

LABOUR'S ²⁷ FOREIGN POLICY

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By ARTHUR HENDERSON

Secretary of the Labour Party

THE international situation is extremely grave. The state of war in the Far East; the menacing position in Germany and the whole of Central Europe; the marked distrust between neighbour states; the loss of confidence and even rapid deterioration in the relations of some of the more important governments, including the governments of Great Britain and Russia; the economic crisis, now accentuated by the extreme forms of economic nationalism; the increasing talk of war in Europe and the unwillingness of the heavily armed states to come to serious grips with the disarmament problem—these are all factors which have helped to create the present state of fear and tension.

And not only has international solidarity been thus seriously challenged and undermined, but in many national States the same reactionary process has been going on. The established system of government, even, in too many cases, parliamentary democracy itself, has been either destroyed or severely shaken. Thus the efficacy of the policy of international co-operation and peaceful stability has been called in question, and the sanctity of public law and public contracts, both national and international, has been weakened.

The Labour Party hopes soon once more to control the government of the country. It is essential, therefore, that the foreign policy which it will pursue should be made clear to the electors.

This policy must not only deal in a bold and comprehensive manner with the dangers of the moment; it must be founded upon those sound, fundamental principles which the Labour Party has always believed should, in all circumstances, govern the relations between nations.

No political party has ever taken so deep an interest in international affairs as has the Labour Party. Throughout the thirty-three years of its existence, by decisions of its Annual Conference and by resolutions of the Labour and Socialist International, it has made its principles abundantly clear on almost every issue in foreign affairs. Long before it was popular to do so, it boldly declared against the injustices of the Peace Treaties. It repudiated

the policy of fastening huge War Debts and Reparations upon the ex-belligerent peoples. It pronounced in favour of those measures best calculated to bring the nations together in friendship and to build up the fabric of international co-operation. From its foundation, it has stood for the solidarity of the peoples of the world. It has rejected the conception of an inevitable conflict of the national interests of different countries, and has maintained that the vital interests of every nation, both economic and political, are common interests shared by all mankind. It has held that man's conquest of nature can only end poverty, can only free men and women throughout the world from the harsh bondage of economic want, if all nations will work together to promote the prosperity which should be common to them all.

Labour Needs Peace

For the fulfilment of its aims, both at home and abroad, the Labour Party needs Peace throughout the world. It has always stood for democracy, freedom and socialism as opposed to militarism and the capitalist aim of profit, self-interest and imperialist exploitation in all its forms. For this reason, it has demanded the establishment of international institutions, the strengthening of international law, the practice of international co-operation and freedom for the peaceful development of every nation.

It is with the post-war application of these fundamental conceptions that I am now principally concerned. Since 1918, the Labour Party has translated these conceptions not only into practical principles of policy, but also into detailed measures which it has urged the governments to adopt. In so doing, it has acted, through the Labour and Socialist International, in agreement with nearly the whole Labour and Socialist Movement throughout the world. Some extracts from a few of the Resolutions adopted by the Party Conference, by the National Joint Council, by the National Executive, and by the Labour and Socialist International are reproduced in Appendix I. These quotations show how concrete and consistent has been the policy for which the Party has stood.

In reading these Resolutions and in examining the argument which follows here, it is important to remember that throughout the period since 1918 the problem of war has been of dominating

importance in international affairs. The scale of war preparations has not sensibly diminished. Governments have applied the lessons of the last war with increasing thoroughness and have prepared plans for the militarisation of the whole industry and population of their countries. The destructive power of armaments has continually and enormously increased. The magnificent invention of flying and the splendid progress of chemical research have alike been used to develop weapons capable of effecting the total destruction of the great centres of civilisation. With these dangers continually before their eyes, it will be readily understood why the Labour Movement has made its whole international policy turn round the fundamental question of ending war.

Even before the last war was over, the Labour Party declared in favour of the immediate establishment, as part of the Peace Treaty itself, of a "universal League or Society of Nations," with a "High Court" to try justiciable disputes, an "International Legislature" to enact common laws, and an "International Council of Mediation." And as an essential principle of such a League, it urged that all the nations of the world should undertake to make common cause against any one of them that broke its agreement by resort to war. The same principle is enshrined in the Constitution of the Labour Party, adopted in 1919.

Since then the Party has never wavered in its loyalty to the policy of the League of Nations, of compulsory arbitration of international disputes, of disarmament, of international economic co-operation, and of "pooled security" by mutual guarantees against aggression. Year by year it has declared in favour of the principle of international organisation and has sought to find the practical means by which international law could be strengthened and war and violence eliminated from the relations of States. It has never shirked the fundamental difficulties which the principle of international organisation involves. It has always recognised that if the nations want peace they must be prepared to take risks to secure it. But it has always held that the risks of securing peace by international organisation were incomparably less than the risks of the old system of international anarchy and armament competition in which war was accepted as an inevitable fact of human life. It has always believed that if the nations would have the courage to face the realities of the problem, they could not only

strengthen international law, but could absolutely and finally abolish war within the lifetime of the present generation.

The Partial Realisation of Labour's Programme

There is no need to dwell on the details of this policy. The Resolutions quoted in Appendix I show that the Party continually demanded that war in all circumstances should be made a crime in international law; that the guarantees of mutual aid against aggression should be adequate and precise; that the Governments should accept the Optional Clause and the General Act of Arbitration; that the whole structure of peace and international co-operation should be built firmly on the foundation of the League of Nations; and that disarmament to the level imposed on Germany should be actively pursued. With the Labour and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions, the Labour Party unhesitatingly applied these principles to the current problems that arose, and demanded for example, with all the emphasis at its command, that the Covenant should be upheld against the aggression of Japan.

The Labour Party, in short, with the Labour and Socialist International, has stood consistently ever since the war for a programme of constructive measures designed to build up a stable system of peace by the establishment of permanent political international institutions.

At no stage has the Party made its adhesion to this policy dependent upon a universal or a general change in the existing social order. It has never held that the attempt to secure international co-operation must await the triumph of Socialism throughout the world. On the contrary, it has held that whatever kind of governments might exist in different countries, it was none the less the duty of the Labour Movement to work with all its power "to develop the beginnings of peace."

What success has there been in bringing this new system of international organisation and co-operation into existence? How far did the League of Nations, when it was created in 1919, meet the requirements of the post-war world? How far did it develop after its creation in the direction which the Labour Party desired? Has it deserved, does it still deserve, the confidence and support of the Labour Movement? If so, why is the international situation as

grave as it is to-day? What can be done to remedy that situation and to restore once more an atmosphere of confidence and peace?

It would take too long to describe in detail the Covenant which was drawn up in 1919 and inserted, as the Labour Party had demanded that it should be, as an integral part of the Treaty of Peace. This Covenant set up institutions—an Assembly, a Council, a Permanent Court of International Justice, an International Labour Organisation, technical and political Committees—of precisely the kind for which the Labour Party had hoped. These institutions were established on a firm basis of constitutional law. They worked by methods of publicity which ruled out the secret diplomacy of the past. The Covenant forbade secret alliances and indeed deprived all treaties of binding force unless they were published by the League. It abolished territorial conquests and created the system of Mandates. It laid the foundation of a system of general disarmament by international agreement. It obliged Members of the League to bring all their disputes before the League for settlement, and it forbade war except in certain circumstances which, as experience has shown, are not very likely to arise.* It provided for joint action—economic, financial, and, if necessary, military—by Members of the League against any State which violated its obligations and resorted to war.

Broadly speaking, therefore, the Covenant made a substantial beginning in creating the institutions and the law which the Labour Movement wanted.

How the Covenant was Strengthened

Not only so. In the first decade of its existence, the League system was very considerably developed and improved in those points where the Covenant had left it weak.

