



The Edinburgh Gazette

Published by Authority.

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1917.

At the Court at Buckingham Palace, the 16th day of February 1917.

PRESENT,

The KING's Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

WHEREAS by an Order in Council dated the 11th day of March 1915, His Majesty was pleased to direct certain measures to be taken against the commerce of the enemy :

And whereas the German Government has now issued a memorandum declaring that from the 1st February 1917 all sea traffic will be prevented in certain zones therein described adjacent to Great Britain and France and Italy, and that neutral ships will navigate the said zones at their own risks :

And whereas similar directions have been given by other enemy Powers :

And whereas the orders embodied in the said memorandum are in flagrant contradiction with the rules of international law, the dictates of humanity, and the treaty obligations of the enemy :

And whereas such proceedings on the part of the enemy render it necessary for His Majesty to adopt further measures in order to maintain the efficiency of those previously taken to prevent commodities of any kind from reaching or leaving the enemy countries, and for this purpose to subject to capture and condemnation vessels carrying goods with an enemy destination or of enemy origin unless they afford unto the forces of His Majesty and His Allies ample opportunities of examining their cargoes, and also to subject such goods to condemnation :

His Majesty is therefore pleased, by and with the advice of His Privy Council, to order, and it is hereby ordered, that the following directions shall be observed in respect of all vessels which sail from their port of departure after the date of this Order :

1. A vessel which is encountered at sea on her way to or from a port in any neutral country affording means of access to the enemy territory without calling at a port in British or Allied territory shall, until the contrary is established, be deemed to be carrying goods with an enemy destination, or of enemy origin, and shall be brought in for examination, and, if necessary, for adjudication before the Prize Court.

2. Any vessel carrying goods with an enemy destination, or of enemy origin, shall be liable to capture and condemnation in respect of the carriage of such goods ; provided that, in the case of any vessel which calls at an appointed British or Allied port for the examination of her cargo, no sentence of condemnation shall be pronounced in respect only of the carriage of goods of enemy origin or destination, and no such presumption as is laid down in Article 1 shall arise.

3. Goods which are found on the examination of any vessel to be goods of enemy origin or of enemy destination shall be liable to condemnation.

4. Nothing in this Order shall be deemed to affect the liability of any vessel or goods to capture or condemnation independently of this Order.