIII. POSTAL QUESTIONS RELATING TO NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS.

In view of the great importance of the International Postal Agreement regarding subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals and of the optional provisions of the Stockholm Convention for a 50 per cent reduction in the ordinary rate for printed matter, the Conference requests the few European Governments which have not yet been able to adhere to this Agreement or apply these provisions to consider afresh, in the most sympathetic spirit, the possibility of acceding to this Agreement or applying these provisions. It would also be desirable that the possibility be given of arranging postal subscriptions to newspapers for a period of less than three months.

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#### ANNEX 11.

[C.E.T.J.16.]

Geneva, November 29th, 1929.

#### ADDITION TO THE FINAL ACT OF A NEW CHAPTER PROPOSED BY THE SWISS DELEGATION.

Add at the end of the Final Act :

#### “ IX. INSTRUCTION OF STAFF.

“ To ensure the execution of the above arrangements, the Conference calls the attention of Governments to the need for the regular instruction of the staff of the administrations concerned in regard to the provisions of the existing Conventions and of all regulations or arrangements that may be in force.”

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## ANNEX 12.

### FINAL ACT ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE ON NOVEMBER 29TH, 1929.

The European Conference on the Transport of Newspapers and Periodicals, convened by the Council of the League of Nations on June 12th, 1929, in pursuance of the work of the Conference of Press Experts held in Geneva in August 1927, sat at Geneva from November 25th to November 29th, 1929.

The Council, by a resolution dated September 6th, 1929, had designated the Right Honourable Viscount BURNHAM, G.C.M.G., C.H., as President of the Conference.

It included representatives of the Governments of GERMANY, BELGIUM, GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, BULGARIA, DENMARK, SPAIN, FINLAND, FRANCE, HUNGARY, ITALY, THE NETHERLANDS, POLAND, PORTUGAL, ROUMANIA, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, TURKEY, YUGOSLAVIA and the SAAR TERRITORY GOVERNING COMMISSION, Whose Delegations were thus composed :<sup>1</sup>

The Conference found that the Governments represented were unanimously in favour of encouraging the international circulation of newspapers and facilitating their transport, considering how desirable it is in the public interest that the people of each country should be made acquainted with the state of opinion in countries other than their own. The Conference was of opinion that the measures set out below were the best that, under existing circumstances, can be devised to bring about this result, as they can be carried into effect without difficulty by the organisations concerned with Railway, Postal, Customs and Police Administration, and could further be readily accepted by Governments in cases where such acceptance was necessary. The measures in question are designed to secure increased speed in transport, the abolition of intermediate agents in the course of transport, the simplification of formalities of all kinds involved in transport, and, as a consequence, such greater speed in the distribution of newspapers and with such reduction in expenses as will enable the foreign newspapers to be sold to the public at reduced prices.

#### I. System of Transport for Daily and Similar Newspapers in International Traffic.

In accordance with the proposals submitted by the International Railway Union, the transport system for daily newspapers in international traffic will be based on the International Convention concerning the Transport of Goods by Rail (C.I.M.). In practice, however, newspapers will be carried in the same way as passengers' luggage; that is to say, as far as possible by through trains and *trains de luxe*, including the International Sleeping-Car Company's trains. The detailed regulations to be introduced for this traffic will be prepared by the International Railway Union, which will endeavour to lay down uniform rules.

The trains by which newspapers are to be forwarded will be determined in each case and for each time-table period by agreements between the Administrations concerned in such traffic, after consultation with the consignors. Generally speaking, so far as concerns formalities, the following solution would be contemplated :

(a) *Handing over for Transport.* — The consignor should hand in his packages, together with the waybill of the International Convention concerning the Traffic of Goods by Rail (C.I.M.), to a specified office at the station of consignment, a baggage office, or some other office specially designated.

(b) *Acceptance.* — After checking (weighing) the consignment, the office would stamp the waybill and accept the consignment for transport.

(c) *Placing on Train.* — The consignment would be placed on the train by the above-mentioned office, or, to simplify the procedure, this might be done by the consignor himself.

(d) *Route to be followed.* — The trains by which transport might be effected would be determined by agreements between the Administrations concerned.

(e) *Delivery to Consignee.* — Delivery would be made direct to the consignee, preferably at the luggage-van of the train conveying the consignment. A receipt would be given by the consignee.

(f) *Payment of Costs of Transport.* — All such transport would be prepaid. As payment of the costs might be effected in various ways, the consigning Administration would determine, after agreement with the consignor, the particular method to be adopted (payment by instalments, periodical payment, bank deposit, etc.).

With reference to traffic with countries which are not parties to the Berne Convention, notably Great Britain, the Conference has taken note of the statements made by the representative of the British railways and the representative of the International Railway Union, according to which, in traffic between London and most of the European capitals, similar or identical results could be obtained by special tariffs providing for through transport and a single transport contract.

<sup>1</sup> The composition of the Delegations appears on page 5.

In the case of countries in which the Post Office has a monopoly of the transport of newspaper parcels, it is desirable, in order that the system described above may produce the necessary practical results, that the Post Office, in place of the national railways, should contract agreements on the basis indicated above with the railway administrations of other countries. The Conference, attaching special importance to the settlement of this question, without which its efforts would be partially nullified, has noted that the International Railway Union intends to invite the Post Offices in question to join in its deliberations on the subject, and trusts that every endeavour will be made on both sides to carry out the negotiations in such a manner as speedily to bring about the desired result.