The Assembly and the Council became continually more "democratic." The representation and influence of States other than the most heavily armed was continually increased; the practice of publicity became more firmly established.

* Articles 12 and 15 of the Covenant provide that no party to a dispute may resort to war until it has taken the dispute to the Council of the League, to the Court, or to arbitration; and until a period of three months has elapsed after the report, verdict, or award has been rendered. It further provides that if one party should accept a verdict or award, or should agree to carry out the recommendations of a report unanimously agreed to by the Members of the Council other than the parties, the other party may not resort to war even after the period of three months has elapsed. The circumstances in which war can legitimately happen under the Covenant are, therefore, very narrowly restricted.

But the Covenant had left certain gaps in its system which made war legitimate in certain cases. By the draft Geneva Protocol of 1924, the first Labour Government proposed to close those gaps. Four years later, the complete renunciation of war was accepted and embodied in the Briand-Kellogg Pact.* In 1929, the second Labour Government proposed amendments to the Covenant which would have harmonised it with the Briand-Kellogg Pact by wholly eliminating the right of war. It had almost succeeded in carrying these amendments through when it fell from power.

The Covenant had provided for the establishment of a Permanent Court; it did not make recourse to that Court obligatory, even in legal disputes which might arise between Members of the League. In 1929, the second Labour Government remedied that defect, so far as Great Britain was concerned, by signing the Optional Clause.† By its example, it started a movement which has brought the Optional Clause into force for no less than forty-two governments, including those of Great Britain, Germany, Italy, France and practically every other important European State. Thus the Permanent Court has made great progress in acquiring the obligatory jurisdiction which the Labour Movement desired that it should have.

Likewise, in respect of non-legal or "political" disputes, the Covenant provided that Members of the League might take such disputes to arbitration if they so desired, but it imposed no obligation upon them to do so. The second Labour Government helped to complete the system of compulsory arbitration by adhering in 1931 to the "General Act." Largely as a result of its example, that instrument is now in force for more than twenty countries, including Italy and France.

The Covenant contained a system of mutual guarantees against aggression, but, as a Resolution of the Labour and Socialist International declared in 1925, "concerted action against an aggressor was still insufficiently organised." The Covenant system would have been notably strengthened had the Geneva Protocol come into force. Since the failure of the Protocol, it has been supplemented by the Locarno Pacts‡, and by various plans which the Assembly of the League has drawn up. In particular, the Convention to Improve the Means of Preventing War§, in

* Appendix V.
† Appendix III.

‡ Appendix IV.
§ Appendix VI.

spite of some defects, provided a plan which would greatly assist in determining when aggression has occurred; while the Convention of Financial Assistance* would, as the Labour and Socialist International declared in 1930, "mark a serious step forward in the peaceful organisation of the world." Unfortunately, these two measures, although drawn up in Treaty form by the Assembly under the leadership of the second Labour Government, have not yet been ratified.

The Covenant in Action : Its Early Success

Nor did this Covenant system for settling disputes and stopping wars remain on paper only. On the contrary, it was very widely used, and it gave—at least up to the autumn of 1931—most unexpectedly satisfactory results. The Permanent Court of International Justice had by that time dealt with nearly fifty cases; the Council of the League had had an equal number. In every case, with one exception, their verdicts had been accepted and carried out, or a settlement had been reached by common agreement among the Parties. In no less than five cases, hostilities had actually begun and had been stopped in their early stages by the intervention of the League. In some of the disputes, the vital interests of powerful States were involved—for example, in the Mosul case—yet the conciliatory and arbitral procedures of the League brought about peaceful settlements which the Parties accepted and carried out.

Similarly, in the domain of general international co-operation, the institutions of the League not only developed much beyond what the authors of the Covenant had foreseen, but they again gave unexpectedly satisfactory results. To tell the truth, the Covenant only provided in the vaguest terms for co-operation by Members of the League to promote their common economic, social and other interests. But on this sketchy basis the League has built up a comprehensive system of technical co-operation in matters of public health, international transport and communications, social questions, native labour questions, commercial and financial relations, etc. The Standing Committees which deal with commercial and financial matters have, in particular, done valuable work, and until it was virtually dropped by the governments in the autumn of 1931, they were engaged on an important

* Appendix VII.

study of international monetary and commercial problems and of the means by which the economic crisis could be ended and international trade restored. Experience has made it evident that with adequate resources and leadership, the technical organisations of the League could do much to prepare the way for the economic and other co-operation between the nations which the Labour Movement has always desired.

The success of the International Labour Organisation has further shown how social and economic conditions can be improved by international action. Its Conventions, which have dealt with the most widely varying problems of industrial and social life, mark a great step forward in levelling up conditions of labour throughout the world and in diminishing unfair competition based on long hours, on the exploitation of women and children and on the absence of social services. More than five hundred ratifications of these Conventions have already been registered. This figure means that the Labour legislation of many countries has been profoundly changed by the existence and the activity of the International Labour Organisation. It represents, therefore, a genuine improvement in the actual working conditions of scores of millions of men, women and children throughout the world. That is in itself a notable result. Yet the chief importance of what has so far been done, whether in modifying labour legislation or in organising a new international Labour Intelligence Service, lies in the fact that it has shown how wide is the scope for future action of this kind.

The Set-back since 1931

Thus it can be said without fear of contradiction that up to the time when the Labour Government left office in 1931, the Covenant was being supplemented and strengthened, and the League was being developed in the directions which the Labour Movement desired. The authority and prestige of the Council and Assembly were increasing; their reputation for impartiality and justice was rising; the rules of international law were becoming more comprehensive; international co-operation was giving practical results; and there existed strong grounds for hoping that the League could be made the instrument by which War would be effectively abolished.

Since 1931 this progress has been stopped. Whatever the causes and wherever the responsibilities may lie, that fact must be

admitted. Failure to prevent the Japanese invasion of Manchuria from developing into a progressive conquest of one Chinese province after another; the similar failure to stop the outbreak of two smaller wars in South America; the long drawn-out deliberations of the Disarmament Conference, where the heavily-armed Governments have shown a hitherto invincible reluctance to agree that their armaments shall be reduced; the failure effectively to use the international machinery of the League to study the causes of the economic crisis and to concert plans for bringing that crisis to an end; the ever more desperate attempts by policies of unbridled economic nationalism to ward off the disasters which the world crisis was everywhere producing—these events have undermined general confidence in the new international law, lowered the prestige of the new international institutions and discredited both the principle and practice of international co-operation. It may seem paradoxical that this should be the result of a period of unrest in which every month makes it more evident that the misfortunes of each individual country are due to world causes which only world action can mitigate or remove. Yet such is the fact, and I would only shirk reality if I denied that at the present time confidence in the League of Nations has been weakened, and that even among the warmest advocates of international co-operation disillusion and disappointment are rife.

Should these Failures cause a Change in Labour's Policy ?

Indeed, some people have even maintained that in the present altered situation the whole foreign policy of the Labour Party should be re-cast; that support of the existing League of Nations should be abandoned; and that some new orientation should be found which would give a better hope for the preservation of peace by the joint action of the working classes of the world. This proposal raises issues vital to the whole foreign policy which the next Labour Government will pursue. It is necessary, therefore, before this policy can be usefully discussed, to examine the arguments on which it has been based, and to decide whether they are valid or not.

Three main contentions have been advanced.

First, it is said that the present League of Nations has demonstrably failed. Faced by decisive tests in three different spheres of

its activity—the Manchurian dispute, the Disarmament Conference, and the Economic Crisis—it has broken down. If, it is said, the machine has cracked at the first really serious strain, we surely cannot hope that it will be equal to the even graver problems which may occur, especially in Europe, in years to come. Therefore—and the conclusion, if not always expressed, is always implied in this condemnation of failure—it would be better to abandon the present League and to start again on sounder lines in better times to come.

