

MULTILATERAL

COLLECTIVE NOTE OF ALLIED POWERS REGARDING ADVANTAGES TO BE
ACCORDED TO CHINA

(September 8, 1917)

“The Wai Chiao Pu having made known to the representatives of Belgium, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Portugal and Russia that it would be glad to resume the negotiations already entered upon in the months of February and March last with a view to the entry of China into the war, the representatives of the said Powers have the honor to make known to the Wai Chiao Pu:

“On the one hand, the advantages that they are disposed to accord to China in recognition of its spontaneous entry into the war;

“On the other hand, the measures that they will be glad to see taken by China in its own interests.

“I.

“A.—The representatives of the Powers above mentioned are agreed upon the principle of postponement, without interest, of the annual instalments of the 1901 indemnity during a period of five years, beginning with the first day of the month following the date of the present arrangement.

“The Italian Government, however, for reasons of an internal administrative character, can not yet fix the amount of the portion of the indemnity of which it is disposed to grant the postponement.

“Furthermore, the share of Russia in the indemnity of 1901 being much greater than that of the other allies, the Russian Government, desiring to participate with them in equal measure in the testimony of friendship which it is proposed to give to China, consents to the postponement of such a portion of the annual instalments due to it as is equivalent to the average of the sacrifices made by the other allies. This average, calculated upon the proportional shares of each of the great allied Powers would be 9.5926 per cent of the total of the annual instalments paid by China to all the Powers. Russia which is interested in the indemnity to the proportion of 28.971 per cent, therefore consents to the suspension of such payments as are due it during five years on the same conditions contemplated for the other allies, in the said proportion of 9.520 per cent, which it declares itself willing to bring up to 10 per cent in order to make round figures.

“It will be understood that the Germans and Austro-Hungarians must not on the other hand benefit from any payment on account of the indemnities of 1901, the treaty of 1901 being, as regards the Central Empires, forever abrogated as to this point

“B.—The representatives of the Powers above mentioned accept the principle of the increase of the maritime customs duties to an effective rate of 5 per cent ad valorem, a commission including Chinese delegates to be entrusted with the modifications to be adopted in the system of customs tariffs in the interests of all the contracting parties, and the allied Governments lending the Chinese Government their good offices in order to obtain the acceptance by the neutral Powers of this increase in the maritime customs duties.

“C.—The representatives of the Powers above mentioned consent to the temporary access of Chinese troops to the reserved zone of Tientsin, so far as may be necessary for the surveillance over the Germans and Austro-Hungarians, following a request by the Chinese Government acceded to by the allied Legations.

“II.

“The representatives of the Powers mentioned above are agreed in recommending to China:

“A.—The promulgation by the Chinese Government of a general tariff for all countries without treaties

“B.—The prohibition of Chinese from all trading with enemy subjects;

“C.—The internment or expulsion of the enemy subjects whose names will be indicated by the allied Legations; the suppression of the right of meeting for enemy subjects, the interdiction of navigation and of the use of wireless telegraph apparatus, and the confiscation of all objects of contraband of war;

“D.—The putting under sequestration of German and Austro-Hungarian commercial firms the complete liquidation of which will be effected;

“E.—An understanding with the representatives of the allied Governments, in the interests of the foreign trade of China, and with regard for the interests of the allies, to organize in the form of international concessions the former German and Austro-Hungarian concessions in the ports of Tientsin and Hankow;

“F.—The placing at the disposal of the allies, against payment for transfer or charter (i.e., *contre frais de cession ou affrètement*), of the enemy merchant vessels seized in Chinese ports;

“G.—Collaboration with the allied legations with a view to the drawing up of regulations similar to those which are in force in the other countries at war with Germany or Austria-Hungary;

“H.—The cooperation, as complete and effective as possible, on the part of China, in the operations of the allies.”

To this note the Chinese Government is understood to have replied on October 5, 1917, by a memorandum to the following effect:

CHINESE REPLY TO COLLECTIVE NOTE OF ALLIED POWERS

(October 5, 1917)

“The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a Memorandum, stating that the Governments of the seven Powers have severally agreed to the three measures proposed by this Government and to express the gratitude of this Government therefor. The eight measures which the seven Ministers proposed that the Chinese Government should put into force have been considered in detail and replies have now been drawn up as follows:

“A.—In reference to the promulgation of a general tariff for the countries without treaties—the same has been drawn up and is about to be promulgated.

“B.—Measures B and D are related. China now proposes to promulgate special regulations on the subject of the industrial enterprises and commercial establishments of enemy subjects. Where a Chinese inspection has shown that they should be closed they will be closed and officials appointed specially to administer them.

“C.—In reference to the matter of the Chinese Government taking strict protective measures against enemy subjects—if plots are discovered the plotters will be interned. It is now proposed to have the Ministry of the Interior draw up detailed regulations upon which all action will be based. In addition to the sequestration of enemy vessels and the confiscation at various times of wireless stations and contraband of war, severe measures will also be taken to prohibit the holding of meetings and the formation of societies.

“E.—The Chinese Government is now arranging to have the old German and Austrian concessions at Tientsin and Hankow thoroughly reorganized, so as to enable the nationals of the different Powers residing therein to enjoy all commercial advantages as well as a system of local self government, with the object of securing such a perfect organization as to constitute the said areas into Model Voluntarily Opened Sino-Foreign Trade Marts. Attention will moreover be paid to the end of the war, in order to prevent the said areas from reverting to the status of special concessions.

“F.—The Chinese Government has already leased the detained enemy merchant vessels to the Ta Ta Kung Ssu. Except for those vessels kept by the Government for its own requirements, assistance will be given to the allied Powers to arrange special sub-lease from the Ta Ta Kung Ssu.

“G.—The Chinese Government in drawing up regulations will adopt the regulations now in force in the other countries in order to avoid a diversity of methods.

“H.—The Chinese Government will cooperate with the allied Powers to the extent of its power in respect to action in connection with the war.

“The above measures having been decided upon by the Chinese Government will be separately put into force as conditions may determine, so that the wishes of the different Powers may be met.

“With compliments.”