Letter 345

Euler to Razumovsky
October 7/18 1760

Synopsis: Euler reveals the hardship caused by the Seven Year's war. Requests indemnification from the Academy for the destruction caused by the HIM’s troops.

Your Excellency has had the goodness to invest in the person of a member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences who contains the highest assurances of protection of His Imperial Majesty and one who would not suffer any consequences of the present war and not allow these unhappy times to postpone scientific progress.

Also notwithstanding this terrible war, have I discharged my duties towards the Imperial Academy with as much zeal as I did during peace having provided as much material for the Commentaries had I actually been present. I know that others have sent little, however I have rendered services to the Academy in so many other ways of which I am capable. However, I have reason to flatter myself, since Your Excellency /2r/ will be sufficiently informed by the Academy's reports, the glory of which will always be a more inspiring motive in my work than the annual stipend which I enjoy thanks to Your Excellency. This situation combined with the extraordinary degree of protection that Her Imperial Majesty provides to the Sciences in general should no doubt guarantee myself and my assets against loss should I be exposed to an invasion by the Imperial troops. His Excellency M. le Comte de Tschernischeff has provided me with the same assurances by providing me with letters of protection for my house here as well as the one I acquired in Charlottenburg. Unfortunately the letter arrived too late as all of my cattle and horses were already stolen and the house and barns were entirely pillaged. It is a loss to be estimated at not less than 700 rubles not including the loss of being unable to cultivate my fields for next year. The letters of
protection were able to keep me from harm's way; however the part that I am to pay to the city will amount to 500 rubles. This means that I have lost 1200 rubles since the arrival of Her Imperial Majesty's army. Your Excellency will concede that this amount is too large a part of my wealth which has been upset and my family pushed to the verge of ruin.

It is with no other recourse that I beseech Her Imperial Majesty and Your Excellency's generosity to provide me with protection during these sad times. It is with the most profound respect that I wish to be placed in the real safety of immunity and have the prerogatives which are granted to me as a member of the illustrious Imperial Academy and particularly to my zeal with which I accomplish all of the duties which its most important membership imposes. I would hope that the distinguished gifts that Your Excellency has heaped onto me until now will provide me with the requisite strength that this unfortunate incident will not deprive me all at once of all the advantages that I have enjoyed until now thanks to your Excellency.

I am with the most profound respect [...]