The second argument is that the League has become the instrument of the Nationalist, the Fascist and the Imperialist Governments now in power. As such, it is said, it may become a positive danger. For it may be used not to promote peace, justice and freedom, but to serve the selfish and dangerous policies of individual countries, and to promote and facilitate corrupt diplomatic bargains by which the interests of smaller States and the dictates of justice will be over-ridden. Machinery for international co-operation in the hands of governments who want the wrong things may, in short, be worse than none.

The third argument is this. The Covenant and the Locarno pact, it is said, contain most serious commitments. By their terms this country is committed to “intervene in other people’s quarrels” whether its own interests are involved or not. By Article 16* of the Covenant, it is pointed out, Great Britain may be obliged, if some other Member of the League resorts to war in violation of its undertakings in Article 12*, to co-operate in an economic and financial boycott of the aggressor, and even, if his aggression continues, to join with other Members of the League in joint action by force of arms. Under Locarno, it is added, the commitment is still worse. If war should break out between France and Germany, Great Britain would be obliged to throw herself with all her military and naval resources upon one side or the other. Since the nations of the Continent have shown no firm determination to pursue a policy of peace; since some at least of them appear to be bent upon objects which the Labour Party cannot conscientiously approve, is there not, it is asked, an intolerable risk that these engagements will involve Great Britain in wars undertaken for unrighteous ends? In these circumstances, is it not the part of wisdom for the Labour Party to stand out of all

*Appendix II.

entanglements abroad, including even the entanglements of Geneva; to give notice of withdrawal from the League of Nations; to denounce the Treaties of Locarno; and to refuse to take part in any war whatever that may break out?

These three arguments must be considered in turn.

The so-called "Failure of the League"

The first is the so-called "failure of the League." Here the main facts are not open to dispute.

It cannot be denied that a major act of aggression and violation of territory by a powerful State against a weak State has been committed.

The Disarmament Conference, after 17 months of labour, has not yet achieved "the first decisive step involving a substantial reduction of armaments" agreed to by its own Resolution of July 23, 1932; its work has been allowed to drag on, although the science of destruction is advancing by leaps and bounds, and although the danger of the rearmament of disarmed powers and of a renewed competition in warlike preparations grows daily more acute.

The Economic Crisis has become more serious. The extreme forms of economic nationalism have been introduced, without effective measures being taken to check them, and without any attempt at constructive effort, however restricted, until June, 1933, when the World Monetary and Economic Conference met in London.

These are the facts. But do they constitute a "failure of the League"? Or do they constitute a failure of the more important Governments to use the machinery which the League provides? Can it be said that what has happened has proved the errors of the law, the institutions, and the practices of which the League of Nations system is composed; or has it simply proved that the Governments have not observed the law, have failed to live up to their obligations, have not taken seriously their duties as Members of the Council, have disregarded the practices which, in the first decade of the League's existence, they had themselves built up? Here, indeed, is no argument against the Covenant and the machinery which it set up. Here is no argument for destroying what now exists and starting again. Here is only an argument for placing responsibility where it rightfully belongs; for recognising —what is so often forgotten—that the League is not a super-

State, not a super-national entity upon which, when it is convenient, blame for all international evils and misfortunes can be thrust. The League is a league of Governments, and it cannot be effective as an instrument of peace and justice unless the Governments of which it is composed are honestly determined to use it for those ends. I have shown above that, so long as it was rightly used, the machinery of the League gave results in many different spheres of activity, which far exceeded the expectations of those who set it up. It is upon the Governments, therefore, not upon "the League," that the blame for recent failures must fall. It follows that the remedy for recent failures lies, not in scrapping the Covenant, but in resolving that it shall be properly applied.

Can the League be used for Nationalist and Reactionary Ends?

The second argument is that the League of Nations may be a dangerous instrument in the hands of governments bent on nationalist and imperialist ends. Again, the reply lies in asking "What is the League?" The League, as I have shown, is a system of law and institutions. The law prescribes peace and justice; it challenges the anarchic dogma that "might is right" by affording the same protection for the rights of all States, great and small. The institutions give an equal voice to every State whose interests are involved in any question with which they deal; they meet in public, keep printed records of all they do, and thus furnish substantial guarantees that every nation can lay its case before the impartial opinion of the world. This is not machinery which lends itself to the corrupt diplomacy of nationalist and reactionary Governments. Such Governments are likely to avoid Geneva when they seek objectionable ends. They will prefer the secret methods of the old diplomacy of pre-war days. They will seek, as they sometimes have done, to undermine the "democratic" and public methods of the League, and to diminish its influence by a whispering campaign of doubt and hesitation, and by suggesting limited agreements of a dubious kind.

But this argument must be carried even further. I have already shown that the basic idea of the League and the main lines of its organisation have always formed an essential part of Labour's programme; and I must add that Labour writers (for example, the late Lowes Dickinson, H. N. Brailsford, and Leonard Woolf) did

much before the war had ended to form the thinking from which the Covenant emerged. But even if the Labour Movement had had no share in helping to create the League, it would be as unwise for us to-day to shun the League as it would be to boycott Parliament. Just as Parliamentary Democracy has served the cause of Labour, and can be made to do so still better in the future, so international organisation will help Labour to achieve its ends. How could a Labour Government develop an effective policy of peace in a world where each nation remained sole judge of its own rights and its own armaments, and had a free hand to resort to war? Moreover, has experience not already proved that the new international law and institutions may both furnish a powerful instrument in the hands of Labour Governments and constitute a serious obstacle to reactionary governments who desire to drop disarmament, to connive at aggression, or to revert to the anarchy of 1914?

Here, again, therefore, the argument advanced for a change of policy is not conclusive. The League cannot, by its nature, lend itself to nationalist and reactionary combinations; the true safeguard against such combinations is not to abandon the League, but, on the contrary, to insist that the methods of the League shall be rigorously applied.

The Alternative Policy of Isolation

The third argument for a change of policy is based on the alleged dangers of the commitments of the Covenant and the Locarno Pacts. This argument is, in fact, an argument in favour of returning to the old policy of "splendid isolation." In a world in which reactionary, nationalist and imperialist Governments predominate, such a policy may, on the face of it, be attractive. It must, therefore, be carefully examined.

War has been a standing institution in the modern world; it has been the most potent single factor in the mutual international relations of many States. The distrust and animosities by which wars are caused have not yet disappeared. Faced, therefore, with this danger of future war, there are only three possible policies which we can pursue. One is the policy of "pooled security" in the League of Nations, that is, the policy of joint action by Members of the League against any State which is guilty of the crime of war. The second is the policy of military alliances. The third is the policy of isolation.

The first of these policies will succeed in stopping war if it creates the general belief that the joint action of the community of States will be so rapid and effective that no aggressor will ever run the risks which resort to war would then involve. There are many experts who believe that the certain prospect of economic and financial boycott would always prove effective without the need for military measures of any kind. However that may be, this policy does at least promise some real hope of ending war. It would ensure that even if military operations were ever required, they would differ from war of the old kind as night differs from day.

For the military operations of "sanctions" would differ from war in three essential ways.

First, they would differ *practically*. While war by its nature was unlimited, and involve endless difficulties with neutrals, sanctions would be confined to the minimum necessary to check whatever retaliation the aggressor might make against the world-wide economic and financial boycott. They would thus ensure that we should never again be involved in war for victory, but only in the minimum measures of restraint required to bring aggression to an end. And sanctions would avoid all difficulties with neutrals, for under the Covenant and the Briand-Kellogg Pact there would be no neutrals.

