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International Law Documents

Neutrality

Breaking of Diplomatic Relations

War

With Notes

U.S. Naval War College (Editor)

The thoughts and opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily of the U.S.

Government, the U.S. Department of the Navy or the Naval War College.

Decree breaking diplomatic relations with Germany, October 7, 1917.¹

[U. S. Official Bulletin No. 128, p. 1.]

MONTEVIDEO, October 7, 1917.

In view of the authority granted the executive power by law of the nation of this date, authorizing said power to declare diplomatic and commercial relations broken between Uruguay and the Imperial Government and the reasons which have caused the legislative decision which are absolutely shared by the executive power, the President of the Republic at a general cabinet meeting decrees:

ARTICLE 1. From the date of the present decree diplomatic and commercial relations between Uruguay and the German Imperial Government remain broken.

ART. 2. That the respective passports be handed over to the diplomatic representative of that Government, all the guarantees for his personal safety being granted to him at the same time until his removal from the country.

ART. 3. That telegraphic instructions be transmitted to the functionaries of the Republic in office in Germany to the effect that they immediately abandon the German territory, requesting the same guarantees which are granted to the German representative by the Government of Uruguay.

VIERA.

VENEZUELA.

Official statement of neutrality, May 27, 1917.

Our diplomatic relations with the nations have not suffered interruption, and we find ourselves at peace with all. We have known how to adjust our conduct to the rules of international law, preserving the strictest neutrality in the gigantic struggle in which for three years the great European powers have been involved, and no one is able to reproach us with a single infraction of our duty as a neutral. Conforming to this rule of conduct, when on February 24 of the present year the German legation, on orders of its Government, communicated to our chancellery the unprecedented extension it had resolved to give to the submarine war, manifestly departing from the practices accepted up to now, Venezuela responded that it would adjust its procedure to the principles of international law which govern the rights and duties of neutrals. Up to the present time nothing has occurred in which we

¹ By decree of October 15, 1917, the neutrality decrees so far as relating to France, England, Belgium, Italy, Portugal, Russia, Japan, Serbia, Roumania, and Montenegro were revoked, U. S. Off. Bull., No. 136, p. 3.

have been directly injured as a result of the operations of the German submarines. Therefore we do not consider ourselves involved in the complications which have brought the United States to war with the German Empire.

Venezuela, through her attitude of respect for law, stands for the defense of the life and property of her nationals; she follows the development of events with the natural interest which arises from the principle in defense of which the United States has entered the war, because of the traditional friendship she has for that nation (the United States), and because of those general interests which are common to the republics of the continent.