For the present, at least, the system described above would apply only to daily newspapers (that is to say, to papers appearing at least six days per week), including their free supplements. Financial newspapers published only on Stock Exchange days would be regarded as daily papers ; so, also, would special papers such as those that are published, for instance, on Sundays, in various European countries.

The Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit should keep itself informed of the manner in which the above-mentioned measures are carried out, and should report to the Council accordingly. If, in the application of these measures, difficulties arise which can be overcome by the conclusion of an agreement between Governments, the Committee will propose to the Council suitable steps to bring about the conclusion of such an agreement.

## II. Rates.

It does not seem possible to contemplate, at least on any general scale, the introduction of a uniform rate which could be applied by the Administrations for the transport of newspapers in through international traffic, owing to the differences in the economic situation in different countries and in their system and scales of charges. Further, such a uniform rate would in some cases be prejudicial to the public interest, as it might involve an increase in the very low rates at present being charged in certain countries. As a general rule, therefore, the rates charged in international traffic will be calculated by adding together the rates charged in internal traffic. The attention of the Governments and Administrations concerned is drawn to the desirability of reducing these rates to, and maintaining them at, the lowest possible level. Unless exceptional circumstances prevent this, the rates charged for the carriage of foreign newspapers should in no case be higher than those charged for the carriage of home newspapers within the country.

## III. Customs and Police Formalities.

The system described in Section I means that newspaper parcels, though carried on an international waybill (*grande vitesse*), must be dealt with by Customs authorities at frontiers and by inland Customs offices in such a manner as to cause no delay in transport or delivery to consignee, and, more particularly, in such a way as to enable the parcels to be re-forwarded by the same train as brought them to the frontier, or by the next connecting train if the first train goes no further. According to the statements made to the Conference, these conditions might easily be fulfilled ; newspaper parcels would be examined in the same way as luggage, the railway official presenting the parcels to the Customs in place of the passenger, and also handing to them the Customs declaration. The Conference notes, moreover, that in several countries no written declaration is handed to the Customs ; it requests Governments to bring the verbal declaration into as general use as possible with a view to still further assimilating packets of newspapers to passengers' luggage.

The Conference likewise found that police formalities can be carried out simultaneously with the Customs operations without additional delay.

If a consignment of newspapers should be stopped for Customs or police reasons, the railway would advise the consignor in accordance with the regulations of the International Convention concerning the Traffic of Goods by Rail (C.I.M.). If the consignor so requested, the advice could be sent to him at his own expense by telegraph ; the arrangements necessary for this purpose could be adopted by " the International Transport Committee " under the above-mentioned Convention. The Conference considered that, not only in the case of railway traffic, but generally, anything that occurs to prevent the conveyance or delivery of newspapers should at once be brought to the knowledge of those concerned.

## IV. Customs and Fiscal Duties applicable to Newspapers.

The Customs formalities applicable to the transport of newspapers would undoubtedly be still further simplified if the various duties on newspapers could be abolished. The statements made at the Conference show that these duties are, as a rule, very small and cannot bring in any considerable revenue in the various countries.

The Conference of Press Experts adopted the following resolution :

“ Believing that international understanding and the promotion of peace can best be encouraged by the widest possible dissemination of news, the Conference urges the Governments concerned to consider the urgent need for early abolition of any taxes and other restrictions on newspapers which hinder a fuller and more extended circulation of the international Press.”

The Council of the League of Nations is requested to ask the competent organisations of the League to consider whether or not it is possible for all or part of these duties to be abolished.

#### **V. Dropping of Packets of Newspapers from Aircraft in Flight.**

The Conference recommended that, whenever technical conditions permit and suitable Customs and/or police supervision can be provided, Governments should allow packets of newspapers to be dropped from aircraft in flight.

The Secretary-General of the League is requested to communicate likewise this recommendation to the International Commission for Air Navigation.

#### **VI. Combined Railway and Air Navigation Transport.**

The Conference notes the efforts made to develop the use of a single transport document for combined railway and air navigation transport. It hopes that these efforts will speedily prove successful and calls attention to the importance, in the case of the transport of newspapers of a settlement of this question.

#### **VII. Periodicals.**

Although considering the question of the transport of newspapers as being more important and more urgent than that of the transport of periodicals, the Conference is nevertheless of opinion that measures resembling as closely as possible those contemplated above should be adopted in regard to periodicals. In order to facilitate consideration of this question by the International Railway Union and by the Administrations concerned, the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit is requested to examine and propose, after securing all suitable assistance, an international definition of the term “ periodical ”.

#### **VIII. Postal Questions relating to Newspapers and Periodicals.**

In view of the great importance of the International Postal Agreement regarding subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals and of the optional provisions of the Stockholm Convention for a 50 per cent reduction in the ordinary rate for printed matter, the Conference requests the few European Governments which have not yet been able to adhere to this Agreement or apply these provisions to consider afresh, in the most sympathetic spirit, the possibility of acceding to this Agreement or applying these provisions. It would also be desirable that the right given to Governments of accepting postal subscriptions to newspapers for periods of less than three months should be made use of as far as possible.

#### **IX. Instruction of Staff.**

To ensure the execution of the above provisions, the Conference calls the attention of Governments to the need for the regular instruction of the staff of the Administrations concerned in regard to the provisions of the existing conventions and of all regulations or arrangements that may be in force.

DONE at Geneva, in a single copy, on the twenty-ninth day of November, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-nine.

*The President of the Conference :*  
(Signed) BURNHAM.

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