Second, the military operations of sanctions would differ *morally* from war, because they would be on the side of the community of States and in support of justice and international law against a lawless aggressor.

Third, they would differ *politically* from war, because whereas threats of war breeds war, threats of world-wide sanctions kill aggression; and whereas war grows with what it feeds on, sanctions cease when peace is restored. They merely clear the way for settlement based on law and justice.

In short, the policy of "pooled security" would offer the maximum hope of avoiding all war, combined with the minimum of danger if war should actually break out.

The second policy is the pre-war Balance of Power. It means going back to the nineteenth century system of rival alliances and armament competition; its end would most certainly be a European and probably also a world-wide war. It is a policy which the Labour Party must strenuously oppose.

The third policy is Isolation, which at the present moment may seem attractive. But its attractions diminish as it is more carefully examined. To carry it out might well mean the final death blow to the League of Nations and to the League idea, because for Great Britain to withdraw from Geneva would, in all human probability, mean the end of the new system and new morality of the League. International organisation and constructive co-operation might be ruled out of practical politics for an indefinite period of time.

And what should we obtain in return for this sacrifice of our hopes? Should we, in fact, secure immunity from war? There is no guarantee whatever that we should do so. On the contrary, history shows that we should only too probably be drawn into war of the old kind. The one thing certain is that we should help those who now desire to smash the League of Nations. When the League had gone, and war broke out in Europe, it would be only too probable that feeling would be worked up in Great Britain by the very jingo and nationalist Press which now opposes the League, and that the policy of Isolation would be abandoned in the worst possible circumstances. In the conception of the militarists who are against the League, freedom from League commitments would mean not standing out of all wars and all commitments leading to war, but freedom to commit this country to war in the interests of nationalism, imperialism, and reactionary capitalism.

Moreover, it is doubtful whether in the modern world Isolation is practical politics at all. The economic, financial and social interdependence of nations is such that no people can live to itself or separate its national life from that of the outside world. The United States of America have tried to do so. They have stayed out of the League and have adopted Isolation and freedom from entanglements as the policy which they consciously pursue. Yet problems of foreign policy and international co-operation have become increasingly important to the people of the United States, their delegations are constantly at Geneva, while the Manchurian dispute has proved how closely American interests are bound up with international organisation and co-operation.

Isolation, indeed, is a policy of despair. It is based on the acceptance of the inevitability of future wars. Its adoption would mean throwing to the winds the new machinery for stopping wars which we have been trying to build up. It would bring us no hope

of any new device, any new expedient, by which we could keep out of wars when they had once begun. So that to trust to the policy of Isolation to keep us out of war would be to act like the inhabitants of a low-lying country who had suffered much from floods and had at last united to build up a system of dams; and who, when the rainy season was approaching and they found the culpable neglect of some of the chief villages had caused some breaches in the dams, threw up their hands in despair and said: "Let's scrap the dams, let's go back to our old plan of each village for itself; then, if the floods come, we'll do as we used to: climb on the roofs of our huts or try to escape in our boats. It's true our huts are made of mud and our boats leak—but never mind, we'll take a chance." The huts will founder and the boats will sink as they did before, if the next flood—the next war—should come.

The Main Conclusion : Labour's Principles Hold Good

The three arguments used against a policy founded on the League of Nations fall, therefore, to the ground. For the Labour Party it is still true that the only hope of maintaining peace in the world is through a system of pooled security and co-operation such as the League was intended to create. Indeed, if fate decreed that the present League should be destroyed, the Labour Party would still be bound to follow the same policy as before. Finding itself back where it was in 1918, it would not try to find something different or new; but, like all parties and all persons whose aim is peace, it would start to work once more for the formation of a new League with laws and institutions not greatly different from the Covenant, the Briand-Kellogg Pact, the Assembly, the Council, the Permanent Court, and the International Labour Organisation which now exist.

It follows from this conclusion that in its main lines the foreign policy of the Labour Party must still remain what it has always been. The grave events which have led to the present situation have not shown that the principle of international co-operation or the system of the League of Nations has been wrong. On the contrary, those events have only proved how right are that principle and that system; they have only shown how necessary it is to secure their application, since the present disasters are in so great a measure due to the failure to give them their full effect.

A Re-Statement of Labour's Policy

This does not mean that the foreign policy of the Labour Party needs no re-statement in the light of present events. On the contrary, it is evident that it does. Its principles require to be adapted to the grave circumstances in which the next Labour Government must apply them. I will, therefore, attempt to give a general sketch of the foreign policy which, in my opinion, the next Labour Government should pursue.

The starting point for the next Labour Government will, no doubt, be that set forth in *Labour and the Nation* in 1928:—

“Through the League’s machinery a Labour Government will co-operate with all other Governments to promote the world’s common interests. It will employ that machinery for settling pacifically all international disputes, whatever be the interests and powers involved. Assisted by the Dominion Governments, whose share in the control of foreign policy is warmly welcomed by the Labour Party, *it will use the whole influence of the British Commonwealth to secure the most complete application and further development of the Covenant, in order that all the organs of the League, political, economic and technical, may achieve the practical results of a vigorous activity.*”

Inspired by the purpose thus set forth, the last Labour Government gave much of its time and attention to the problems of international co-operation. The next Labour Government will give even more. The League of Nations will be the very pivot of the foreign policy it pursues. It will be the conscious purpose of the Cabinet as a whole to work together to increase the power, authority and efficacy of the League. Almost every Department of State will be involved in a common effort to promote this end. At home, Ministers will give their constant and continuous personal attention to every question in which this purpose is involved. In Geneva, Labour Delegates will seek, in every sphere of the activity of the League, to infuse new life, to spread a new and revitalising faith in the necessity and the efficacy of international co-operation, to inspire a new determination to secure results that shall bring with them a restored era of prosperity and peace.

In consequence, the Labour Government will boldly use the machinery of the League to deal with every important inter-

national problem. It will not allow dangerous situations to drift on to disaster while that machinery rusts unused. While encouraging every measure that will induce Governments, great, medium, and small, to work together in better understanding, it will insist that Great Power Pacts and Concerts shall not be allowed to replace the League or to undermine its authority.

It follows from what has just been said, that the Labour Government will not allow the work of international co-operation to be crippled for lack of funds. Due economy must be observed in all things, but the constant attacks made by Conservative Governments on the Budget of the League will cease. The League's expenses will be allowed to increase in proportion to the magnitude of the services it will be called upon to render. Britain's expenditure for peace amounts to a small fraction of one penny per annum per head of its population. The Labour Government will not allow its peace work to be starved by "economies" which increase the risk of war.

There is no reason to doubt that it will be within the power of the Labour Government to effect a complete revolution in the atmosphere of international politics. Few people in Great Britain understand the enormous influence which their country wields both in Geneva and throughout the world. Great Britain often has it in her hands to decide the great issues which arise in international affairs. A strong lead from the British Government in favour of the principles upon which the League is founded will always rally the support of the overwhelming majority of other nations. The Labour Government must use to the full this power of leadership which Great Britain possesses.

The Central Object : The Abolition of War

The central object of the next Labour Government's foreign policy must be to renew the attack upon the institution of international war. As I have said before, war is still the greatest and the most terrible fact in the life of the world to-day. The fear of war still dominates the policies and poisons the international relations of most States, including the most powerful States in every continent. Many people, among them many of the ruling classes, though they realise the frightful dangers of the next war and its aerial bombardments, still regard the recurrence of war as inevitable in years to come.

