

APPENDIX.

SUMMARY OF THE PRINCIPAL DESPATCHES RECEIVED FROM HIS MAJESTY'S SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES IN REGARD TO ENEMY PROPERTY.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF (IMPERIAL) ENEMY PROPERTY COMMITTEE. — REGISTRATION OF ENEMY PROPERTY IN BRITISH EMPIRE.

1. DESPATCH dated 26th June, 1919, enclosed copies of the report of the Enemy Property Committee dated 8th July, 1918, and intimated that the recommendations of the Committee had been approved by His Majesty's Government, and that the necessary powers to give effect thereto were being taken in the Aliens Restrictions Bill which was then before the House of Commons. The following is a summary of the main recommendations of the Committee :—

(1.) They recommend that steps should be taken to render the information now available as to enemy property in the Empire more complete, and as far as possible to maintain the accuracy of that information during the continuance of the war (enemy property to be taken as property belonging to persons of enemy nationality). (Paragraphs 6 and 9.)

(2.) They recommend that for this purpose—

(a.) All persons managing or holding property on behalf of any enemy subject should be under an obligation to give information to the Custodian as to the property managed or held by them.

(b.) Companies and partnerships should give particulars to the Custodian of any interest of any enemy subject in the company or partnership.

(c.) All enemy subjects in the United Kingdom should be put under a general obligation to give information to the Custodian as to their property. The bank accounts of enemy subjects would be treated as the property of the enemy subject for these purposes, both from the point of view of the bank where the account is kept and from the point of view of the enemy subject whose account it is.

(d.) The Custodian should have power to call for further returns, from any person who is under an obligation to make a return, at any time if he thinks it necessary to do so.

(e.) The information required should include information as to transfers of property taking place between the introduction of any Bill imposing the obligation to give the information and the date on which the return of property is required. (Paragraphs 17, 18, and 19.)

(3.) The Committee also consider that steps should be taken to obtain similar legislative provision in the dominions and colonies as respects enemy property in the dominions and colonies, and also to obtain from the Governments of Allied and neutral countries any supplemental information as respects enemy property in the Empire which these Governments are in a position to furnish (Paragraphs 20 and 21.)

(4.) For the purpose of avoiding the multiplication of useless returns the Committee recommend—

(a.) That some limitation should be imposed on the obligation of individual enemy subjects to make returns of property of small value, either by excluding from the obligation property of a certain value or certain classes of property, or by exempting from the obligation persons whose whole property does not exceed a fixed amount; and

(b.) That Poles, Czechs, Armenians, and others who are technically enemies but who have received from the Home Office or from the police a general exemption from the principal restrictions of the Alien Restriction Order, and who hold a certificate from the Home Office or the police to that effect, should be exempt from the obligation to make returns. (Paragraphs 24 and 25.)

(5.) The Committee recommend that the returns given by British-born women married to enemy subjects should be separated from those given by other enemy subjects. (Paragraph 26.)

(6.) For the purpose of maintaining the accuracy of information obtained the Committee recommend that—

(i.) No transfer of—

(a.) Securities;

(b.) Property deposited with banks, safe-deposit companies, solicitors, &c., for safe custody; or

(c.) Land

belonging to a person of enemy nationality should be allowed except with the consent of the Custodian or some committee appointed by him or acting with him.

(ii.) The Custodian or the committee should have power, as respects any property of a person of enemy nationality which did not come within the general restriction, to give notice to the owner and any person having custody of the property that it was to be subject to the like restrictions. (Paragraph 37.)

(7.) The Committee consider that these recommendations should be carried out, if possible, by means of a special Act of Parliament for the purpose. (Paragraph 32.)

[N.B.—The paragraphs quoted refer to report of (Imperial) Enemy Property Committee.]