The Labour Party does *not* believe that war is inevitable. It *does* believe that there can never be progress and prosperity at home, or true security for the British Empire, until the whole war system has been finally stamped out. It believes that, in loyalty to the men who sacrificed their lives in the last war, this task must be accomplished by the present generation. In this belief, the Labour Movement has broken for ever with the war system of the past. In office and out of office, Labour will oppose that system with all its resources. Never again, if Labour can prevent it, shall the peoples be thrown into another conflict in support of the false ambitions and sectional interests which nationalist and reactionary governments pursue. Never will the Labour Party agree that Great Britain shall herself make, or shall help others to make, any war for purposes such as these. With the other civilised nations of the world, Great Britain has signed the Pact of Paris; she has renounced war as an instrument of national policy; every section of the Labour Movement is determined that that pledge shall be honoured to the full. If any Government should ever seek, in violation of that pledge, to involve Great Britain in war, it would be opposed by the united strength of the whole Labour Movement.

A Peace Act of Parliament

In its renewed campaign against war, the Labour Government's first step will be to make clear to all the world exactly where Great Britain stands. Like other countries, we are signatories of the Treaties renouncing war and organising peace described above. But, like other countries, we have not yet brought our national law into harmony with our new international obligations. Public opinion at home does not realise that we are bound in law and honour not to go to war; that we are bound to settle our disputes by arbitration, to co-operate with other nations in common measures to keep the peace and to restrain aggression. Public opinion abroad does not realise that the maintenance of the new peace-keeping system is the corner-stone of British policy, and that the country is resolutely determined to keep its word under the Treaties it has signed. Since the real restraining power of any law lies in the general belief that it will be observed, and since Great Britain can do more than any other country to create that belief throughout the world, it is

obvious that this element of doubt about our national attitude towards the Covenant, the Locarno Treaties, and the Briand-Kellogg Pact is a matter of the highest practical importance.

For these reasons, the next Labour Government should, in my opinion, pass a new Peace Act through Parliament. This Act would bring our national legislation into full accord with our international obligations. It would provide that, in all cases without exception, the Government should submit its international disputes to one of the methods of peaceful settlement to which we have agreed; that neither while a dispute was under consideration, nor at any other stage, should the Government mobilise its armed forces or take any warlike action of any kind except for the purpose of repelling actual aggression, and that the Government shall have full powers to take all the economic, financial and other measures required to enable it immediately to fulfil all our national obligations under the Covenant, the Locarno Treaties, and other instruments by which we may be bound.*

This Peace Act of Parliament would not be an empty gesture. It would have important practical effects in ensuring that the British Government would be able to carry out its undertakings for the maintenance of peace. It would bring home to the public mind, both at home and abroad, as perhaps no other measure could do, the firm determination of the British people that the new peace-keeping system shall be upheld. Since its example would in all probability be followed by other nations, it would mean that the new international law of peace would be firmly anchored in the national legislation of the civilised countries of the world.

The Organisation of Pooled Security

By the Peace Act of Parliament, the Labour Government will pledge Great Britain's allegiance to the new Peace system in permanent and unmistakable form. But it will equally strive to ensure that all other signatory countries will likewise honour the pledges they have made. It will work actively at Geneva to achieve this end. In doing this, it will hold fast to the principle that all resort to war is in itself an international crime, and that no Government, however right its cause may seem in its own eyes, may seek

* The new Spanish Republic has embodied in its National Constitution provisions broadly similar to what is here proposed.

justice for itself by force of arms. It will accordingly endeavour to secure general acceptance of the Amendments to the Covenant proposed by the second Labour Government for the purpose of bringing the Covenant into harmony with the Briand-Kellogg Pact. It will secure agreement that what has been forbidden is all resort to armed force as an instrument of national policy; and it will not allow that any aggressor should disguise his crime by maintaining that he had not technically "declared war" or that he is acting in "self-defence."

The Labour Government will also seek to eliminate the other defects in the Covenant system which experience has revealed. It will press for whatever improvements may be needed to ensure that the responsibility of an aggressor can be speedily determined, and that action to uphold the law and end the breach of peace shall be prompt, universal and effective. With this purpose, it will endeavour to secure the widest possible adherence to the Convention to Improve the Means of Preventing War and the Convention of Financial Assistance, with whatever changes in their terms the making of a Disarmament Convention may require.

Drastic Disarmament : A Labour Lead

A Labour Government will work for a drastic reduction of national armaments by international agreement. There can never be true peace while in any considerable country a great war machine is tirelessly at work, intent on using every triumph of science and every advance in human powers of organisation to improve the methods of destruction. If war is to be ended, the war machine must be destroyed. The Labour Party will not be content until the forces which governments maintain are reduced by rapid stages down to the minimum required for preserving national and international order, and until the weapons of aggression forbidden to the Central Powers by the Treaties of 1919—that is to say, all heavy artillery, tanks, capital ships of over 10,000 tons displacement, aircraft carriers, submarines, military and naval aviation—have been totally abolished.

In particular, the Labour Government will use its whole influence to secure the total abolition of all military and naval air forces, and to organise adequate safeguards against possible abuse in war of civil aviation. To this end it will devote particular attention to internationalisation. No other step would so effectively

promote the national safety of Great Britain and the Empire as the complete elimination by these means of the danger of aerial attack. In this, as in all aspects of the disarmament problem, the ultimate object which the Labour Party will keep in view will be the total abolition of all national armed forces as we know them to-day, and their replacement by an international police force under the League of Nations.

The Labour Government will also insist upon strict limitation of budgetary expenditure upon armaments and upon a comprehensive and continuous system of control over the observance of the disarmament treaty in its application to personnel, material of war and budgetary appropriations. Through its representatives on the Permanent Disarmament Commission, it will seek to ensure that this control is rigidly enforced. To facilitate their task, it will press for provision in the Disarmament Convention for immunity from persecution for those who give information to the officials or agents of the League engaged on the task of supervision. The Labour Government will further submit a Bill to Parliament rendering liable to fine and imprisonment any person convicted of wilfully misinforming, or withholding information from, an agent of the League, and giving such agents the power to bring an alleged offender before the British Courts. It will urge at Geneva that other Governments should pass similar legislation.

The Labour Party is determined that the "Profit" must be taken out of war. In accordance with the demand of the authorised spokesmen of eight and a-half millions of Ex-Service Men who fought in the last war, the Labour Government will propose "the total abolition of the Private Manufacture of Arms and Munitions, which the Members of the League have agreed in the Covenant is 'open to grave objections.'"

It will further propose that the Trade in Arms shall be controlled by a system similar to that established by a recent General Convention for Dangerous Drugs.

The Labour Government will work for "moral disarmament" by securing international agreements to prevent the misuse of Education, Broadcasting, the Cinema, etc., for warlike or nationalist propaganda.

Another essential part of the peace system consists in the machinery and obligations for settling disputes without war. Not only will the Labour Government pledge itself by legislation to

use to the full all the treaties it has signed providing for the peaceful settlement of disputes; it will also work for the widest possible adherence to these treaties by Powers who have not yet accepted them. Nor will it leave out of account disputes which arise from demands for changes in the existing law and *status quo*. The Labour Party has always held that provision for peaceful change is an essential part of any system for the maintenance of permanent peace. It has always insisted that Article 19* must be regarded as a living part of the Covenant system.

But no subject needs more careful handling than the Revision of Treaties. Ill-considered action or proposals may easily retard rather than advance even those changes which seem most plainly right.

Peaceful Settlement of Disputes : Revision of Treaties

The peaceful revision of Treaties pre-supposes their scrupulous observance until they can be changed by common consent. The sanctity of law and contracts is the very foundation of order and peace. This does not mean that the right of veto by one Party will indefinitely prevent the removal of obvious injustices. The right of veto will not indefinitely stereotype the existing *status quo*. The experience of the last ten years has shown that the contrary is true, for large scale revision of existing Treaties has been going on by general consent. The special discriminations against German commerce imposed by the Treaty of Versailles, the occupation of the Rhineland, the Reparations Clauses, the unilateral Disarmament of Germany and her Allies—all these have either disappeared already or are now plainly destined to disappear. Even certain frontier revisions have been made in parts of the world where confidence and general goodwill prevail.

But frontier changes have not yet been made in Europe, and there has been no attempt to secure them by invoking the operation of Article 19. The Labour Party believes that before Article 19 can be made to work successfully in such difficult questions, it is essential that confidence and goodwill should be restored, and in consequence that the fear of war and the present causes of friction and distrust must be removed. The Labour Government will endeavour, therefore, to grapple with these causes of friction and distrust; it will support every measure that diminishes the difficulties which arise where the population is of mixed origin and

* Appendix II.

race; and every measure which diminishes the importance of political boundaries and reduces their present power to impede the co-operation of neighbour peoples. With this purpose it will exercise its rights as a Member of the Council of the League to secure the impartial observance of the Treaties for the Protection of Minorities which have been signed by most European nations. And when an atmosphere of stable peace and confidence has been restored, the Labour Government will propose that the Assembly of the League should consider the methods by which the efficacy of Article 19 as a means of peaceful change can be assured.

General International Co-operation : Economic and Financial Planning

To the Labour Party the pursuit of Peace is not a policy of mere negation. Peace is not simply the absence of war. Nor can it be assured simply by establishing machinery to settle disputes. Peace, to be fruitful and enduring, must mean co-operation—real, effective co-operation that gives results—co-operation in all matters where nations have common interests to promote. It must mean a recognition of the fact that these common interests exist in every branch of national life. The Labour Government will endeavour, therefore, to make of the League of Nations a constructive and all-embracing machinery of co-operation which shall play a far greater part in the real government of the world than it does to-day. It will seek to prove to the peoples by actual results that the policy of international co-operation is right; it will seek to pass from the present stage of experiment and investigation to the stage of practical realisation, and to do so on a far larger scale than has yet been tried.

There are many fields—Public Health, Transport and Communication, the suppression of Social Evils, and others—in which the lines of great future development are already clear. In these fields the Labour Government will press boldly forward. In particular, Broadcasting and Civil Aviation should play a great part in bettering international relations by bringing the peoples of different nations into closer contact and by promoting better understanding between the nations themselves. The Labour Government will therefore endeavour to free these great new public services from whatever shackles nationalism and militarism may have laid upon them.

Likewise it will seek to promote all forms of economic and financial co-operation. The frenzied and chaotic measures of economic nationalism by which Governments are now seeking to protect their peoples from the effects of the world crisis have only served to make the crisis worse. In harmony with the Labour Party's declared policy, a Labour Government will seek to control the monetary machine so as to stabilise by international agreement both the value of money and the rates of foreign exchange, and to supervise and control, with the aid of the Financial Committee of the League and of a reformed Bank of International Settlements, the export of capital and the granting of international loans. It will endeavour to restart the flow of international trade and will work for the all-round lowering of tariff barriers and the substitution for these of a system of planned international exchange, which will be of mutual benefit to the workers and consumers of all countries, and will result, in conjunction with the pursuit of a bold Socialist policy at home, in increasing the volume of international commerce, in stimulating consumption and in helping to solve the problem of unemployment, particularly in our exporting and shipping industries.

The Labour Government will further propose that the Economic and Financial Organisation of the League should be given the necessary resources and facilities to conduct a full long-term scientific inquiry into the fundamental problems of the economic life of the world. This inquiry will have, as its ultimate purpose, the preparation of a carefully considered national and international Plan by which the thousands of millions of pounds worth of wealth which is now every year either left unproduced or wasted, may be brought to the service of the peoples.

The International Labour Organisation

The Labour Government will endeavour to associate the International Labour Organisation very fully with this work of Economic Planning. The rapid development of machinery and the consequent "rationalisation" of industry makes it more than ever necessary to safeguard the industrial standards which we have attained by strengthening the international regulation of the conditions under which goods entering into international commerce are produced. The Labour Government will seek to develop the machinery of the International Labour Organisation

for preventing unfair competition in the world's market founded on debased standards of wages and conditions of employment. In general, the Labour Party holds the view that the International Labour Organisation has not yet been used, as it should be, as one of the instruments for bringing about an enlightened social and economic organisation of the world's production. With this end in view, it would make every effort to stimulate and support the International Labour Organisation.

Political Co-operation : America, Russia, The Far East

The Labour Government will practise a policy of unreserved political co-operation with all other peoples of the world. It will support policies that will promote the stability and welfare of other nations who may be in need of help.

The Labour Government will attach the utmost importance to friendship and co-operation with the United States. It will endeavour closely to concert its policy with the Government of Washington in order to make the collective peace system prevail throughout the world, to attain disarmament and to restore prosperity, by combating the economic nationalism and political isolation which the new American Government has denounced.

Organised Labour has long recognised the value of friendly relations with Russia. The last Labour Government built up such relations. The next Labour Government will do the same. It will seek to develop friendly relations, both commercial and political, with Russia. It will further propose a treaty of non-aggression and conciliation between the two countries and will do its utmost to promote relations based on good understanding and to encourage the active participation of Russia in the task of organising world peace.

The Labour Party attaches particular importance to the problem of Asia. The peoples of Europe cannot be indifferent to events in Asia. The European peace-keeping system may be undermined if war in Asia goes unchecked; world prosperity cannot recover while half the inhabitants of the world live in conditions of instability and at a standard of life far below that which is necessary or right. The Labour Government will therefore endeavour by common action with the world at large to secure a return of peace and order and a recovery of economic

prosperity in the Far East. In this task it will be animated by equal friendship for both the people of China and the people of Japan. With regard to the present deplorable conflict it will act on the following principles: A war of aggression must not rage unchecked in China and treaties must not be torn up with impunity. Aggression can only be checked and peace restored by worldwide action on the basis of the Covenant, the Peace Pact and the Nine-Power Treaty.* A settlement honourable to both parties, and safe for world peace, can be reached only on the basis of, and by the methods recommended in, the League Assembly Report. International action is required not only to restore peace, but also, as both the Assembly and the United States have pointed out, to assist the Chinese Government to carry out its programme of national reconstruction. In lending this assistance through the machinery of the League, the Labour Government will endeavour to promote the political and economic stability of the Chinese Republic, not in the interests of financial groups, but in the interests of the Chinese people and of the world at large. In this action, and in all similar questions, the Labour Party will reverse the Imperialist policy of domination and economic exploitation which in the past has been so grave a menace to the peaceful development of the less advanced regions of the world.

The next Labour Government will make a serious attempt to make the League of Nations universal by working for the entry into it of those nations who now stand outside.

Conclusion

The Labour Party still believes, as it has always believed, in the solidarity of the interests of the workers in every land. Never were the righteousness and the truth of that principle so plainly shown as they are being shown by world events to-day. The narrow nationalism, the narrow "patriotism" of the old system is no longer even "sane selfishness." The old dogmas of "sovereignty" and "independence" are no longer relevant to the realities of the modern world. True loyalty to the welfare and the destiny of our own people and of the other peoples in the British Commonwealth is but part of a wider loyalty to the welfare and destiny of mankind. Labour will never rest till, in the faith of this wider loyalty, the British Commonwealth of Nations takes up once more the task of leading the peoples of the world to a new era of peace, prosperity and human progress.

* Appendix VIII.

SUMMARY OF LABOUR'S FOREIGN POLICY

1. The central object :—to abolish War by organising Peace.
2. Peace must be organised through the League of Nations ; the League is the pivot of Labour's policy.
3. The Labour Government should pass a Peace Act of Parliament making it clear that this country will
 - (a) Settle all disputes by peaceful means.
 - (b) Never use coercive measures except to resist aggression and when the organised community of nations has recognised that their use is unavoidable.
 - (c) Take part in world-wide economic action to restore peace by isolating the peace-breaker.
4. The Labour Government will strengthen the Peace system by :—
 - (a) Completing existing obligations not to resort to force.
 - (b) Perfecting the means for preventing and stopping the use of armed force, settling disputes peacefully and promoting peaceful change.
 - (c) Drastic Disarmament by rapid stages and through international agreement.
 - (d) Early abolition of the weapons of aggression forbidden to Germany.
 - (e) The suppression of Private Manufacture of Armaments.
 - (f) The Internationalisation of Civil Aviation.
 - (g) The limitation of Budgetary Expenditure on Armaments.
 - (h) Constructive measures of "Moral Disarmament."
5. Economic and Financial Co-operation and Planning on a world-wide scale :—
 - (a) To combat economic nationalism, particularly tariffs ;
 - (b) to increase consumption ; and
 - (c) to organise world production for the use of all instead for profit of the few.
6. Friendship and co-operation with the United States, particularly in questions of peace and war.
7. Development of friendly relations, commercial and political, with Russia and the conclusion of a Treaty of Non-Aggression and Conciliation.
8. World action to uphold peace and law in the Far East.
9. Full co-operation with the International Labour Organisation by :—
 - (a) The adoption of a General Convention for the 40-hour week.
 - (b) Other measures to meet the problems caused by rationalisation, machinery and mass production in Industry and Agriculture.
10. Fullest publicity in all international dealings.
No secret alliances, treaties or engagements of any kind.

APPENDICES

The following texts are printed as Appendices, in the hope that they may be useful for reference:—

- I.—Extracts from Resolutions adopted by the Labour Party and the Labour and Socialist International.
- II.—Articles 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18, 19 of the Covenant.
- III.—The Optional Clause.
- IV.—Articles 1, 2, 4 of the Locarno Agreements.
- V.—Articles 1 and 2 of the Briand-Kellogg Pact (Pact of Paris).
- VI and VII.—Short Explanations of the Convention to Improve the Means of Preventing War and Convention of Financial Assistance.
- VIII.—Nine-Power Treaty.

APPENDIX I

EXTRACTS FROM LABOUR PARTY RESOLUTIONS

In 1918, the Labour Party adopted a Manifesto to the Nations, entitled "Labour and the New Social Order." In that Manifesto, the following passages occur:—

"We stand for the immediate establishment, actually as a part of the Treaty of Peace with which the present war will end, of a Universal League or Society of Nations, a Supernational Authority, with an International High Court to try all justiciable issues between nations; an International Legislature to enact such common laws as can be mutually agreed upon, and an International Council of Mediation to endeavour to settle without ultimate conflict even those disputes which are not justiciable. We would have all the nations of the world most solemnly undertake and promise to make common cause against any one of them that broke away from this fundamental agreement."

Section 7 of Clause 4 of the Constitution of the Labour Party, which defines the "Party Objects," reads as follows:—

"... to assist in organising a Federation of Nations for the maintenance of Freedom and Peace, for the establishment of suitable machinery for the adjustment and settlement of international disputes by Conciliation or Judicial Arbitration, and for such International Legislation as may be practicable."

* * *

In November, 1921, the National Joint Council declared that Disarmament was essential, but that the realisation of Disarmament must depend upon the acceptance by the various nations, and particularly the Great Powers, of certain principles of international policy and organisation:—

"First, a regular method and machinery for the equitable settlement of international disputes and a guarantee against aggression irrespective of a nation's military strength or weakness. . . ."

The Resolution went on to declare that an association of all nations was "the only practicable alternative to armaments and war. . . . All the great nations must join such an association prepared to undertake these obligations, without which wars are inevitable. . . ."

* * *

In February, 1922, the National Joint Council declared its belief that:—

"The only safe policy was that of a League of Nations in which all countries would reciprocally guarantee one another against unprovoked aggression and invasion."

* * *

In January, 1925, the two National Committees declared their loyalty to the principles of the Geneva Protocol, which the first Labour Government had helped to draw up. They declared that the Labour Party:—

"stood by the Protocol, on the ground that it furnished the only practical plan at present for obtaining Disarmament and substituting arbitration for war as the method of settling disputes."

In 1926, the Party Conference declared that the real objective which any British Government should keep in view at the World Disarmament Conference is:—

“the general application to the world at large of the system of Disarmament, International Investigation and Control, imposed upon Germany and her Allies by the Treaties of Peace.”

The Resolution further called upon the British Government to sign the Optional Clause for the arbitration of all international legal disputes.

* * *

The Party Conference at Birmingham in 1928 elaborated and completed these earlier statements. In addition to the Optional Clause, it called upon the Government to sign the General Act of Arbitration; it demanded an all-round and drastic reduction of armaments “as part of a plan of total disarmament by successive stages”; and it declared that the Briand-Kellogg Pact for the Renunciation of War should be “honestly regarded as the abandonment of the right of war, except so far as may be necessary to promote the enforcement of the sanctions provided for in the Covenant of the League of Nations.”

* * *

In 1928, the Party issued its Policy Statement, *Labour and the Nation*, in which it laid down that the

“whole structure of peace and of a foreign policy of co-operation must be built firmly on the foundation of the League of Nations.”

This Statement declared that the purpose of Disarmament was:—

“not to enable governments to retain as cheaply as possible the power to achieve their ends by force of arms, but to abolish the element of force from international relations.”

It proclaimed the faith of the Party that the Renunciation of War, Disarmament and Arbitration,

“taken together and combined with the guarantees of the Covenant . . . will abolish war, and thus provide the complete solution of the vital problem of international security in Europe.”

* * *

In February, 1932, the National Joint Council, in a statement on the Far Eastern situation, declared as follows:—

“If the Japanese Government in defiance of the public opinion of the world, continues the war, our Government will be obliged, in conformity with its undertakings as a signatory of the Covenant (Art. 16) to propose to the Special Assembly of the League whatever co-operative and graduated measures of financial and economic constraint may be necessary—in association and agreement with the United States and the Members of the League—to restore peace and to ensure a just settlement.”

* * *

A few months later, the National Joint Council declared that:—

“It will be impossible to give the nations a feeling of security, which is a condition of international disarmament, unless determined steps are taken against the warlike policy of Japan.”

EXTRACTS FROM RESOLUTIONS OF THE LABOUR AND SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

The Labour and Socialist International at its Congress in Brussels in 1928, declared:—

“The aim of the Labour and Socialist International is complete disarmament on land, at sea and in the air, without distinction between the victorious and defeated States. . . . The general tendencies of Capitalism lead to War. On the other hand, however, it is true that the growing interdependence of economic undertakings, the increasing cost of armaments, the recognition that competition in armaments threatens automatically to bring about War, the necessity for the security of foreign loans and the fear of new revolutions, which every War may let loose, may all induce certain sections of the ruling classes to agree in principle to a reduction of armaments. It is one of the most important and immediate tasks of International Socialism to exert the utmost pressure on all Governments in order to make use of existing tendencies towards International Disarmament Agreements among the ruling classes themselves, to overcome the powerful imperialist and militarist oppositions hostile to them, and in this way to attain an International Disarmament Convention. . . . The Labour and Socialist International considers it as the duty of all Socialist and Labour Parties:—

“(1) To secure the adoption in all countries of a law forbidding any military or industrial mobilisation, before an international conflict has been submitted to the League of Nations, or to some other procedure of peaceful settlement.

“(2) To secure the exercise of the strongest possible pressure, even the most revolutionary, by the masses, against every Government which refuses to accept or to respect Arbitration, but has recourse to War in the case of an international conflict.”

* * *

In 1931, the Labour Party, Labour and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions published the following joint Resolution:—

“By fighting against capitalism, the source of war, and by working for a new social order immune from social strife, Labour is preparing for the complete and ultimate achievement of peace. The Labour Movement has never relaxed its efforts to develop the beginnings of peace which may even now be found in the present social order. It has always endeavoured to promote all forms of economic and political co-operation among the peoples. It has fought unceasingly, and will continue to fight for the development of international arbitration, international justice and all forms of pacific settlement of international disputes.”

APPENDIX II

SELECTED ARTICLES FROM THE COVENANT

THE PREAMBLE

THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

In order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security

by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war,

by the prescription of open, just and honourable relations between nations,

by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments, and

by the maintenance of justice and scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organised peoples with one another,

Agree to this Covenant of the League of Nations.

ARTICLE 8 (REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS)

The Members of the League recognise that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations.

The Council, taking account of the geographical situation and circumstances of each State, shall formulate plans for such reduction for the consideration and action of the several Governments.

Such plans shall be subject to reconsideration and revision at least every ten years.

After these plans shall have been adopted by the several Governments, the limits of armaments therein fixed shall not be exceeded without the concurrence of the Council.

The Members of the League agree that the manufacture by private enterprise of munitions and implements of war is open to grave objections. The Council shall advise how the evil effects attendant upon such manufacture can be prevented, due regard being had to the necessities of those Members of the League which are not able to manufacture the munitions and implements of war necessary for their safety.

The Members of the League undertake to interchange full and frank information as to the scale of their armaments, their military, naval and air programmes and the condition of such of their industries as are adaptable to warlike purposes.

ARTICLE 10 (GUARANTEES AGAINST AGGRESSION)

The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.

ARTICLE II (ACTION IN CASE OF WAR OR THREAT OF WAR)

1. Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. In case any such emergency should arise, the Secretary-General shall, on the request of any Member of the League, forthwith summon a meeting of the Council.
2. It is also declared to be the friendly right of each Member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstances whatever affecting international relations which threaten to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends.

ARTICLE 12 (DISPUTES TO BE SUBMITTED TO ARBITRATION OR INQUIRY)

The Members of the League agree that if there should arise between them any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, they will submit the matter either to arbitration or judicial settlement or to inquiry by the Council, and they agree in no case to resort to war until three months after the award by the arbitrators or the judicial decision or the report by the Council.

In any case, under this Article the award of the arbitrators or the judicial decision shall be made within a reasonable time, and the report of the Council shall be made within six months after the submission of the dispute.

ARTICLE 16 ("SANCTIONS" OF THE LEAGUE)

Should any Member of the League resort to war in disregard of its covenants under Articles 12, 13, 14, 15, it shall *ipso facto* be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between persons residing in their territory and persons residing in the territory of the Covenant-breaking State, and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse between persons residing in the territory of any other State, whether a Member of the League or not.

It shall be the duty of the Council in such case to recommend to the several Governments concerned what effective military, naval or air force the Members of the League shall severally contribute to the armed forces to be used to protect the Covenants of the League . . .

ARTICLE 18 (REGISTRATION AND PUBLICATION OF ALL FUTURE TREATIES)

Every Treaty or International engagement entered into hereafter by any Member of the League shall be forthwith registered with the Secretariat and shall as soon as possible be published by it. No such treaty or international engagement shall be binding until so registered.

ARTICLE 19 (REVIEW OF TREATIES)

The Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration by Members of the League of treaties which have become inapplicable and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world.

APPENDIX III THE OPTIONAL CLAUSE

Article 36 of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice

The jurisdiction of the Court comprises all cases which the parties refer to it and all matters specially provided for in Treaties and Conventions in force.

The Members of the League of Nations and the States mentioned in the Annex to the Covenant may, either when signing or ratifying the Protocol to which the present Statute is adjoined, or at a later moment, declare* that they recognise as compulsory as *ipso facto* and without special agreement, in relation to any other Member or State accepting the same obligation, the jurisdiction of the Court in all or any of the classes of legal disputes concerning:—

- (a) The interpretation of a Treaty.
- (b) Any question of International Law.
- (c) The existence of any fact which, if established, would constitute a breach of an international obligation.
- (d) The nature or extent of the reparation to be made for the breach of an international obligation.

The declaration referred to above may be made unconditionally or on condition of reciprocity on the part of several or certain Members or States, or for a certain time.

In the event of a dispute as to whether the Court has jurisdiction, the matter shall be settled by the decision of the Court.

APPENDIX IV THE LOCARNO AGREEMENTS

ARTICLE I

The High Contracting Parties collectively and severally guarantee, in the manner provided in the following articles, the maintenance of the territorial *status quo* resulting from the frontiers between Germany and Belgium and between Germany and France, and the inviolability of the said frontiers as fixed by or in pursuance of the Treaty of Peace signed at Versailles on June 28, 1919, and also the observance of the stipulations of Articles 42 or 43 of the said Treaty concerning the demilitarised zone.

ARTICLE II

Germany and Belgium and also Germany and France mutually undertake that they will in no case attack or invade each other or resort to war against each other. . . .

ARTICLE IV

(1) If one of the High Contracting Parties alleges that a violation of Article II of the present treaty or a breach of Articles 42 or 43 of the Treaty of

* This Declaration is known as the "Optional Clause."

Versailles has been or is being committed, it shall bring the question at once before the Council of the League of Nations.

(2) As soon as the Council of the League of Nations is satisfied that such violation or breach has been committed, it will notify its finding without delay to the Powers signatory to the present treaty, who severally agree that in such case they will each of them come immediately to the assistance of the Power against whom the act complained of is directed.

(3) In case of a flagrant violation of Article II of the present treaty or of a flagrant breach of Article 42 or 43 of the Treaty of Versailles by one of the High Contracting Parties, each of the other contracting parties hereby undertakes immediately to come to the help of the party against whom such a violation or breach has been directed as soon as the said Power has been able to satisfy itself that this violation constitutes an unprovoked act of aggression and that by reason either of the crossing of the frontier or the outbreak of hostilities or of the assembly of armed forces in the demilitarised zone immediate action is necessary. Nevertheless, the Council of the League of Nations, which will be seized of the question in accordance with the first paragraph of this article, will issue its findings, and the High Contracting Parties undertake to act in accordance with the recommendations of the Council provided that they are concurred in by all the Members other than the representatives of the parties which have engaged in hostilities.

APPENDIX V

THE PACT OF PARIS (BRIAND-KELLOGG PACT) (Signed August, 1928)

ARTICLE I

The High Contracting Parties "condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another."

ARTICLE II

The High Contracting Parties further agree "that the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts, of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise among them shall never be sought except by pacific means."

APPENDIX VI

CONVENTION TO IMPROVE THE MEANS OF PREVENTING WAR

The Convention to Improve the Means of Preventing War gives the Council of the League power to call upon States between whom hostilities have begun to desist from such hostilities and to withdraw their forces behind lines which the Council is empowered to lay down. It gives the Council the right to prescribe other "conservatory" measures for preventing war, and it imposes an obligation upon the signatories to accept and carry out such measures.

APPENDIX VII

CONVENTION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Convention of Financial Assistance is an agreement among the Signatory Powers that, if any one of them should be the victim of aggression, the others will co-operate in providing Government guarantees for the payment of interest upon the loans which it may need to issue to enable it to defend its territory. The Convention lays down the maximum sum which each signatory is called upon to guarantee.

APPENDIX VIII

NINE-POWER TREATY

This Treaty relates to principles and policies to be followed in matters concerning China. It was signed at Washington, February 6, 1922.

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